

SUMMER 2020

TANGENTS

THE JOURNAL OF THE
MASTER OF LIBERAL ARTS PROGRAM
AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY

IN THIS ISSUE...

Memoir Pieces by Oscar Firschein, Andy Grose
Sandra Park

Poems by Amy McPhie Allebest,
Sally Lindsay Honey,
Prabhu Palani

Essays by Michael Breger, Pete Dailey,
Louisa Gillett, Christopher McBride,
Mark A. Vander Ploeg,
Astrid J. Smith

PUBLISHING NOTES

This publication features the works of students and alumni of the Master of Liberal Arts Program at Stanford University.

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VOLUME 19

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

We are pleased to present this issue of *Tangents*, the Journal of the Stanford Master of Liberal Arts Program. For this the nineteenth volume, we have chosen a diverse group of works by students and alumni, including:

- ✦ three narrative memory pieces, ranging in locations from Vilnius to Chicago to Upstate New York.
- ✦ three poems (“Dawn,” “Sestina,” and “The Lone Tree”)
- ✦ two essays exploring the impact of Western culture on life in Iran
- ✦ an essay proposing the counterintuitive notion that entailments were liberating to the male heroes of Jane Austen’s novel;
- ✦ a description with visuals of a *hypomnena*, a material book
- ✦ an essay discussing how the World War I poet Wilfred Owen modeled his poetry after the Romantic poet John Keats
- ✦ an essay describing ways in which Shakespeare used his character of Prospero and his interpretation of Machiavelli’s *The Prince* to advise his new king, James I.

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

Be sure to learn about this issue’s contributors, highlighted on the last page.

We hope that our choices will provide enjoyable reading—and inspire future contributions.

This is our second year of service as editors for *Tangents*, and we welcome feedback.

The continuing generosity of alumni and supporters of the MLA program make our annual publication possible. Thank you!

Candy Carter, editor

Teri Hessel, associate editor

Jennifer Swanton Brown, associate editor (poetry)

THE FEMALE HERO AND CULTURAL CONFLICT IN SIMIN DANESHVAR'S *SAVUSHUN*

by Christopher McBride

Literature often stands at the heart of any political formation and evolution as it reflects and refracts the culture from which it emanates. In twentieth-century Iranian writer Simin Daneshvar's novel *Savushun*, cultural conflict, colonialism, politics, and national identity are visible through the lens of a strong female character. The novel operates within the shadow of history—the vibrant, centuries-old culture of Iran—as well as the presence of more recent pre-Revolutionary upheaval. Daneshvar's characters must confront influential ghosts of the patriarchal past and integrate those into their evolving present. Moreover, *Savushun* is groundbreaking in its presentation of an Iranian woman as protagonist and its wrestling with possible “solutions” regarding the role of women like Daneshvar in evolving Iranian society. *Savushun* exists as a landmark text in both Iranian literature and in the broader canon of world literature.

Daneshvar's background is important for understanding her novel and the historical-cultural context. Born in Shiraz, Iran in 1912, she came to Stanford University as a Fulbright Scholar and Wallace Stegner Fellow in 1952. *Savushun* was published in 1969, with an English translation in 1990. Magdalena Rodziewicz underscores the work's importance: “In Iran, the novel still remains one of the best-selling titles with over a dozen editions and over half a million copies sold. Its publication in 1969 was considered an important event on the literary scene that marked the introduction of a new perspective in modern Iranian fiction” (7). Cultural

anthropologist Brian Spooner argues: “*Savushun* enriches a generation's understanding of itself. It encapsulates the experience of Iranians who have lived through the midcentury decades that led up to the 1979 revolution. They feel immediate identity with the major characters” (xi). Spooner's championing of the novel underscores its relevance over recent decades. The overarching humanity in the novel arises from social realism merging with powerful political forces to create a burgeoning modern vision of Iranian women's roles in a colonial and patriarchal environment.

Clearly, Daneshvar voices the concern engendered by external cultural forces converging in Iran during the early 1940s, as the novel realistically addresses life in Shiraz during WWII.¹ The novel presents the story of protagonist Zari and her husband Yusof as they attempt to maintain their home, children, and farmlands during the upheaval of World War II. The situation reflects both imperialism and colonialism (though Iran never became a colony, it was a de facto colony of the West during WWII). The early 1940s saw Western powers seeking a footprint in Iran due to both its strategic location and immense oil reserves. German influence in Iran had increased during the late 1930s as the Nazis pushed a narrative equating Persians with German Aryans in order to sow Nazism in Iran. By this time, Soviet and British presence in Iran was growing, as Allied nations feared the possibility of a German invasion. Once pressure forced his father Reza Shah's abdication, Mohammad Reza Shah (the Shah) took the oath

of office, an event attributable to the “Anglo-Soviet” invasion (Milani, *Shah* 69, 85). This semi-occupation provides the historical background informing the action in *Savushun*. Characters in the novel handle the occupation differently, and these varied reactions create a context for protagonist Zari’s actions and transformation.

Images from the novel’s opening wedding scene illustrate the powerful and influential presence of this foreign occupation.ⁱⁱ As the Governor welcomes guests, the narrator describes the scene:

The last to arrive was a cross-eyed British Colonel...accompanied by two Indian soldiers bearing a basket of carnations shaped like a ship... The Governor, who was busy kissing the British lady’s hand, did not notice the flowers. He shook hands with the colonel a second time and then stretched his hand to the Indian soldiers, who clicked their heels, saluted, turned about, and left. The military band was playing a march (26).

The imagery here underscores the dominant role of the occupying officers and the subservient place of the Iranians under occupation. The Governor twice kowtows to a British officer and is summarily unheeded by the servile Indian soldiers. He either ignores or fails to see the remarkable flowers, while a band plays the music of imperialism. The narrator notes the “British flag” and remarks: “[t]he whole scene seemed like a movie, especially with all the foreign officers in uniforms adorned with braids and medals” (27). This opening spectacle provides a template illustrating attitudes towards occupation seen often in the novel. For instance, the obsequious behavior shown by many at the wedding is echoed in the behavior of Yusof’s brother Khan Kaka. He preaches a sort of rapacious realpolitik

when discussing grain sales to occupying forces: “they are our guests. They won’t be here forever. Even if we don’t give it to them willingly, they’ll take it by force. They’re not deterred by the locks and seals on your warehouses. And besides, they don’t want it for free. They’ll pay cash for it. I’ve sold everything in my warehouses in one shot...After all, they are in charge” (31). Yusof’s response is both heroic and misguided, foreshadowing his death at the hands of those opposed to his alternative approach. He exclaims: “There is nothing



Simin Daneshvar, 1960s. Source: Wikiadabiat, Wikimedia Commons, 1960s

THE IMAGERY HERE UNDERSCORES THE DOMINANT ROLE OF THE OCCUPYING OFFICERS AND THE SUBSERVIENT PLACE OF THE IRANIANS UNDER OCCUPATION



surprising and new about the foreigners coming here uninvited, Khan Kaka...What I despise is the feeling of inferiority which has been instilled in all of you... At least let one person stand up to them so they think to themselves, ‘Well, at last, we’ve found a real man’” (31). It is within these competing worldviews that Zari must operate, and contrary to Spooner who argues that Yusof is the “hero of the work” for his “calm, responsible, human decency” (xv), it is Zari who is truly heroic, but in a way that permits her to negotiate a female space for her later self-assertion.

As a mother and keeper of the home, Zari has an obligation that extends beyond the simple idealism of Yusof. On one hand, he is to be admired for his insistence on supporting the peasants with food, and he is clearly unwilling to subjugate himself to foreign influence simply for money. His loyalty is partly tribal, but more human, revealing one response to the indignities of foreign occupation. On the other hand, his attitude reveals a naïve idealism—a sort of masculine indulgence that Zari cannot adopt. Her obligations are many: she must keep the house, care for three children, and prepare for the arrival of another. She does not have the luxury of her husband’s well-intentioned sanguinity. Nonetheless, Zari does undergo a transformation throughout the novel. Early in *Savushun*, while lamenting her inability to get her “loaned” earrings back, she “cursed herself for being such a coward and thought, Spineless women like me get what they deserve” (50). As a self-aware model of female self-assertion, Zari emerges as a strong example with parallels to her creator, Simin Daneshvar. Jalal Al Ahmad, Daneshvar’s own husband who was known for his vigorous promulgation of Westoxification, died shortly after publication of the novel, and this biographical component lends an interpretive key. Anna Vanzan writes: “The relationship between Simin

and Jalal reverberates that between Zari and Yusof, the protagonists of Daneshvar's most famous novel, *Savushun*, i.e., a liaison based on love, mutual respect and complicity, quite improbable in 1940s South Iran, but most probably a replica of that established between the two great writers" (Vanzan). Daneshvar certainly had an unconventional relationship with the Al Ahmad. For instance, she took the unusual step in Iran of keeping her surname after marriage, and she even taught at Tehran University from 1959 to 1979, also making her an anomaly. Her husband supported these scholarly efforts, but Daneshvar also worked diligently to create her opportunities, and her publication of *Savushun* may stand as the ultimate marker of her intellectual growth. Like her creator, Zari also learns from her outspoken husband, but it is only by moving beyond Yusof's patriarchal sphere of influence that Zari can find guidance towards her own path.

Rather than rely on male role models, empowerment for Zari comes through interactions with other women; these characters provide a touchstone for assessing her own place within her culture. One woman facing the limitations of her culture is Khanom Fatemeh (known as "the aunt"). Before telling Zari the painful story of her personal and family hardships, she remarks: "I've always kept my pain to myself...I've never told anyone what I've suffered." (82). Suffering seems endemic to women in this world, and the aunt's propensity to withhold her own pain suggests pervasiveness of this reticence. The aunt is not someone for Zari to emulate, and other women as anti-role models confront Zari in her charitable work in the insane asylum, too. For example, she encounters the "crippled woman," whom she fears "because the woman considered her responsible for her affliction" (116) and who greets her with profanity at each visit. In addition, Zari meets "the teacher with one false eye" who curses Zari, calling her a "slut" and accusing her of sewing "rat poison into the dates" (117). This asylum houses

women who have become broken at the hands of their culture. They are clearly not models for Zari, and they function as a cautionary statement regarding the condition of life for women in Iran at the time. A particularly striking patient is the woman who "claimed to be the Wife of God and sometimes said that she was God himself" (115). This female finds a potentially heretical connection to the divine. The narrator explains: "looking at the sky, she chanted in a language resembling Arabic and believed that God was waiting for her on the roof, but she wouldn't go because she was a woman and should, therefore, not take the first step" (115). Because her religion and culture are male-dominated, the "Wife of God" cannot approach God independently. As an anti-role model, this woman both reveals what has become of some female castoffs in this patriarchal society, and provides Zari with a caution regarding negotiation of a place for herself, particularly after her husband's death.

If women in her culture cannot serve as guides to empowerment for Zari, then she must find inspiration elsewhere. Importantly, Zari's role as mother and wife appears to color her view of life and provide her with some foundation for her growth. After the opening wedding scene, she speaks of foreign occupiers to Yusof: "Let them do whatever they want, except bring war into my nest.... This home is my city, my country, but they even drag the war into my home" (34). The home as microcosm of society is critical for Zari and it must be kept free from outside intrusions. However, even the home as safe space has limitations. Later she laments to her son and husband when discussing her "lost" earrings: "...I didn't want to make it worse. It's always like that...I to keep peace in the family" (140). Her husband, whom she has been trying to protect within her "nest" only says to her coldly: "Woman, think a little. When you give in so easily, everybody pushes you around" (141). It is after this exchange that Zari's transformation begins to become manifest, framed by

RATHER THAN RELY ON MALE ROLE MODELS, EMPOWERMENT FOR ZARI COMES THROUGH INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER WOMEN--THESE CHARACTERS PROVIDE A TOUCHSTONE FOR ASSESSING HER OWN PLACE WITHIN HER CULTURE.



a reaction against her husband's influence. She tells Yusof boldly of his role in keeping her oppressed: "If I want to stand up to anyone, I must first stand up to you...It is you who have taken my courage away" (142). Farzaneh Milani discusses Zari's place within a patriarchal culture, arguing that she "frames herself in terms of, and in response to masculine-centered values and definitions, including those she has absorbed by osmosis from her surrounding culture" (*Veils and Words* 213). Zari must, therefore, overcome the culture that surrounds her, and she continues her transformation in the wake of Yusof's condescending attitude. He says patronizingly: "Your first lesson in courage is this: First, when you are afraid to do something, if you are in the right, do it in spite of your fear, my cute kitten!" (143). Her response is telling: "I am a human being...I am not a cute kitten. Anyway, first lessons are given to people who are dead between the ears" (143). It is in this moment of standing up to her husband's benevolent patriarchy that Zari begins finding her voice as a woman in a changing society. She is not a pet, and she is not one to be lectured like a child. Moreover, she now seems intent upon ending the metaphorical colonization of her home and her self—two private spaces which she must reclaim as part of her quest for independence.

The ending of the novel provides an opportunity to assess Zari as both a character and as a representative of modern Iranian women of the late 1960s. Like Daneshvar, Zari has pushed back against the system that keeps her in a docile role, but does so within the schema of her perceived duty as mother and wife—with the family home as her "nest." While Yusof's aims are noble, he lives by an idealistic code that does not take his family into consideration in any more than a philosophical sense. After Yusof's death, Zari is faced with an existential crisis. Her husband has been murdered; she has three children to care for (and another child on the way), and she is now subject to the conniving plans of others. Dealing with grief, anger, and exhaustion, Zari faces the possibility of becoming like one of the asylum women. She tells Dr. Khan: "Since last night I have been distraught. I don't have my wits about me. I am afraid I am going mad...I am tempted to mimic the insane people I have seen" (289). The doctor assures her that she will not go mad, assuring her that "everything is in one's own hands" and making her feel "like a bird released from a cage" (289). It is from this conversation as the culmination of her self-realization that Zari is able to lead a funeral procession for her dead husband.

She exclaims: "while he [Yusof] was alive, you and others tried to keep him quiet until he was forced to shout louder and louder until he got himself killed. Now...let the people show in his death that he was right...Moreover, with his death, justice and truth have not died. There are others—" (296). By making the choice to stand up to the many facets of tyranny and oppression around her and allow her husband to be celebrated, Zari "discovers new dimensions of experience and autonomy" (Milani, *Veils and Words* 215). With her bold defiance, Zari takes a significant step towards female independence, suggesting the increasing role for modern women like Daneshvar in pre-Revolutionary Iran as well. At this time, few Iranian women had been published, so the spiritual liberation of Zari and the literary arrival of Daneshvar share a remarkable parallel.ⁱⁱⁱ Milani explains that Iranian women had historically been "denied easy access to the power and privilege of the published word. Principles of modesty substantially reduced their roles and their presence on the literary scene, suppressing them for the most part both verbally and visually. Theirs was a "private" world, where self-expression was confined within a delineated space. For almost ten centuries, literature possessed a predominantly masculine character in Iran" (*Words, Not Swords* 30). The triumph of Zari is very much like that of Daneshvar herself, where two women find an outward voice to share their message in the evolving public sphere. No longer are their voices relegated to the private world, and no longer will male voices delineate their personal expression.

**WITH HER BOLD
DEFIANCE, ZARI TAKES
A SIGNIFICANT STEP
TOWARDS FEMALE
INDEPENDENCE,
SUGGESTING THE
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DANESHVAR IN PRE-
REVOLUTIONARY IRAN
AS WELL.**



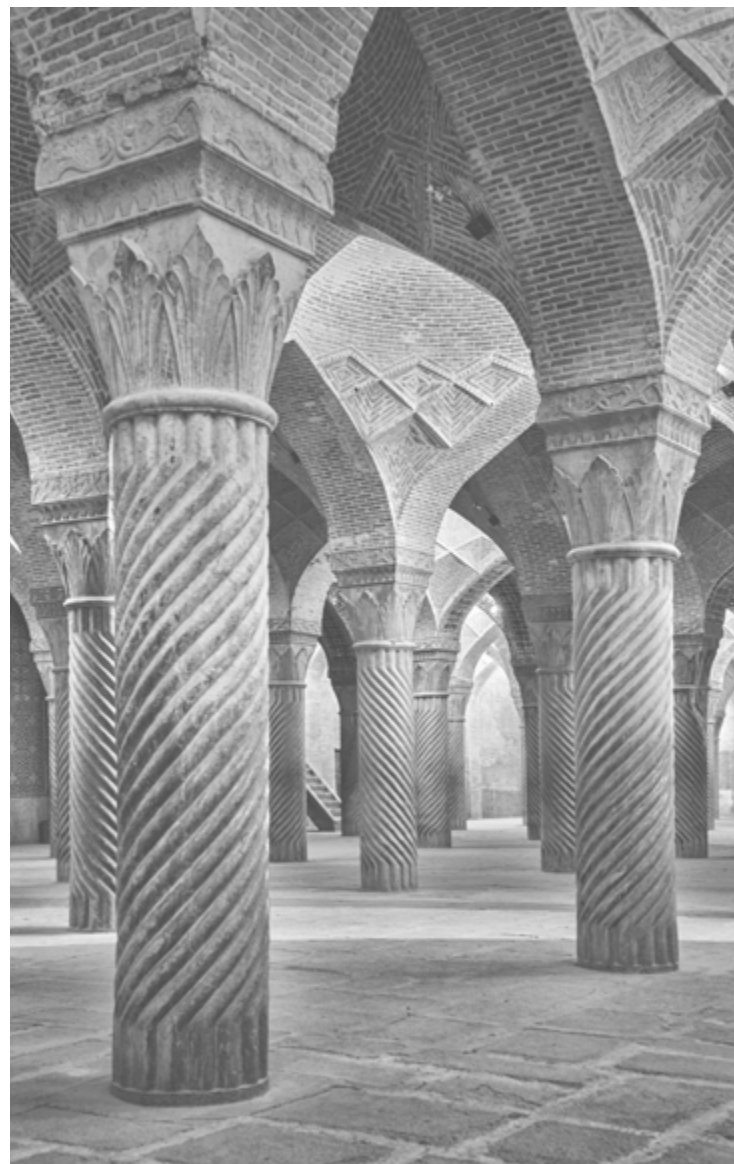
Daneshvar's *Zari* provides a powerful example of a dynamic character who evolves throughout the course of *Savushun*. *Zari* locates a self-confidence and voice that took her husband's death and a flirtation with madness to come about. While *Zari* finds a moment of transformative empowerment in the closing part of the novel, the ending also suggests that she will remain true to her role as mother and caretaker, keeping her home as "nest" and agitating subtly against colonial and patriarchal oppression. Though set during WWII, the novel also functions fully within the volatile political and cultural milieu of Daneshvar's late 1960s Iran. This novel uses the 1940s occupation of Iran to speak to and encourage women of a later era. Anna Krasnowolska argues that *Savushun* "played an important role in shaping attitudes of the whole generation of its readers before the [1979] Revolution" (qtd in Rodziewicz 8). Ultimately, the novel presents a remarkably "modern" vision, showing that art can be both aesthetically engaging and politically reactive. Both *Zari* and her creator Simin Daneshvar stand as strong and heroic women in a patriarchal culture. Today, as Iran's diaspora continues to lend its voice to the nation's struggles, we can wonder just what type of subtle transformation from within and outside of Iran will continue to take place with the help of female authors.

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ENDNOTES

- ⁱ Reflecting on the Daneshvar's origins as fiction writer, Khorasani notes "In the mid-forties, Simin, in the open political atmosphere of the her time, at the peak of her youth and creativity, found it difficult to quench her inexhaustible thirst for writing just by writing and translating; she started her fiction writing career by writing short stories" (Khorasani).
- ⁱⁱ Rodziewicz argues that "[t]he occupation of Iran by the Allied forces during the Second World War was one of many events that significantly affected the lives of Iranians and prompted them, consciously or not, to reconsider their own attitude toward foreign dominance" (5).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Farzaneh Milani illustrates the ingrained publishing system that Daneshvar overcame: "From the 1930s to the 1960s, only about a dozen women— compared to 270 men—published works of fiction in Iran. By the mid-1990s, however, women dominated the fiction best-seller lists. The number of women novelists now is 370—thirteen times as many as ten years earlier and about equal to the number of men novelists" (*Words, Not Swords* 185).



WE'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE: A MEMOIR

by Oscar Firschein

Colonel Harnes, my boss, sat near me smoking one of his huge cigars, a shotgun on his lap. He had just announced to the striking electricians that he would blow the head off anyone who kept Oscar from hooking up “the damn machine.” I thought of the line in *The Wizard of Oz*, “We’re not in Kansas anymore.” I was definitely not back home in the immigrant enclave in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn anymore.

The machine in this case was a huge device for testing concrete. You put in a cylinder of hardened concrete and the machine compressed it until it collapsed into a spray of concrete pieces. The machine measured how much compressive force was required to smash the cylinder. That’s how you tested the structural strength of the concrete that went into building a dam.

I had recently graduated from City College in New York with a degree in electrical engineering and found the possible career of working for a company that designed motors or radios and the like rather unappealing. So I responded to a vague civil service announcement asking for recent engineering graduates, and strangely enough received an offer from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to work on a large flood control dam in western New York State. I had never lived outside of New York City before.

When I reported for duty at the small town of Mount Morris, work on the dam had just begun. The Genesee River had many times flooded the city of Rochester thirty miles to the north. The site was perfect for a dam, a gorge with two-hundred-foot steep banks cut by the river.

As the days passed, I watched with fascination as workers dynamited slots in each of the canyon walls. Mohawk Indian workers, famed for their reputed balancing ability, sat at the end of swaying thirty-foot pilings to construct a temporary cofferdam that would block off half the river, so that work could begin on the actual foundations of the dam. Finally, I witnessed the construction of the cableway that would bring buckets of concrete from the

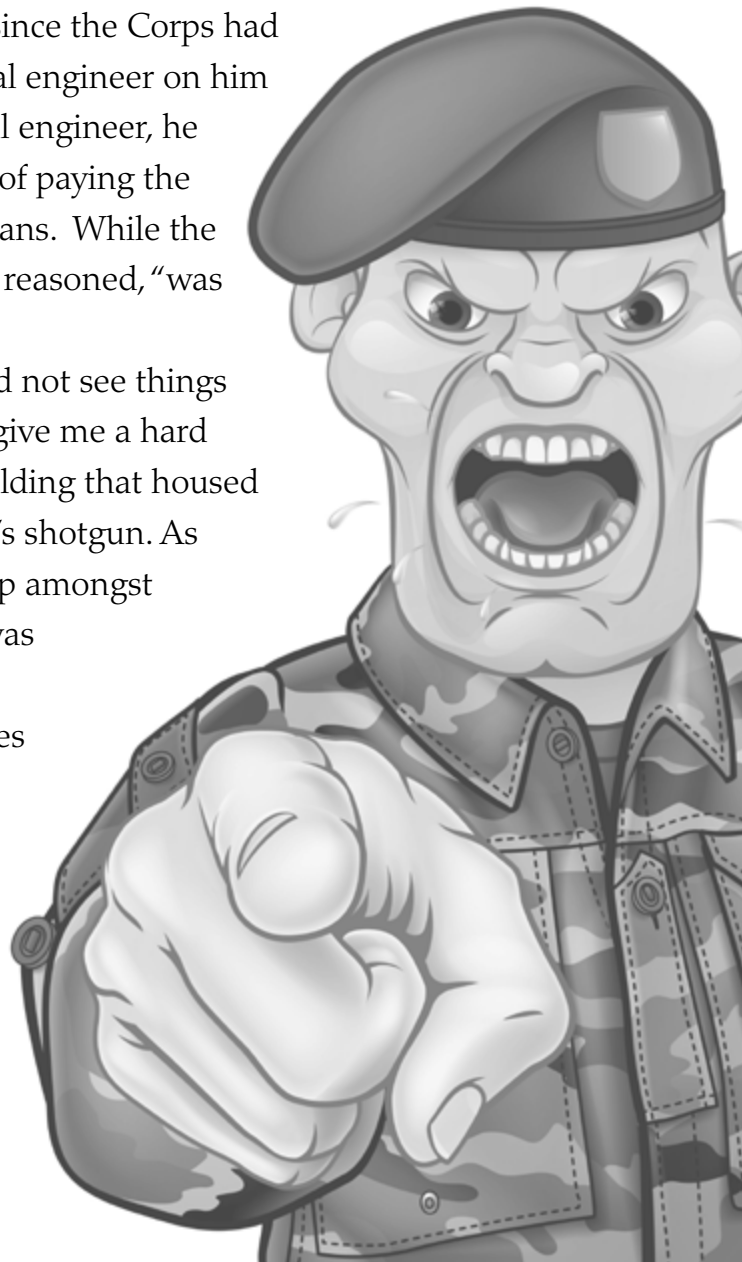
mixing plant at the top of the gorge onto the river-level site

That's how I arrived at my dire situation with the Colonel and the shotgun. He was a stickler for perfect concrete, the right sand and aggregate, the proper proportions of cement, and the correct amount of water. But he was unhappy at the delay in testing the concrete, because the test cylinders had to be sent sixty miles west to Buffalo for analysis.

He persuaded the Corps to fund a testing machine structure right at the dam site. All he needed was someone to hook up the power. That someone was me, his young graduate electrical engineer, and that's how I found myself trying to hook up this monster of a testing machine. My shotgun-toting boss had figured that, since the Corps had unloaded this neophyte young electrical engineer on him instead of a hoped-for experienced civil engineer, he might as well make use of me, instead of paying the contractor's high-priced union electricians. While the electricians might be good, "Oscar," he reasoned, "was good for practically nothing."

The contractor's union electricians did not see things the Colonel's way. They proceeded to give me a hard time by marching around the small building that housed the testing machine. Thus, the Colonel's shotgun. As a liberal New Yorker, who had grown up amongst workers strongly in favor of unions, I was very uncomfortable with my situation. Noticing my discomfort, Colonel Harnes suggested that he could either blow off my head or the heads of picketing workers. But he was determined to have his testing lab.

Unbeknownst to the good Colonel, I knew nothing whatsoever about how to hook up the testing machine. I knew how motors and radios and electrical devices worked, but engineering school taught only theory,



nothing practical about how to wire up such a machine. On one of my days off, I took the Greyhound bus into Rochester, the nearest big city thirty miles to the north, to find a good book store and buy an electrician's manual. Then, using the information gained from the manual, I bought the needed equipment from a local hardware store.

After a couple of days, the union electricians calmed down. They were convinced by the general construction contractor that it wasn't worth making a fuss about a minor hook-up job and getting the Colonel all upset. After all, it was the Colonel who reviewed the contractor progress payments. So he could put away his shotgun; the union picketing was over. As a matter of fact, the guys would come over and watch me work. They were mostly southerners, great at storytelling and, as I realized later, playing dumb for poor young city suckers like myself.

"Oscar," one of them finally said, "I really wish I had some of your school learning. I never had the money to go to college. If I did, would I know how to do what you are doing now?"

Flattered, I asked him exactly what he wanted to know.

"Well," he remarked. "This machine has a big three phase motor with three wires coming out of it. You bought switches and a circuit breaker for a motor that has two wires. I really want to learn, like you did in college, how to hook up a three-wire motor with only two-wire equipment."

I suddenly realized that I had made a major goof, and all the equipment I had bought had to be junked.

"The Colonel is going to use that shotgun on me," I stammered at this new revelation.

"Well, don't you worry," the union electrician comforted me. "We got a mess of equipment that we can give you that will make the motor work."

That's how the testing lab for the Mount Morris Dam was wired up. And the Colonel never knew.

I had learned how to wire up a three-phase motor, but better than that, I learned to appreciate, but be wary of, southern humor.

THE MATERIAL BOOK: AN *HYPOMNEMATA*

by Astrid J. Smith

The text below originally appeared as an explanatory essay, printed and tucked into the object described. It has been abridged and paired with selected images to give an impression of the visual, tactile, and sensory experience one might have with the material book itself.

Before you lifted it to read these words, this essay resided comfortably in a manila folder, cut down to size and sewn into an object that might seem to defy definition. There are bits sticking out, linen threads and deckled edges, textures ranging from soft and supple to rigid and shining with varnish. Even before you touched the pages, you likely peered through the plexiglass window and read the words, “The Material Book: An *Hypomnemata*.” Aching fingers, strained eyes, and nursed exacto-blade wounds can attest to the way in which this object is both the tangible realization of an idea and a product of life. Before it came into being, I felt that I needed to understand two things: why was it so important to me to create this object, and *what was it* that I was trying to make? My vision was to create a unique and *auratically* charged object that combined notes from professor Elaine Treharne’s Winter 2017 MLA-334 “The Material Book” class, quotes from readings, related images and thoughts, and reflections or contributions from classmates, colleagues, friends, and family (Benjamin 4). A reversed-search for a term to apply to the concept began—something like an album, a notebook, a commonplace book—and then there it was, exactly what I wanted my constructed book to be: an *hypomnemata*.



A term that is no longer widely used, *hypomnemata* are made to aid memory and retain information, both to refer to and reflect upon at a later time. Some were intimate philosophical thought-objects and aggregations of related materials, while others were compiled during research. “In the ancient library catalogues of the writings of Aristotle and other members of the Peripatetic school, there are a few entries which expressly mention “notes” (*hypomnemata*) or “course of lectures” (*akroasis*) (Lord 461).” One particular example of the use of such a book occurred when Plutarch extremely rapidly produced his essay letter for Paccius on the subject of tranquility. “Plutarch made use of *hypomnemata* that

were already there. They were not made in view of Paccius' particular request, but initially for Plutarch's own purposes... This could mean that Plutarch had taken notes as an aid for his personal meditations not necessarily on tranquility of mind or by way of preparation for some publication(s); these notes may equally have been taken to substantiate his lectures or simply to support his memory" (Van der Stockt 579). Through the compilation of ideas relating to a specific theme, Plutarch was able to respond with immediacy to the topic, as the *hypomnemata* had provided a physical object to safeguard, house, and expand his thoughts.

Through the act of writing out and compiling quotes and reflections, one is able to form new connections, and crystallize their own views. Nietzsche felt that the manner in which we go about this process of crystallization and self-reflection was a matter of personal style and the best character was one who could "fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appear(ed) as art and reason and even weakness delight(ed) the eye" (Preston 11, quoting Friedrich Nietzsche's *Gay Science*). Author Ted Preston relates this synthesis process to the *hypomnemata* in his article, "The Private and Public Appeal of Self-Fashioning," stating:

One of the ways this self-creation (or "giving style") occurs is through writing. Foucault discusses a type of notebook called a *hypomnemata* that came into vogue in Plato's time. Technically, they could be account books, registers, or individual notebooks serving as memoranda. They took on the use of a "book of life," or "guides for conduct," when some began to write into them quotations heard, fragments of written works, examples and witnessed actions, and reflections and arguments heard or that had come to mind. ... They were thought to help construct a (better) self for a variety of reasons. For one, by jotting down key arguments and quotations read in a variety of texts, the writing helps us to focus and synthesize our thoughts. Writing about what we have read serves to distill and refine our reading experiences (Preston 11).

The creation and compilation of the *hypomnemata* is clearly a very personal process, finding inspiration and imbuing one's thoughts, feelings, and time into the object. "The contents of the work, rather than the self-consciousness of its exposition, were the chief concerns of the author. ... *Hypomnemata*



belonged to no genre, and therefore were not under an obligation to obey any prescriptive rhetorical canons (Heffernan 321). "A format that allowed for complete freedom could be taken in any direction the author—or artist—should choose. This flexibility and basis in historical practice made the *hypomnemata* an incredibly appealing tool for reflection.

The first steps in making my book were to decide on the basic structural components and aesthetic; this process satisfied my appreciation of creative problem-solving. These would drive all later choices, and would help the object take shape. I worked outward from content and image to conceptual groupings of materials. Wanting to have a deckled edge on all sides, I tore most of the paper down to size by hand. I hoped that the semi-transparent pages of notes would require readers to lift, move, and interact with the pages, and also that the fragility and subtlety would impart a feeling that this object was about more than the words on the pages. It was a welcome challenge to incorporate invited contributions from others into the piece, though I opted to provide little context other than their proximity to related materials. I assigned sequence by sticking post-it notes to loose folios and ephemera, and then later adjusted as needed, solving how to affix each item one at a time. Processes included staining, treating and varnishing, baking, Xerox manipulation and toner image transfer, packing tape collage, hand-lettering, measuring, cutting, note copying, tearing, and

binding with Coptic and pamphlet stitch. Afterward, I built a clamshell box intended to function as an intriguing museum case that would allow just a glimpse of the object below, with a nod also to the windowed coffin. Including as many process-remnants and planning notes as possible was a way to reference the material evolution of the object, and the role that it now played in my lingering concept of the class. When nearly completed, I carried the book around with me for a week and asked friends and colleagues to write in it, adding their names to a list in reference to the *liber vitae* early sacred book of names and proto-yearbook *amicorum* traditions. It was a long and involved process, and the resulting object will be a treasured tangible representation of Treharne's "The Material Book" class and the ideas that it stimulated. Creating this unique work, a physical act bridging the divide between thought and form, I found myself contemplating the human desire to tangibly manifest our ideas—whether pen to paper, or needle to binding—and what happens to these desires in our predominantly digital age.

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DARK ARCADY: THE PLACE OF JOHN KEATS IN THE WORLD WAR I POETRY OF WILFRED OWEN

by Louisa Gillett



Title: *Sleeping Soldier*. Photographer: Ernest Brooks. Source: National Library of Scotland.

It is no secret that the English World War I poet Wilfred Owen consciously modelled his earliest verse on the Romantics, particularly John Keats. As a teenager, Owen was obsessed with the romance of his life, as well as his poetry, and even as he contemplated joining the army and fighting, the lens through which he viewed the possibility of war was stubbornly poetical. Just after war began in 1914, he wrote to his mother: “Do you know what would hold me together on a battlefield?: The sense that I was perpetuating the language in which Keats and the rest of them wrote” (130). Owen died on the battlefield at the age of 25, one week before the signing of the Armistice. He had experienced some of the worst fighting of the war, and his poetic trajectory is often portrayed as a radical transformation – midwived by shellshock and by fellow poet Siegfried Sassoon – from his juvenile, Romantic style to the agonised realism of the war poems for which he is celebrated. Yet this perspective fails to recognize the continuities and commonalities between the Romantic tradition of English verse and Owen’s mature poetry, particularly its relationship to the work of John Keats. Only by placing Owen’s war poetry within this context and examining the ways in which he draws upon, resists or mutates Romantic ideas and sensibilities, is it possible to fully appreciate the ways in which Owen’s poems achieve his political

and artistic aims and effects. In doing so, a dialogue emerges with his predecessor, and with us, on the troubling relationships between nature and man, beauty and truth.

The temporal nature of World War I was excruciatingly, maddeningly paradoxical. It took the soldiers backwards in time (back onto all fours like a child, de-evolved into crawling in mud like a worm, burrowing in the ancient stony groins of the earth), and forwards in time, too, the muddy swamp of the battlefield being the product of modern industrial warfare. As critic Santanu Das has observed, a soldier at the Front was positioned simultaneously looking forward to the latest technology and backwards to some “primeval chaos” where “the world might not only dissolve into slime but draw man into its chaotic indifferenciation...” (45). Some soldiers were physically taken out of time and space altogether, so comprehensively destroyed that no visible trace of their body was left behind, and Wilfred Owen did not want to flinch from showing his audience the horror that soldiers feared and faced. Indeed, exposing the true nature of modern war was his primary stated ambition. In the draft of a Preface for his poems, he explained: “Above all I am not concerned with Poetry/ My Subject is War, and the pity of War./ The Poetry is in the pity” (192).

Owen’s manifesto does not seem to promise

much in common with his Romantic predecessors. Yet in its peculiar blend of pain and beauty, Owen's mature verse has a profound kinship to Keats. The parallel is well illustrated by reading Owen's poem "Exposure" in proximity to "Ode to a Nightingale." Owen opens with "Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knife us..." a direct reference to "My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains/ My sense." In stanza five, Owen expands and deepens the connection:

Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for
our faces—
We cringe in holes, back on forgotten dreams, and
stare, snow-dazed,
Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,
Littered with blossoms trickling where the
blackbird fusses.
—Is it that we are dying? (Owen 162)

Keats is here, not just in the "drowse" which revisits the first line of Keats's "Ode," but in the disturbed sensorial combination of ecstasy and mortality. The "snow-dazed" soldiers on the chanel fields of France are also "sun-dozed," ebbing in and out of a pastoral bliss created by the disoriented consciousness of approaching death. In the gloriously synaesthetic "Ode to a Nightingale," the paradox of bliss and death is enabled by the speaker's dreamy state of expanded and blurred sensation and consciousness. In "Exposure," finitude of self has collapsed under a similar pressure. It is impossible to fully describe or delimit the state of consciousness of a speaker who asks, "—Is it that we are dying?," unable to separate reality from dream-state, individual self from the collective "we," or consciousness from quietus.

Situationally, "Exposure" could be read as a reproach to Keats, at liberty in a garden to muse on "easeful Death," but surely Owen is also acknowledging and drawing upon their shared existential predicament. As the poem continues, and the narrator says: "Slowly our ghosts drag home..." and "we turn back to our dying," the uncanny status of the speaker grows until "Tonight, this frost will fasten on this mud and us,/ Shriveling many hands, and puckering foreheads crisp." In this Autumn harvest, the windfall is the bodies of men, and yet the language in which this misery is expressed adds beauty to horror in a way which darkly mirrors Keats's habit of adding sensuous strangeness to beauty.

While Keats is generally categorized as a Romantic

...THE LANGUAGE IN WHICH THIS MISERY IS EXPRESSED ADDS BEAUTY TO HORROR IN A WAY WHICH DARKLY MIRRORS KEATS'S HABIT OF ADDING SENSUOUS STRANGENESS TO BEAUTY

in contemporary critical discourse, the strange quality of darkness in his aesthetic was well-recognized by late nineteenth-century writers such as Arthur Symons, who also figured him as a latent "Decadent," arguing that "there is another quality, made up out of unearthly nerves and something... twisted in the mind... now the fashion to call decadent" (305). Indeed, nature, and the nature of the universe within which humans must operate, is generally more ambiguous and problematic in Keats than the other major Romantic poets, not necessarily redemptive, in the traditional habit of the pastoral mode. Even in "To Autumn" (324), ostensibly the most benign of the odes, Keats offers us a succession of images uncomfortably twisted from the pastoral mode - the "last ooziings" of the cyder-press, the "dying day," and the "full-grown lambs" who, being full grown, are likely destined for consumption. The "gathering swallows" that "twitter in the skies" leave us with the image of a pulsing, darkening sky, and a coming abandonment. By the end of "Exposure," we cannot be sure if we have witnessed a hallucination, dream, premonition, or extinguishment, and the semi-refrain "But nothing happens" emphasizes the mysterious status of events. As well as the political imprecation that no one pays any notice to this disaster as it unfolds, the phrase creates the feeling that time has stopped - in the manner common to death, or to a dream. Indeed, the endless now of this ambiguous dreamy state is one of the critical ways in which Owen energetically develops and draws upon Keats.

The atmosphere or situation of porous, expansive consciousness, unbounded by time, that pervades Keats's Odes, especially "Ode to a Nightingale" and "Ode on a Grecian Urn," is a recurring motif in Owen's verse, and characterises many of his most celebrated poems. In "Strange Meeting," the entire



mis-en-scène is physically, and psychologically subterranean – a nightmare, or hell, or a nightmare in hell – and the past tense, within which the narrative is framed as a memory, collapses into the ambiguously situated closing line “Let us sleep now...” (126), leaving the speaker and reader/ listener stranded in a temporally uncertain moment that refuses to cease when the poem ends. In Owen’s most famous poem, “Dulce et Decorum,” the reality of the recalled experience is itself merged with the hallucinatory qualities of a dream:

...someone still was yelling out and stumbling,
And flound’ring like a man in fire or lime..
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams, before my helpless sight,
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.
(Owen 117)

Here, autumnal mist has been nightmarishly refigured as the glass of the gas mask, while the natural order of land and sea has been overturned; now it is light which is green, while the land has the treacherous instability of water. The somnambulant Keatsian dream-state is not containable to the dream, but has leached into his memories and perceptions – a reflection, perhaps, of reality at the Front being so surreal and ghastly as to be perceptually indistinguishable from a nightmare. Yet there is beauty here too. The effect of the onomatopoeia and repetitions is eerily compelling, while the rhythm of each line is so profoundly matched to its emotional journey that it approaches the melodic intensity and rhythmic precision of a scored song. Meaning as well as feeling is generated by the musicality. The use of the active continuous tense in the compulsive rhyming of “guttering, choking, drowning” holds

THE SOMNAMBULANT, KEATSIAN DREAM-STATE IS NOT CONTAINABLE TO THE DREAM, BUT HAS LEACHED INTO HIS MEMORIES AND PERCEPTIONS

time in suspense and creates a paradoxically boundless linguistic prison, framing the dream-experience in a language which resists the possibility of closure and suggests, as Santanu Das observes, “the eternal now of the trauma victim who...is forced to relive the past experience as a perpetual present” (157)

The poem in which Owen arguably pushes his exploration of the annihilating force of war further than any other is “The Show,” begun in late 1917 and revised in the May of 1918. It begins:

My soul looked down from a vague height with Death,
As unremembering how I rose or why,
And saw a sad land, weak with sweats of dearth,
Gray, cratered like the moon with hollow woe,
And fitted with great pocks and scabs of plaques.

Across its beard, that horror of harsh wire,
There moved thin caterpillars, slowly uncoiled.
It seemed they pushed themselves to be as plugs
Of ditches, where they writhed and shrivelled,
killed. (Owen 132)

From the outset of the poem, the physical landscape itself is a body – “weak,” “pitted,” and plague-ridden, dehiscent with stinking “foul openings” – while the soldiers are worms and caterpillars, coiling and uncoiling through the corpse of the rural/ pastoral landscape. Although on first impression there is nothing here that is Romantic or in common with Keats, there is a deeply Romantic core to “The Show” – the image of the soaring bird. As Patrick Jackson crisply summarises, “the Romantic bird in flight represents the vision of the poet...the sublime agent that transports the Romantic poet to great heights of inspiration” (297). The bird that carries Owen up to survey the desolation of the battlefield is “Death,” and no sense of beauty endures amidst the horror, and yet Owen’s poem draws on those same Romantic tropes. Technically too, there is a strong commonality. “The Show” ends in syntactic and synaesthetic confusion as rich as Keats ever offered:

And Death fell with me, like a deepening moan.
And He, picking a manner of worm, which half had hid
Its bruises in the earth, but crawled no further,
Showed me its feet, the feet of many men,
And the fresh-severed head of it, my head. (Owen 133)

The falling movement is described by sound (the “deepening moan”) while the syntax causes the



speaker's identity to become violently unstable as the perspectives switch so that the worm who the speaker observes turns out to be the speaker himself, and yet also to be composed of the dismembered body parts of the many others.

"The Show" is deliberately, shockingly ugly, and unmistakably of the twentieth century. But it also relates intensely to the sublime but potentially annihilating metaphorical power of Keats's nightingale – a bird which can unmake the speaker and assimilate him into the fabric of nature himself, so that he is to its "high Requiem become a sod" (287). Keats's nightingale, standing for death as much as for transcendence, (an altogether darker figure than Shelley's "Skylark," for example), has been transfigured in Owen, and become the literal, holocaustal force of war, churning men into mud. To use poet Joyelle McSweeney's stimulating terminology, in "The Show," Owen has gone beyond what might be considered anti-pastoral and into the "necropastoral." In a sense, this is not so much a departure but a radical change of focus, considering that within Arcadia as originally conceived, the notoriously constant resident was Death.¹ Technically extraordinary, "The Show" is the work of a major poet at the height of his powers, and yet rarely anthologised, and not well-known. Arguably, it illustrates the end-point of an exploration into what happens when beauty is not only differentiated from the sublime, in the manner of Burke and the Romantics, but subtracted from it altogether, leaving the reader defenceless against the apocalyptic sublimity of war.

Keats, of all the Romantics, was the most sensitive to the problematic darkness at the heart of the pastoral and the natural order, and Keats and Owen have a kinship of sensuality, of sensation, of the twin poles of bliss and annihilation around which consciousness in their poems revolves. These shared qualities make them two of England's finest poets of death. Yet while Keats encompasses an English pastoral which is dually symbolic and literal, in Owen, the symbolism of the pastoral and the symbolic function of poetic imagery more generally, risks being overtaken by reality. This is hardly surprising considering the conditions under which he was writing. As Gilbert notes, "the unprecedentedly bleak materiality of death in the great War necessarily revises literary as well as literal relationship to dying, death and dead" (181).

In the most canonically cherished of Owen's

poems, the sensuous qualities, mastery of the musical possibilities of spoken language, and the sheer beauty of imagery and linguistic inventiveness accompanies the horror. Arguably it leavens the pain, even as it intensifies it. In these respects, Owen's relationship to Keats is clear. But ironically, might those same qualities diminish our ability to hear his "truth"? In his draft Preface, Owen wrote: "these elegies are to this generation in no sense consolatory. They may be to the next. All a poet can do today is to warn. That is why the true Poets must be truthful" (Owen 192). With "The Show," Owen may have staked a limit to what poetry can do in telling the truth, before we can no longer bear it and it therefore ceases to be acceptable as poetry. Culturally, it seems that we need that Romanticism, that Keatsian possibility, however faint, of beauty and bliss, proximal to pain and death.

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ENDNOTE

- ¹ See Panofsky's essay 'Et in Arcadia Ego' (295-320) for an extensive analysis of the relationship between Arcadia and Death.

SESTINA

by Amy McPhie Allebest



Title: *Apollo and Daphne*. Artist: John Williams Waterhouse, 1908. Source: Wikimedia Commons

In the deepest thermal cavity, in ancient, latent silence,
Daphne nuzzled the clotted darkness.
Muted, muffled music throbbed the stillness,
Waking her to stretch against the fleshy walls, flexing to test the taut protection.
Pulsing, surging nourishment engorged the swollen cord rhythmically, filling her soft,
Contented belly, a conduit created, like the Universe, to give.

But who is the giver?

Daphne thought, and suddenly her thick, warm, muscle-home spoke from the silence
In a voice so sonorous and soft
That it filled the darkness.

*I am the muted music, said her home, the bounty-swollen sustenance, the plush,
protective Palace. I have lived for you always, and I live for you still.*

Why “protective?” asked Daphne, holding still

To hear the answer the womb would give.

For example, the answer came quietly, I was not protected

When I was very small. A man gave me money to keep me silent;

He pressed the coins into my palm in the dark;

He was huge and strong and my whimpering was too soft

*For anyone to hear, all the way out there in that barn. And so I became a woman with
a soft,*

Fissured core, knowing what I had done, feeling those coins in my hand, still

After all these years. And Daphne saw a vision of a small woman with dark

Hair and a beautiful face. Daphne watched her give and give and give

To a dark-haired man who sheltered her but required her silence,

*And she saw more gold coins pressed in her cowering mother’s hand, coins which
bought protection.*



Do what you have to do for protection,
Said the womb, and Daphne saw the woman treading softly,
Looking downward, barraged by the dark-haired man's rage, silently
Waiting for each tirade to pass. Later, in the stillness
The woman crept from room to room, tenderly enfolding small sleeping
bundles, giving
Them her milk, her soul's marrow in the dark.

The woman grew older and hid in the dark,
Bottles of pills, syringes, candy-wrapped toxins. Dry-mouthed and skeletal,
begging protection,
She shrunk into a shriveled husk, no more to take or to give.
The dark-haired man's heart grew soft
And he howled that he had always loved her and that he loved her still,
And she revived. Daphne's vision faded and grew silent.

I give you the name of Daphne so that you will not be soft,
Said the dark womb. *Do you what you need to do for protection.*
But that is a still-birth, said the fetus. *My name is not Daphne.* And the womb and
the fetus fell silent.

In Greek mythology, the lust-filled god Apollo chases the chaste nymph Daphne with the intention of raping her. To save her from this fate, Daphne is turned into a laurel tree, ending her life as a human being in order to protect her from sexual violence.

A sestina is a fixed verse form consisting of six stanzas of six lines each, normally followed by a three-line envoi. The words that end each line of the first stanza are used as line endings in each of the following stanzas, rotated in a set pattern.

LIBERATING MR. DARCY! FREEDOM IN *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*

by Mark A. Vander Ploeg

In many of Jane Austen's (1775-1817) writings, entailments—that is, the legal practice restricting inheritances to eldest male heirs—play a prominent role, and most certainly do in *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). Such entailments cast menacing shadows—repressing women, perpetuating inequality and stunting social and economic mobility. However, is this an incorrect interpretation of entailments in *Pride and Prejudice*? Perhaps a better, although counterintuitive, argument is that Austen casts entailments as freedom—a freedom inspiring duty to family and society.

To accept this interpretation, the history of entailments allows us to put ourselves in Austen's shoes, thereby understanding how her upbringing and family relationships are central to her views on marriage, inheritance and social hierarchy. The central themes of *Pride and Prejudice* take on land law, rather than marriage or class, as the ground upon which the author works out the way in which persons are, and ought to be, connected to others (Macpherson 2). For Austen's family, entailments denied them inheritances, critically shaping her views of the social and legal conventions of her time.

Austen's great strength as a writer was her ability to engage the human psyche and achieve an intuitive grasp of the social expectations and legal precedents defining marriage and inheritance. *Pride and Prejudice*, as many of Austen's novels, centers on the notion that property determines much of the social and economic activity in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century England (Teachman 27). As a young woman, Austen understood the machinations of entailments and their impact on relationships, developing a keen sense of their social and economic dynamics.

Evolving in a messy, ad hoc fashion, entailments have a long and tortured history. To comprehend

**THE CENTRAL THEMES
OF *PRIDE AND
PREJUDICE* TAKE ON
LAND LAW, RATHER
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ARE, AND OUGHT TO
BE, CONNECTED TO
OTHERS.**

Austen's treatment of entailments, some historical understanding of entailments helps the reader gain perspective on the actions of the male characters in *Pride and Prejudice*.

Entailments go back almost a millennium to feudal times. To exert authority over conquered territory after the Battle of Hastings (1066), William the Conqueror established a feudal system of estates, dividing the land among nobles loyal to him. A noble was allowed to create tenancies for male heirs and offer dowries for daughters. These tenancies, or fee interests, were inheritable interests of landholdings and were fundamental to the establishment of entailments.

Beginning in the early thirteenth century, common law established the concept of "alienability," or the right to grant property to whomever one wished. Undermining social customs of the times, alienability threatened primogeniture, or



Title: *Pride and Prejudice*, chapter 6. Artist: C.E Brock illustration, 1895. Source: Wikimedia Commons

inheritance going to firstborn males. To blunt this threat, in 1285 a Westminster statute overriding alienability established the concept of “fee in tail,” or entailment, designating heirs to be firstborn males. Public frustration with entailments ensued, and the practice of “common recovery” evolved. By the time of *Pride and Prejudice*, common recovery was a well-established scheme involving a tenant and heir joining together in a fictitious lawsuit to break an entailment. While common recovery breaks an entailment, every common recovery also disinherited someone, and Austen was well aware the mischief this encouraged.

The history of entailments—from feudal tenancies to common recovery—is complicated and essential to understanding Austen’s use of entailments in *Pride and Prejudice*. It is not enough to accept Mr. Bennet and Mr. Darcy as masters of Longbourne and Pemberley. We must also comprehend that these estates define relationships and set events in motion, giving the story its moral arc.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, entailments dictate how

people relate to one another and face responsibilities. In the case of the Longbourne estate, Mr. Bennet is no more than an ordinary tenant with no latitude to improve, sell or mortgage the property. Without a male heir, he and his family are merely biding time. Mr. Bennet finds himself with a conundrum, a predicament where he has no grounding and, without the customary reference points of a structured inheritance, is at a loss of how to act (Duckworth 4). On the other hand, Mr. Bingley, who has wealth but no land, is also untethered and despite his fine manners and good nature, lacks the character formed by the rigors and responsibilities of being the master of an estate (87). Austen depicts the situations of Mr. Bennet and Mr. Bingley as remarkably similar. Both are short-sighted, lack direction and behave in short-term, irresponsible ways.

Land ownership buttresses a long-term view throughout Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*—without land, short-sighted behavior prevails. Mr. Darcy’s perspective stretches into the future, embracing a duty to family and the Pemberley estate. In contrast, Mr. Bennet’s cavalier attitudes towards his wife and daughters, or Mr. Bingley’s unplanned, hasty return to London show each to be untethered and impulsive. Throughout Austen’s fiction, estates function not only as settings of action but as proxies for the character and social responsibility of their owners (38). Such is the case in *Pride and Prejudice*.

THROUGHOUT AUSTEN’S FICTION, ESTATES FUNCTION NOT ONLY AS SETTINGS OF ACTION BUT AS PROXIES FOR THE CHARACTER AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THEIR OWNERS.

Even the Longbourne and Pemberley libraries represent short- and long-term character. Curating Pemberley’s library with care, Mr. Darcy wryly observes, “It ought to be good . . . it has been the work of many generations” (Austen 38). In contrast, Mr. Bennet’s library, not curated or nurtured, is instead

a refuge from responsibility, a subjective retreat (Duckworth 129). *Pride and Prejudice* takes shape in these contexts, contexts of short-term urges versus long-term responsibilities.

Similarly, Mr. Darcy's financial bailout of Wickham is a scrupulous service to family and the future. Although Wickham is despicable and the ultimate short-term actor, Darcy rescues him financially, redeeming Lydia in the process and restoring the Bennet family's reputation. In doing so, he discreetly clears the way for Elizabeth to be from honorable circumstances and worthy of marriage!

Mr. Darcy has a vision and a plan. His sense of responsibility comes from the logic of entailment—abstract, future-oriented and duty-bound. This is Mr. Darcy's moral compass, his sense of obligation to perpetuate all that Pemberley represents (Todd 85). In this context, Mr. Darcy cares deeply for both Elizabeth and Pemberley as he acts in their long-term interests. Pemberley for Mr. Darcy, unlike Longbourne for Mr. Bennet, inspires long-term, responsible actions. One represents stability and security, the other not.

Family security is the crux of the matter for Mrs. Bennet and her daughters in *Pride and Prejudice*, just as it was for Austen and her family. Austen's father, George, orphaned at age six, came from a lineage of wealthy wool merchants whose wealth over the centuries had been vested in first-born sons, ultimately impoverishing George and his branch of the family. Her mother's family, the Leighs, were a prominent landed family dating back to the early sixteenth century from which two estates, Adlestrop and Stoneleigh, were formed, entailed and passed down through the generations.

Austen's family descended from the Adlestrop Leighs, although never receiving any financial support or inheritances. The author's maternal grandmother also came from substantial wealth and bequeathed it all to James, her mother's brother. Adding insult to injury, nothing of either estate ever accrued to Austen's mother. The legacy of missed and denied inheritances continued until, for lack of a direct male heir, the Stoneleigh entailment upended the Stoneleigh estate, creating an opening for Austen's family.

The entailed tenant of Stoneleigh, Edward Leigh, was declared a lunatic in 1774 and unfit to manage Stoneleigh. Austen's Uncle James, one of four potential Stoneleigh heirs, shrewdly negotiated a handsome buyout of his Stoneleigh claim, adding to his already substantial wealth from previous

inheritances. Waiting anxiously, Austen's family had high hopes that Uncle James would pass on some of this newfound wealth. No such luck. James died unexpectedly and childless, leaving everything to his widow. Austen and her family were devastated. Her father George had died suddenly in 1805, leaving the family destitute, and Uncle James had been their only hope. And to conclude this sad litany, the Adlestrop Leighs subsequently broke the Stoneleigh entailment through a common recovery. A deft move not lost on Austen.

No surprise, Austen had plenty of personal experience shaping her treatment of entailments in *Pride and Prejudice*. Thanks to generations of entailments, primogeniture, vague and contested wills, and even a common recovery, she experienced first-hand the damage these events did to relationships and family well-being. The disputed and disappointing disposition of Stoneleigh was especially scarring. As Huxley writes, "It is no wonder that wills, entails and inheritance are major themes in Jane Austen. The long wait for the unraveling of the Stoneleigh affair had begun when she was a child, and she must have grown up with the knowledge of it during any discussions of family assets" (117). Austen's experience with inheritances and entailments was first-hand and painful. Her family's security was continually disregarded, imperiling their well-being and damaging relationships for generations.

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Austen's experiences and insights allow her to cleverly employ entailments in *Pride and Prejudice*. Pemberley's entailment girds Mr. Darcy's sense of responsibility and long-term stewardship. Unlike Mr. Bennet, Austen's Mr. Darcy is duty-bound yet free, embracing a future untethered by time or space. He is free to make responsible choices.

Austen crafts surprisingly optimistic futures for her characters in *Pride and Prejudice*. Elizabeth's marriage to Mr. Darcy and her place within Pemberley is not a conventional Cinderella story, a rags to riches rescue by a Prince Charming. It is a story of Elizabeth embracing, like Mr. Darcy, Pemberley and duty. Nor does Austen seek to denigrate inheritance, marriage and the nature of society. Rather, the author draws a compelling picture of freedom as responsibility and commitment of an individual to family and society. Elizabeth, like Mr. Darcy, embraces duty and discovers freedom and security for herself and her family.

One by one, the Bennet family finds an optimistic future out of discouraging circumstances, a turn of events Austen wished for her family. Honed by her own family's distress, Austen deftly portrays entailments as duty defining freedom. Entailments inspire, if not demand, responsible choices and responsible choices lead to family security and a future. Entailments in *Pride and Prejudice* are not the culprits we expected—instead, they are freedom.



Title: *Pride and Prejudice*, chapter 19. Artist: C.E Brock illustration, 1895. Source: Wikimedia Commons

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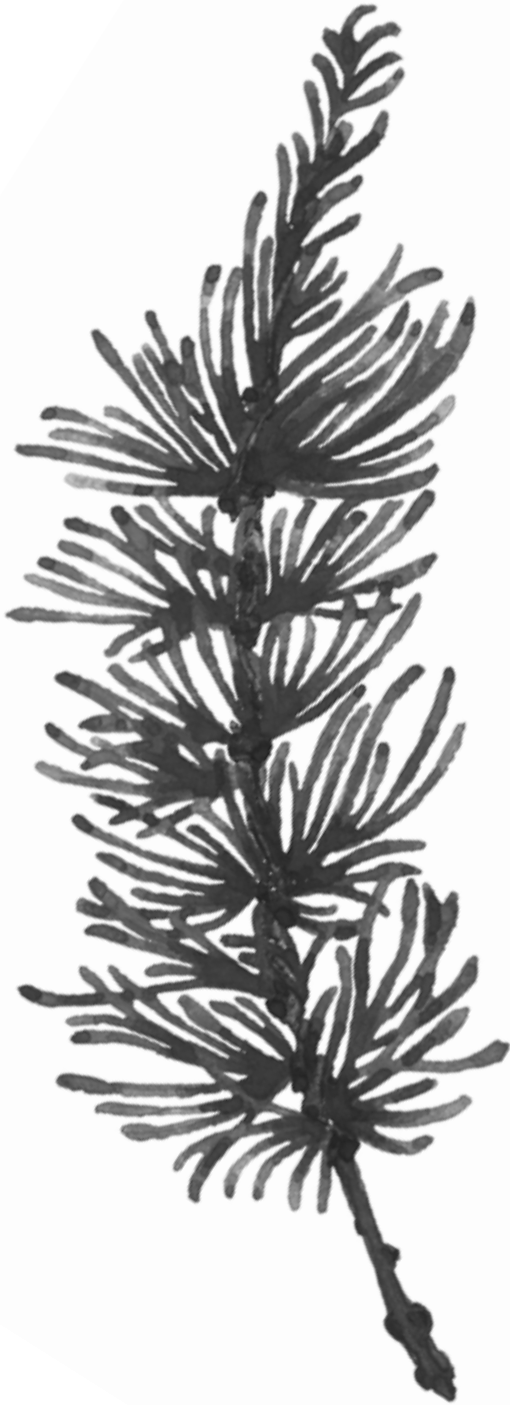
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THE LONE TREE

by Prabhu Palani



Outside my window
Espied yearlong
Stands a tall tree
Evergreen, swaying
Yet strong
It has
No great plumage
But a steady presence
And a reminder
of eternity.
With time's
passage
Changing seasons
and circumstances
We chatter
Noiselessly.
A constancy
That is
The absolute
Truth.
Reminds me
That I
am a mere traveler
Bookended.
My friend
The lone cedar
Alone, exposed
Strong
Outlives, teaches,
And comforts.

TOWARDS A MUSICAL MODERNITY: JAZZ IN THE IRANIAN CONTEXT AND IMAGINATION FROM 1925 THROUGH 1979

by Michael Breger

The notion of modernity is central to the study of twentieth-century Iran. One of the most significant cultural aspects of modernity is that of the aesthetic, and few forms of music embody the modernist aesthetic quite like jazz.

The history of jazz and jazz-adjacent musical forms in Iran is intimately tied to the advent and subsequent criticisms of Western notions of modernity in Iranian life. While jazz played a relatively marginal role in Iran's musical and socio-cultural landscape, it found some receptive audiences, and its impact on the imagination of Iranian thinkers and musicians as an expression of dissent is significant. Iran also represented a proving ground for emergent hybrid forms of jazz music that combine traditional elements with established modes. Iran's radical shifts in political affiliation have shaped its musical landscape and as such, jazz became a representation of the West, modernity, and eventually, "Westoxification."

In the period from 1925 to 1953, the term "jazz" was applied to nearly all popular music of the West. Reza Shah's regime, seeking to demonstrate Iran's "modernity" imported selected aspects of Western popular and musical culture, but did not actively promote jazz as part of this effort, as the regime did not view jazz as sophisticated or respectable (Nikzad 64). As such, jazz did not fall in line with the regime's particular vision of Iranian modernity and was of marginal popularity and cultural significance.

By the 1950s the Cold War context had fully begun to make its way into Iranian statecraft. The election

IRAN'S RADICAL SHIFTS IN POLITICAL AFFILIATION HAVE SHAPED ITS MUSICAL LANDSCAPE AND AS SUCH, JAZZ BECAME A REPRESENTATION OF THE WEST, MODERNITY, AND EVENTUALLY, "WESTOXIFICATION."

of Mohammad Mosaddeq as prime minister in 1951 reflected a growing disenchantment with and rejection of the West. Mosaddeq's oil nationalization program contributed to his widespread popularity and stoked the fears of the Shah and the United States. In the CIA-backed coup of 1953, the United States reinforced the Shah's supremacy and a new distrust of the West by the people of Iran. Mohammad Reza welcomed much of the cultural soft power promoted by the United States at this time, and simultaneously restricted what he saw as left-wing revolutionary agendas.

The coup established a new relationship with the United States that permeated all echelons of cultural activity in Iran, as U.S. citizens began to work in the oil, education, media, arts, and other

JAZZ AND OTHER POPULAR MUSICS OF THE WEST INFLUENCED A FORM OF HYBRIDIZED NATIONAL AND CULTURAL EXPRESSION WHEN FUSED WITH IRANIAN ART AND MUSIC.

industries. Such migrants to Iran lived privileged lives and authorities catered to their cultural tastes, marking them as new objects of resentment for some Iranians (Breyley 306). The U.S.-backed regime did not actively promote jazz, but was tolerant of its performance and production in select cases. During this time, American jazz musicians living in or visiting Iran enjoyed considerable freedoms in their practice, whereas Iranian jazz musicians encountered active resistance from the state. Musicians who were seen as promoting dissent through their music faced almost certain persecution by SAVAK, the Shah's secret police force, either in the form of arrest, imprisonment, torture, or execution (Breyley 300). In this case, jazz was not singled out as a specific musical form to be suppressed, but any music that could be deemed offensive to the regime was at risk of punishment.

Jazz found a receptive audience under Mohammad Reza Shah's regime. Jazz was popular with many pro-Shah Iranians, who viewed the musical form as a reaffirmation of their special connection to the United States. Alternatively, the inherent creative disobedience of jazz music and its role in the underground made it popular among some leftist dissidents. Much of the commercially viable popular music at the time carried traces of jazz. Two such practitioners of this jazz-inflected pop are singers Farhad and Dariush, whose works employ trace elements of jazz piano, brass, and guitar.

Jazz and other popular musics of the West influenced a form of hybridized national and cultural expression when fused with Iranian art and music. Such hybridity is present in the jazz-adjacent works of Iranian artists Vigen Derderian, Googoosh, and Hassan Golnaraqi. Golnaraqi's evocative track "Mara Beboos" contains some of the downtempo style of jazz guitarists like Django Reinhardt.

Known colloquially as the "Sultan of Jazz," Vigen Derderian was perhaps the most commercially successful star of the era. Vigen began his career in the early 1950s in the cafés and nightclubs of Tehran, and developed a smooth "crooner" pop style that was deemed acceptable to the Shah's cultural requirements. While Vigen's music does not sound explicitly like jazz as many Western audiences know it, it is reflective of some of the most Westernized music in the post-war period. He is often compared with Elvis Presley, and like "The King," he appeared in popular films. Vigen's musical work is emblematic of jazz in Iran. There exists a complex relationship

between Western and non-Western traditions, as the Western elements and aesthetics of Vigen's music are inexorably tied to the non-Western (Breyley 307). His stage demeanor, hairstyle, costumes and album design are all decidedly non-Western, but contain currents of Western popular forms of music like swing and early rock and roll, both of which contain jazz-derived rhythmic and harmonic elements.

New Iranian pop music also incorporated this notion of hybridity. Following the advent of television in Iran during the late 1950s, stars like Googoosh and Fereydoun Farrokhzad began to enter the musical fold. While seen as primarily Westernized, such artists incorporated elements from a myriad cultural contexts including Turkish psychedelic, Arabic, Indian, Latin American, and Eastern European styles (Breyley 309). While jazz had contributed to the mainstream pop of these other influences, and therefore found its way into Iranian music through transitive relation, it remained in the minority of musical popularity. It was reserved for some left-wing intellectuals who would frequent Tehran's small clubs and cafés in search of contact with the more creative side of the West, which would have been, in this case, those travelling "the hippie trail," or the overland journey taken by members of the hippie subculture and others from the mid-1950s to the late 1970s between Europe and South Asia, primarily through Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Nepal. As such, elements of jazz, beat, and folk mixed with traditional musical forms (MacLean).

During the Cold War, the United States employed jazz as a "sonic secret weapon," in which American jazz performers would visit other countries to transmute American cultural practices (Belair). In 1956 the U.S. state department sent bebop trumpeter and bandleader Dizzy Gillespie to perform in the





Title: *Iranian Artists in the 1970's*. Source: National Iranian Radio & Television Archive, Wikimedia Commons, 1970's.

oil city of Abadan, kicking off a regional strategic tour of cultural dissemination stretching across the Middle East, Asia and Eastern Europe (Von Eschen). Subsequent campaigns were led by jazz giants like Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Benny Carter, Harry Edison, and others (Breyley 308). These cultural ambassadors would have attracted young fans as well as foreigners who were working in Iran. These tours in turn influenced American musicians like Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn, whose composition "Isfahan" was certainly impacted by the Persian musical forms which they gleaned on their tours.

DURING THE COLD WAR, THE UNITED STATES EMPLOYED JAZZ AS A "SONIC SECRET WEAPON," IN WHICH AMERICAN JAZZ PERFORMERS WOULD VISIT OTHER COUNTRIES TO TRANSMUTE AMERICAN CULTURAL PRACTICES.

The emergent musical dialogue between the two countries was instrumental in the development of new forms of jazz. One particularly noteworthy jazz practitioner who embodies the cultural osmosis between Iran and the United States was Lloyd Miller. Dr. Miller is known for his research work on Persian music, is fluent in Persian, can play 100 instruments in 15 jazz, ethnic and world music traditions, and holds a doctorate in Persian studies. During the 1950s and 60s, Miller played Iranian instruments with top jazz artists in Europe like Don Ellis and Eddie Harris, and often played at the famous Blue Note in Paris, where he sat in for Bud Powell to play with Kenny Clark. Miller learned Persian art music formally under the Iranian master Dariush Safvat, who was also living in Paris at the time (Breyley 311). Miller lived in Iran for six years, absorbing the music of the country and blending it with his own jazz practice. During the 1970s, Miller even hosted his own prime-time main network jazz show on NIRT in Tehran, "Kurosh Ali Khan and Friends," where he performed under a pseudonym Kurosh Ali Khan. The show featured improvisational performances by mostly unknown Iranian artists.

Dr. Miller's magnum opus, aptly titled "Oriental Jazz" elegantly fuses traditional American bebop, hard bop, cool jazz, and big band forms with traditional Persian instruments like the *tar*, *zarb*, and *santur*, 6/8 time signatures, and microtonal scales, all cornerstones of traditional Persian music. As Miller seamlessly melds Persian instrumentation and modes with American jazz, his music showcases the dialogue between the two. When one first sees the album art and title, there is almost an expectation that the music will be a stiff, buttoned-up imitation of Iranian music, indeed the application of the term "oriental" already implies a certain degree of cultural appropriation. Upon hearing tracks like "Gol-e Gandom," "Amber Eyes," and "Hue Wail," the listener is immersed in a swirling, kaleidoscopic dreamscape of jazz-fusion. The style is not necessarily academic, but contains an ineffable sophistication and clear evidence of the work that Miller put in to learn and play these native instruments from players in Iran.

Miller describes his successful dialogue between jazz and Iranian music as less of a blending and more of a meeting, stating how, "I'd play this Iranian stuff with the Arab *oud* and Turkish clarinet and Vietnamese flat harp, and we'd play some jazz things with [Western] instruments. So instead of trying to play jazz on [Persian instruments], or trying to play

Persian music on Western instruments...I played those instruments...not blended at all. They met, and went side by side" (Breyley 311). Miller's concept of "side by side" music reflects the aversion to fusion or contamination shared by the supporters of the *Golha* radio program, discussed below.

"Oriental Jazz" was part of a body of work that kicked off the genre of "spiritual jazz." Stylistically, spiritual jazz is marked by a mixture of jazz with approximations of ethnic music styles (often a blend of styles evocative of African, Indian, and East Asian musical traditions), religious music of non-Christian traditions, and the ecstatic, transcendental aspects of Free Jazz. Other practitioners of "Spiritual Jazz" include John Coltrane, Alice Coltrane, Pharoah Sanders, Sun Ra and His Solar-Myth Arkestra, and Dorothy Ashby. All of these artists participated in a musical movement that saw jazz artists striking out beyond jazz's constraints, be it chord changes, predetermined tempos, or "standard" melodies, striving toward freedom and spiritual transcendence amidst the great cultural tumult of the 1960s.

One of jazz-harpist Dorothy Ashby's most critically-acclaimed albums takes a cue from Iranian cultural heritage, reflected in the title of the 1970 masterpiece: "The Rubaiyat of Dorothy Ashby: Original compositions inspired by the words of Omar Khayyam, arranged and conducted by Richard Evans." Ashby's downtempo harp and vocals represent a mannered, lush, and cinematic listening experience, with lyrics supplied by the notoriously inaccurate Fitzgerald translation of Omar Khayyam. The record is self-consciously philosophical, with a grandiosity and mystical sensibility present in the works of other spiritual jazz or soul jazz practitioners.

By the mid-fifties, some of Iran's urban intellectual communities expressed their concerns about a perceived lack of appreciation and taste for singularly Persian art and music. Such communities saw the emergent popular music as infected by Western, Arabic, Turkish and other influences, which included jazz (Breyley 308). Such fears prompted Davud Pirnia to develop a music program on national radio called *Golha* or "Flowers," a reserved space to play authentically Persian music with no sense of cultural interference. Such a narrow goal is nigh impossible to achieve, but nonetheless Pirnia established a newfound appreciation for certain new forms of Iranian music that came out of an interdependent musical atmosphere. *Golha* represented an accumulation of musicians who improvised in



the Motrebi or "light-urban" form of music style, lyricists and composers, and some proponents of the Westernized style who emphasized harmony and fixed-meter works (Breyley 308). In many ways, *Golha* became part of the "back to roots" movement that played a significant role in the Revolution.

Lloyd Miller played a role in the ideological preservation of "uncontaminated" Iranian music during this time. His master, Dariush Safvat returned to Iran out of an intensified concern about the Westernization imposed by the Shah's regime. As such, he established the Centre for the Preservation and Propagation of Iranian Music in Tehran in the late 1960s. Miller was awarded a Fulbright scholarship in 1970 to move to Iran, where he promoted the Centre and its concerts of both traditional art music and jazz. As Miller recalls "[The Centre] wanted to promote the thinking that 'Iranian music was going down the tube, it's the fault of westernization, it's all the fault of America and its crummy culture and let's get the Yankees outta here...' I didn't mean it that way, but all these guys were left-wing and loved me ragging on America, and how our music was destroying theirs. I wrote about how great Safvat was saving traditional music" (Nikzad 67).

Additionally, an English-language Iranian magazine article about his television show "Kurosh Ali Khan and Friends," published in the late 1970s, quotes Miller or "Kurosh" as saying that the United States's musical landscape was "riddled with union dictatorship, hoods, fakes and swindlers" (JazzScope). Such an ideological view is reflective of a contradiction at the center of Miller's position in Iran as a jazz practitioner, as Miller enjoyed many of the privileges of being an American in Iran in the 1970s. Miller was sheltered from, if not immune to the very real and ever-present threat posed by SAVAK, which many Iranian dissidents and aspiring experimental musicians would have faced. Miller enjoyed unprecedented freedom of expression in public contexts while Iranians themselves could only

practice and perform their music in private.

For those Iranians who feared cultural colonialism and gharbzadegi (Westoxification), jazz represented a prime example of American decadence and moral rot. Critics of the West argued that musical traffic only flowed from West to East, and along with it came the ills of Western society (Milani 831). Indeed, Iranian socio-political critic Jalal Al-e Ahmad declared the West morally and aesthetically bankrupt, as it celebrated what he called the “primitive art of Africa” (Milani 832). This trend of aligning jazz music with the primitive extended to Egypt, where writer and ideologue Sayyid Qutb argued that:

“The American is primitive in his artistic taste, both in what he enjoys as art and in his own artistic works. “Jazz” music is his music of choice. This is that music that the Negroes invented to satisfy their primitive inclinations, as well as their desire to be noisy on the one hand and to excite bestial tendencies on the other.” (Qutb).

Such vehemently racist attacks on jazz were popular, as other thinkers in Iran conflated jazz with westoxification. Indeed, Ayatollah Khomeini and his ideological circle approved and appropriated those views, promulgating anti-modern thought as a function of ecclesiastical doctrine. As thinkers like Al-e-Ahmad provided the ideological underpinnings to the 1979 Revolution, it follows that jazz would come under direct censorship and suppression under the new regime. Jazz could not be publicly performed or commercially recorded in Iran between the 1979 revolution and the mid-1990s (Breyley 313). As such, there exists a complex relationship between the free form musical medium and the totalitarian regime which speaks to the significance of such a frenetic and improvisational art form in the context of a highly regulated society.

IT FOLLOWS THAT JAZZ WOULD COME UNDER DIRECT CENSORSHIP AND SUPPRESSION UNDER THE NEW REGIME.

In terms of defining an aesthetic modernity, jazz represents one of the most salient art forms in the minds of Iranian thinkers and experimental musicians. Most often, jazz represented a form of dissent and was perceived as being purely of the West. Jazz also represented a significant pillar of the cultural Cold War, employed by the United States as an overture of the superpower’s aesthetic sophistication, with Iran as one of the proving grounds for the so-called “sonic secret weapon.” While it did not enjoy the same mainstream success as it did elsewhere, jazz made an impression upon Iranian popular music during a unique moment of cultural osmosis. This musical dialogue also presented the West with traditional Persian music as a new form of inspiration, which sparked the development of new experimental forms in the United States. As for its role in the 1979 Revolution, jazz was categorized as an object of resentment by the intellectuals behind “Westoxification,” who attacked the musical form indicative of the moral rot of the West, and of modernity.

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WATCHFIRE

by Andy Grose

I have lost sight of you in the sea glare, far out where the setting sun becomes an hourglass, then a fire ball in its dance upon the schiller of the sea. Where you once were, a black dot burns the inside of my eyes. Closer in the surf swells and then collapses with the breathing of the waves that know just when to stop and run off laughing, hissing, trailing swirling petticoats of foam.

The black dot follows my eyes back to shore sweeping the steep cliffs we climbed down to reach this spot. Yellow lizards crawl over the rocks as if nothing is new. Sand blows between my toes in rivulets that whip and merge, then serpentine into a grainy mist that scatters the fine skeletons of silica on down the beach.

One lizard, staggered by the weight of my gaze, slips, hangs for a moment by one leg, then tumbles to the waiting sea. It wreathes atop the sizzle, then is gone. Silly, wasn't it, to think the sea would soften things.

Why was I in Chicago, anyhow, that day we met? I don't recall. But I remember that you had on a crepe blouse, pale ecru, the collar points peaked in blood red lace, the bodice a peek-a-boo of macramé. An ivory mermaid clasped your throat.

That we were on the west side of the street, where Madison meets Michigan. That it was nine a.m. The great square clock at Shattuck Jewelry chimed the precise hour in crisp clear tones, the prelude to another winter day. It was so bitter cold that I could see your breath framing your face. The sun was straight into your eyes.

The lizard crawls back up the rocks, its fine black diamond scales still wet with saltwater. Stone faced, its yellow eyes are fixed on me, wide open and unblinking twins.

The scarlet sky is growing purple black.

I gather driftwood for a watchfire.





WITHOUT VERONIKA

by Sandra Park

Vilnius was the last place I wanted to be.

Those last weeks, some days under clear blue skies, other days dark clouds and distant thunder, I would duck into my favorite amber shop on Pilies Street. It was a shop that looked like all the other shops. Except for the sullen presence of Veronika, the shop girl who took care of everything—from sweeping the sidewalk in front of the entrance to counting the change down to the last litas—in fact, she was always preoccupied with something. The first time I went there, it took almost an hour of browsing before she looked up. She was not looking for business.

“Prasom,” I pointed to a string of milky whites. On close inspection, they looked plasticky, fake even though they were real, according to Veronika. I bought it anyway.

It took several more visits to the shop to realize that the Lithuanian demeanor, especially this one’s, was to maintain a slight frown, as if considering EU negotiations, or whether it will suddenly thunderstorm, washing away customers for the day; both questions enough to fix this frown, in consideration of how this world can teeter at the edge because of a dip in the DAX or FTSE, or a heavy pelt of rain.

Although I’m not into bling in any form, eschewing earrings, even any button that pretends to be something else, I ended up buying armloads of amber from Veronika. And each time, she completed the transaction without showing me the slightest sign of familiarity. Since I live far from family, my attachment to Veronika grew deeper, akin to my family feelings for a favorite cousin or long lost sister.

“Kodel tu ne sypsena?” Why do you not ever smile, I asked.

At first she did not understand. After I repeated this many times, syllable by syllable, she shook her head and replied in perfectly fluent English, "I am a serious person."

"*Rimtas zmogus*," I said in my faltering Lithuanian.

"Yes," she said. "If there is nothing to smile about, I do not smile."

"*Normaliai*?" I asked. "Like normal?"

"Yes. Like normal," she said. "Anyway, my mother died and I have no time for school."

"Oh my God," I said. "I am so sorry for your loss. My own mother will probably outlive me. She lives in California, exercises regularly, eats leafy green vegetables."

Veronika seemed to briefly brighten at my glum news. Was it fascinating that a mother might outlive her daughter? That leafy green vegetables could really turn things around? Her quick glance revealed a glow that went shutter dark almost at the same moment.

Over the next few weeks, I bought more amber. A filigree stick pin with three drops of golden resin dangling from strands of fine liquid chain. A rope of toffee-colored rocks. Even a hideous pendant of a scarred, pocked slab the size of a continent that I only bought because Veronika said it was one of a kind. It was pleasant to practice my Lithuanian and to wait for her laconic remarks in English.

And, yes, it was a thrill to hear about her personal business. How she had to turn over her paycheck to her father and beg for coins to buy necessary items, like cigarettes and moisturizer. I couldn't help but wonder how much amber I would have to buy to secure enough basic supplies for Veronika. Given the food chain of the shop, I considered buying a cuckoo clock and desk set made almost entirely of amber, but did not know how to fit these into my luggage. By the end of the week, I had found a used steamer trunk at the Russian market, smothered in destination stickers from around the world. I methodically bought more and more amber, Veronika frowning, ringing up the sales.

And then, one sunny, catastrophic day, Veronika was gone. In her place was an older woman, in full-face makeup and blue-red lipstick, upholstered up to her chin. Where was the shop girl with almost nothing to say? Each remark, in fluent English, like a telegram from the field. Mother, father, school,

prospects. I was hoping to find out a bit more about my Veronika. About her day, how it was going, not good but at the very least, like normal. O Veronika! Where could you be?

After checking back, time and again, I finally realized that Veronika had moved on. Maybe to another shop, a bit more upscale, in a mall outside the old town. This would be a tick above normal. Something as nice as a mild day without rain. The spires of Saint Casimir piercing the sky.

Tomorrow, I leave for Santa Barbara, California. Palm trees, beaches. Sunny with no chance of rain. When asked about my adventures, I will smile suggestively, laugh a deep-throated laugh. Ah, the easy pleasures of the boulevard. Drinks under yellow umbrellas on Didzioji Street. Another drink to stay aloft.

As the years go by, the resin rocks in my suitcase grow heavy. Huffing and puffing, I move my amber collection to a corner of the garage. I've taken up tatting, wielding one hooked needle to make finely detailed patterns, flowers I cannot smell, fruit I cannot eat. Imitating Veronika, I turn down my mouth while working. When I hear bad news, I do not coddle my friends with sympathetic sounds. When I hear good news, I raise my brows, quizzically.

My days? Not brilliant. Just normal. And that is all. I am a serious person. Tell me your misfortune and I will tell you mine.



DAWN

by Sally Lindsay Honey

In pre-dawn dark, Orion dips his left foot in the western sea
While the Southern Cross drags its kite tail in the waters to the south
And my masthead light scribbles messages among the stars above.

“Watch for the five planets,” it writes. “See Jupiter directly overhead?
Follow the straight line angling down to the horizon –
The steps of Mars, Saturn, and Mercury – and wait half an hour.

Then, Venus will appear to complete the pentad:
Special galactic showing for one month only.”
I gaze from the scant shelter of my coasting boat,

Confined to borderline between sea and sky,
Pushed by unseen gentle breath and rocked by waves
Spawned in distant turbulence of just-now-glowing dawn.

And I can only wonder what do I, minute and immaterial
In this dance of heavenly bodies, blessedly veiled
By our diurnal sheltering sky, what do I signify?

PROSPERO AS PRINCE – SHAKESPEAREAN COMMENTARY ON VIRTÙ AND FORTUNA

by Pete Dailey



Title: *The Enchanted Island before the Cell of Prospero, Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act 1, Scene 2*. Artist: Henry Fuseli. Engraver: Peter Simon 1797. Source: Wikimedia Commons, Gertrude and Thomas Jefferson Mumford Collection, Gift of Dorothy Quick Mayer, 1942.

Shakespeare introduces King James I to Prospero in 1611 in the play, *The Tempest*, first performed at the court on “Hallomas Nyght” (November 1). In the final play of Shakespeare’s career, Prospero is the dispossessed Duke of Milan. By setting the play in the context of Italian politics, Shakespeare is harkening back to Machiavelli, and if not directly invoking Machiavelli, at least toying with the Machiavellian themes like the application of monarchical power from *The Prince*. James

would have been very familiar with these themes. Machiavelli’s work is well known in England by the time of Shakespeare. For example, Francis Bacon, King James’ Solicitor General, cites Machiavelli frequently in his writings (Grady 39). *The Tempest* might be interpreted as Shakespeare’s parting advice to the Scottish King James on how to exercise power over newly unified Britain.

Bookish Prospero’s character would be resonant for James, a monarch who saw himself as a scholar.

James took magic seriously, having published *Daemonologie*, written in the form of a philosophical dialogue dealing with the various forms of sorcery, as James VI of Scotland, prior to becoming James I of England (Hulme and Sherman 89). No warrior, and reportedly bisexual, with a corrupt and lascivious court, James couldn't rely on conquest or his reputation in battle to reinforce his legitimacy (Black 181-2). So James devoted most of his intellectual efforts to buttressing his absolute power (Cox 195).

The legitimacy of a Prince is conferred by the Prince's ability to gain and retain power, rather than by any moral interrogation of the Prince's methods for exercising power, according to Machiavelli. Shakespeare seems to toy with the Machiavellian concepts of *Virtù* and *Fortuna* from *The Prince* in *The Tempest*. Machiavellian *Virtù* refers to actions taken by a Prince in the pursuit and maintenance of power, and *Fortuna* is Machiavelli's term for things that happen to a Prince, originating outside of his control, that may or may not benefit the Prince. Shakespeare's *The Tempest* accommodates the notion that Machiavelli's *The Prince* accurately describes how politics frequently work, but ultimately *The Tempest* elevates the question as to whether the Machiavellian prescription is how politics should work.

SHAKESPEARE SEEMS TO TOY WITH THE MACHIAVELLIAN CONCEPTS OF VIRTÙ AND FORTUNA FROM *THE PRINCE IN THE TEMPEST*

The Tempest is rich in Machiavellian scenarios. Prospero is at once both the dispossessed prince, having lost the Dukedom of Milan, and a prince in power, ruling over the other three inhabitants of his island: his daughter, Miranda; the slave Caliban; and the magical being, Ariel. Both the Machiavellian concepts of *Virtù* and *Fortuna* play roles in the fall and final redemption of Prospero.

Machiavelli uses *Virtù* to refer to all the attributes and activities that would serve to keep a Prince in power, not to be conflated with the modern word, virtue. In fact Machiavellian *Virtù* is more often the opposite of modern virtue. "Hence a Prince

who wants to keep his authority must learn how not to be good..." (42). Machiavelli means that immoral actions in the service of acquiring, holding, or exercising power are justified. For Machiavelli, attributes such as duplicity, violence, cruelty, and parsimony are *Virtù*. Moreover, *Virtù* refers to those things that are under the Prince's control, or in the case of *The Tempest*, under Prospero's control. Princely actions, or *Virtù* stand in opposition to, or act to contain or even exploit the force of *Fortuna*.

Machiavellian *Fortuna* is more than fate, luck, or nature, although it certainly encompasses these phenomena as well. Machiavelli uses *Fortuna* to describe forces that exist outside, or are independent of the actions of a Prince, including the goodwill of others. Machiavelli admits that *Fortuna*, "...governs half our actions, but that even so she leaves the other half more or less in our power to control" (67). This important statement reveals Machiavelli's belief in Free Will. Machiavelli contends in *The Prince*, that while a Prince may not be able to choose the hand that fate deals, he can certainly choose how he plays his cards. Machiavelli's position is that by bringing *Virtù* to bear on any given situation, there's a good chance the Prince can turn the situation to his advantage, or at the very least, substantively mitigate adverse consequences of *Fortuna*.

In the second scene of the first Act of *The Tempest*, Shakespeare describes Prospero applying *Virtù* to exploit *Fortuna*. *Fortuna* brings Antonio's ship close enough to Prospero's island that Prospero has an opportunity to use deceit and trickery, conjuring a tempest to wreck the ship, so that he might further execute his plan to regain his dukedom. "...Twelve year since, Thy father was the Duke of Milan, and A prince of power..." (1.2.54-56). Shakespeare utilizes the dialogue between Prospero and his daughter, Miranda, to reveal that Prospero lost the Dukedom of Milan to his brother, Antonio, some 12 years prior. It is as if by having Prospero characterize himself as "A prince of power," Shakespeare is directly alluding to Machiavelli, whose similar word choice is repeated throughout *The Prince*. The conversation continues to reveal that Antonio (along with Ferdinand, Alonso, and Sebastian) were on the ship that has now been wrecked, depositing its passengers on the shore of Prospero's island. The audience is left to understand that Antonio usurped Prospero's princely power through some form of *Virtù*, and that *Fortuna* has now brought Antonio to Prospero, who will presently likely use *Virtù* in an effort to regain his Dukedom.

Shakespeare implies that these Machiavellian forces of Virtù and Fortuna describe how politics work, and this is how things have gotten to where the audience joins the action in the first Act (1.2.1-120).

SHAKESPEARE IMPLIES THESE MACHIAVELLIAN FORCES OF VIRTÙ AND FORTUNA DESCRIBE HOW POLITICS WORK.

At this point in the play, with the audience positioned to agree with Machiavelli on a descriptive level, Shakespeare begins to encourage the audience to question Machiavelli on a normative level, through the development of the relationships between Prospero and the three subjects he ruled on the island: Caliban, Miranda, and Ariel. Prospero's relationships on the island are case studies for the Machiavellian exercise of princely power through the use of hate, love, and fear. Caliban hates Prospero. Miranda loves Prospero. And Ariel fears Prospero. Machiavelli says that a Prince should endeavor to avoid being hated, but not necessarily seek to be loved, rather seeking to be feared as a means to most effectively wield power. If Machiavelli's prescriptions are to bear fruit, Prospero will exercise princely power more effectively through Ariel by way of fear than he will through Miranda by way of love, and Caliban will be the biggest threat to Prospero's power.

At the outset, Caliban's hatred of Prospero leads him to conspire with Stephano and Trinculo, but in the end the threat fizzles, doing nothing to prevent Prospero from exercising his princely power. Machiavelli is clear in his admonition to avoid being hated, specifically cautioning against dispossession, which Machiavelli asserts will engender hatred and create a permanent enemy (49-50). Machiavelli sees hatred as a force of Fortuna because it stirs subjects to actions that are outside the control of a Prince. Prospero does to Caliban exactly what Machiavelli warns against. Caliban says to Stephano and Trinculo, "As I told thee before, I am subject to a tyrant, a sorcerer that by his cunning hath cheated me of the island" (3.2.40-42). So it is no surprise that Caliban conspires with Stephano and Trinculo to kill Prospero. The conspiracy initially seems to affirm Machiavelli's princely advice to avoid being hated because hatred breeds enemies. However, the fact

that the conspiracy is little more than a side issue or a minor sub-plot, that it not only fails, but is dismissed with a sense of absurdity, suggests that Shakespeare attaches much less credibility in *The Tempest* to the threat of hatred than does Machiavelli in *The Prince*.

Despite Machiavelli's admonition against relying on love to exercise princely power, it is through Miranda's love of Prospero and the love she shares with her betrothed, Ferdinand, that Prospero reclaims his dukedom. Machiavelli says of love:

love is a link of obligation which men... will break any time they think doing so serves their advantage (46).

Machiavelli disapproves of love as a lever of control because it grants too much agency to the subject. In other words, love is a force of Fortuna for a Prince (reliance on the goodwill of others). Indeed Miranda is willing to subvert her obligation to Prospero in favor of her new love, Ferdinand: "Sir, have pity; I'll be his surety" (1.2.475). Miranda here takes Ferdinand's side in a potential dispute with her father, Prospero. Miranda's willingness to switch her allegiance to Ferdinand reflects Shakespeare's limited agreement with Machiavelli, on a descriptive level, that love can be fickle. But Prospero's ultimate successful restoration to power in Milan was quintessentially facilitated by Miranda's love for Prospero and Miranda's marriage of love to Ferdinand, the son of Alonso, the King of Naples.

Machiavelli places fear at the top of the hierarchy of mechanisms for the exercise of princely power, because fear is engendered through Virtù, but Prospero eventually rejects Virtù in his exercise of power over Ariel. Machiavelli says:

Since men ... can be made to fear at the inclination of the Prince, a shrewd Prince will lay his foundations on what is under his own control (46)

For Machiavelli, being feared is exercising Virtù. Prospero exercises power over Ariel initially through fear. Prospero tells Ariel, after describing how he freed Ariel from a state of magical imprisonment in a tree, that he will put Ariel back in a tree for 12 more years if Ariel doesn't do Prospero's bidding (1.2.295-7). The threat is effective. Ariel is cowed and continues to do Prospero's bidding. But just as important as the threat is the promise that Prospero made to free Ariel. In the final action of the play,



Prospero lives up to his promise and frees Ariel, despite the fact that Machiavelli counseled that perfidy was *Virtù*.

A prudent Prince cannot and should not keep his word when to do so would go against his interest, or when the reasons that made him pledge no longer apply (48).

Yet Prospero does free Ariel, acting with integrity when it would plainly have been in Prospero's interests to maintain the service of this magical being. As Hager suggests, *The Tempest* is Shakespeare's prescription for "tempering the rigors of autocracy with earned liberty" (127). While fear can be an effective mechanism for exercising princely power, or *Virtù* in Machiavelli's vernacular, ultimately there are moral mechanisms, like honesty and integrity, that are also effective and perhaps therefore, preferable.

MACHIAVELLI PLACES FEAR AT THE TOP OF THE HIERARCHY OF MECHANISMS FOR THE EXERCISE OF PRINCELY POWER.

Ultimately when Prospero regains his dukedom, he appears to renounce his magic and the trickery and dishonesty (*Virtù*) that go with it, further impugning

Machiavelli's princely advice. Prospero says, "... This rough magic I here abjure... And deeper than did ever plummet sound I'll drown my book" (5.1.25-57). Prior to this point in the play, Prospero is willing to undertake a variety of immoral means to justify the end goal of restoration to power in Milan. In Prospero appearing to reject further use of these means when he is redeemed, Shakespeare invites the audience to question the efficacy of Machiavelli's advice. Machiavelli may describe how politics appear to function, but should politics be so Machiavellian? It isn't a question Shakespeare definitively answers in *The Tempest*, as Prospero doesn't actually drown his book, but merely proclaims the intention, leaving the audience to ponder Prospero's sincerity. If Prospero is sincere, and he fully intends to drown his book in act five, what does that change of heart say? Machiavelli's fundamental thesis in *The Prince* is that the ends justify the means. If Prospero is seen to potentially abandon his Machiavellian ways once he achieves his end, this may suggest Machiavelli's premise is capricious to begin with.

Shakespeare accepts that Machiavelli's princely advice explains many of the behaviors seen in struggles for power, such as the duplicity of Antonio (Machiavellian *Virtù*). In dealing with hate, love, and fear, Machiavelli counsels to avoid, dismiss, and promote them, respectively. Shakespeare partially accepts Machiavelli's premise that love could be fickle, hate could create enemies, and fear could be a lever of control. But ultimately Shakespeare turns Machiavelli's hierarchy for these mechanisms of princely control upside down. Love wins out.

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Alonso's love for Ferdinand, Ferdinand's love for Miranda, and Miranda's love for Prospero is the mechanism by which Prospero is restored to power. Hate is dismissed. Caliban's plot amounts to nothing. And fear is intentionally abandoned. Prospero set Ariel free. Ultimately Prospero appears to reject Virtù at his moment of redemption, promising to drown his tricks in favor of Fortuna (the good will of others) and a moral and honest approach to future governance. The audience is left to recognize the power of Machiavelli's arguments to describe how politics often function, while questioning whether politics should be so Machiavellian. *The Tempest* does not conclude in a display of absolute royal authority, instead Prospero accepts his own humanity, perhaps reflecting Shakespeare's suggestion that James' authority too would be more credible and effective with a similar dose of humility and humanism.

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