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DREAMS AND PHANTASIES IN RICHARDSON'S CLARISSA

"DREAMS SLEEPING AND DREAMS WAKING": A PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY OF DREAMS AND PHANTASIES IN RICHARDSON'S CLARISSA

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ABSTRACT

It is the purpose of this thesis to analyze Samuel Richardson's treatment of dreams and phantasies in Clarissa in order to demonstrate the underlying motivations of Clarissa and Lovelace and the possible connection between unconscious material and conscious statements and reactions. The form this study will take is a psychoanalytic investigation of character motivation as it is revealed in the dreams and phantasies. Chapter One will elaborate on the scope and content of this thesis. Chapter Two will focus on Clarissa's dream prior to her flight in order to determine the extent to which she manipulates and perpetuates her role as 'Persecuted Maiden'. Chapter Three will analyze Lovelace's phantasies of potency in terms of their underlying implications. Chapter Four examines the psychological effects of the rape on Clarissa and Lovelace. In particular, Clarissa's delirium and death-scene and Lovelace's dreams and death-scene will be of central importance.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

> Shall we dare really to compare an imaginative writer with one who dreams in broad daylight "and his creation with day-dreams?"[1]

If, as Leslie Fiedler asserts, "only in the sub-mind of a dreaming man can we discover images common to everyone in our multifarious culture"[2], then Richardson's Clarissa is a study of the stuff that dreams are made on. It is surely Richardson's ability to rearrange and transform psychical activity into a mitigating verbalization of wishes[3], his ability to probe the dialectic interplay of feelings on the conscious and unconscious levels of mental activity which accounts for the appeal of Clarissa. What Richardson intro-

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[1] Sigmund Freud, "The Relation of the Poet to Day-Dreaming", Character and Culture, ed. Philip Rieff (New York, 1975), p. 39.

[2] Leslie A. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel (New York, 1975), p. 40.

[3] What I am suggesting here is that the novel, like a dream, is a composition which appeases the conscience by translating the material of the unconscious, which might be a source of guilt or anxiety, into an acceptable form. Refer to Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, ed. and trans. James Strachey (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1975), p. 446, for the postulation that the form of a dream is a defence aimed at concealing and obscuring the subject-matter.

duces into his fiction is a complex phantasy[4] revealing self-indulgence in sexual and aggressive impulses, a phantasy which is controlled by the obsessive attention to detail inherent in the epistolary form. Ian Watt notes that "it is likely that only a very safe ethical surface, combined with the anonymity of print, and a certain tendency to self-righteous sophistries were able to pacify his inner censor"[5] and thus make acceptable the underlying wishes of the novel. Certainly, Richardson's introspective elaboration of the dynamic unconscious is softened by a narrative technique which bribes "us by the offer of a purely formal, that is, aesthetic pleasure in the presentation of his phantasies."[6]

It is Denis Diderot, in his "Eloge De Richardson", who anticipates the continuum of critical appraisal of Clarissa when he hails Richardson as the master of psychological realism:

> C'est lui qui porte le flambeau au fond
> de la caverne; c'est lui qui apprend à
> discerner les motifs subtils et déshônnetes
> qui se cachent et se derobent sous d'autres

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[4] I prefer to use 'phantasy' rather than 'fantasy because the former word refers to the world of imaginative activity and its creative aspects while the latter word connotes whimsical thinking.

[5] Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1975), p. 244.

[6] Sigmund Freud, "The Relation of the Poet to Day-Dreaming", p. 43.

> motifs qui sont hônnetes et qui se hâtent de se montrer les premiers. Il souffle sur le fantôme sublime qui se presente a l'entree de la caverne; et le More hideux qu'il masquait s'aperçoit.[7]

With incredible astuteness, Diderot perceives the subtle power of Richardson's character delineation. Indeed, it is Richardson's ability to expose the hideous Moor lurking behind the glorious phantom which imbues his fiction with psychological verisimilitude.

An esteemed admirer of Clarissa, Dr. Johnson considers the reading of the novel to be a vicarious experience: "For give me a sick bed, and a dying lady, and I'll be pathetic myself: but Richardson had picked out the kernel of life, while Fielding was contented with the husk."[8] Even Henry Fielding, Richardson's noted rival, extends the flag of peace to comment on the profundity of the characterization:" Such Simplicity, such Manners, such deep Penetration into Nature, such Power to raise and alarm the Passions, a few Writers

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[7]Denis Diderot, "Eloge De Richardson", Oeuvres Completes (Paris, 1875), V, 215. "It is he who carries the torch to the back of the cave; it is he who teaches us to discern the subtle and dishonest motives that are hidden and concealed under other motives that are honest and that hasten to show themselves first. He blows out the lofty phantom that presents itself at the entrance of the cave; and the hideous Moor that he was masking perceives himself."

[8]Samuel Johnson, The Critical Opinions of Samuel Johnson, ed. Joseph Epes Brown (New York, 1961), p. 456.

either ancient or modern have been possessed of."[9] Thus, it is Richardson's mode of characterization which is a source of stimulation for his readers. For the critic, it is Richardson's unprecedented use of dreams and phantasies[10] as a means of effecting psychological realism which offers an intriguing focal point for the analysis of the psycho-sexual motives of a man and woman caught in the struggle for self-realization.

The ease with which literary criticism based on psychological theory lends itself to an intense analysis of the dynamic relationship between Clarissa and Lovelace has appealed to a number of critics whose discussion of Richardson's use of dreams and phantasies has been somewhat imprecise

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[9]Alan Dugald McKillop, Samuel Richardson (Chapel Hill, 1936), p. 167.

[10]In Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy, phantasy is defined as "an inner sense which doth more fully examine the species perceived by common sense, of things present or absent, and keeps them longer, recalling them to mind again, or making new of his own. In time of sleep, this faculty is free, and many times conceives strange, stupend, absurd shapes, as in sick men we commonly observe." See Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy (New York, 1924), pp. 101-102. In modern psychoanalytic terms, phantasy constitutes the imaginative creation of a day-dream as well as unconscious mental activity structured on an "imaginary scene in which the subject is the protagonist." Constructed of illusions, distortions and defensive processes, phantasies reveal a conflict between the fulfillment of a wish and a repressive agent. See J. La Planche and J.B. Pontalis, The Language of Psycho-Analysis (London, 1973), p. 314.

Dreams connote mental activity which occurs during sleep. Like phantasy, a dream is based on hidden wishes usually founded on sexuality, aggression and symbolization. Refer to Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams.

and oblique. In his preface to Richardson's Characters, Morris Golden states that the purpose of his thesis is to examine the psychological aspects of characterization. However, despite his suggestion that the "pervasiveness of fantasy in the creation of characters" is Richardson's "preeminent contribution to the novel"[11], Golden merely provides a referential list of phantasies and dreams. Certainly, as he propounds, Clarissa embodies a conflict between the author as moralist and the author as "fantasist"[12] but the assumption that Richardson's "most effective characters... project a sad yearning for the freedom of youth's violent fantasies"[13] is tenuous and unverifiable. For Dorothy Van Ghent, Clarissa emerges as "Richardson's middle-class fantasy on the aristocratic theme."[14] Moreover, she suggests that the novel is a sexual myth constructed of "irrationals similar to a dream."[15] Interesting though these postulations may be, Van Ghent never adequately defines the nature of the phantasy nor examines

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[11]Morris Golden, Richardson's Characters (Ann Arbor, 1963), p. 17.

[12]Ibid., p. 190.

[13]Ibid., p. 185.

[14]Dorothy Van Ghent, "On Clarissa Harlowe", in Samuel Richardson, ed. John Carroll (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1969), p. 58.

[15]Ibid., p. 63.

the underlying wishes embodied in the fiction. In his study of the nature of the novel of sentiment, R.F. Brissenden aptly points out the nightmarish elements of Clarissa, stating that the novel takes on the "unreal yet hyper-real atmosphere of a dream."[16] Yet, in spite of his assertion that this dream-like quality gives the work a "peculiar intensity"[17], Brissenden never examines this observation in terms of the effect of the atmosphere on the epistolary form nor does he adequately explain his equation between the psychological novel and the novel of sentiment.[18] Ian Watt, whose primary interest is the effect of the social and moral climate of the eighteenth-century on the novel, offers an astute comment on the "masochistic"[19] nature of Clarissa's dream and delirium and an appreciation of Richardson's "remarkable awareness of the symbolism of the unconscious."[20] However, his analysis of the relation of the unconscious and pre-conscious mental

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[16]R.F. Brissenden, Virtue In Distress (London and Basingstoke, 1974), p. 178.

[17]Ibid., p. 181.

[18]Ibid., p. 162.

[19]Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel, p. 241.

[20]Ibid., p. 241.

activity to the heroine's waking life is brushed aside. Perhaps the most ambitious attempt to appreciate the dreams and phantasies in Clarissa is offered by Mark Kinkead-Weekes who rightly comments that "Richardson's imaginative grasp of how dreams can expose the unconscious and reveal intuitions that the conscious mind cannot grasp, or will not admit... has received virtually no critical attention."[21] Where this thesis differs from Kinkead-Weekes' is in the method of analysis of dreams and phantasies and in the interpretation of the characters' psychological responses to the rape. In addition, while Kinkead-Weekes' interpretative reading of the novel proceeds from an assumption that Richardson was conscious "of what he was doing formally",[22] this thesis contends that it is impossible to determine the extent of Richardson's conscious awareness of the meaning of his art.[23]

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[21]Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist (London, 1973), pp. 485-486.

[22]Ibid., p. 3.

[23]In his A Treatise of Human Nature, David Hume perceives the divergence between conscious intention and the finished work of art. He states that the self is a "bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with an inconceivable rapidity, and are in perpetual flux and movement." Robert Bell, "David Hume's Fable of Identity", Philological Quarterly, Vol. 5 (1975), p. 471. Literary criticism has long considered the question of conscious intention in art to be a problem. As R. Wellek and A. Warren state: "It is simply impossible to rely on the study of the intentions of an author, as they might not even

In a letter to George Cheyne, Richardson expresses an understanding of the relation of the artist to day-dreaming as he experienced it in his writing of Pamela:

> And I labour'd hard to rein in my Invention, and made it a Rule with me to avoid Digressions, and Foreign Episodes... that being resolved to comprise the whole in two Volumes, four in all, I had great Difficulty so to touch so many Subjects distinctly and intelligibly to ye common understanding, and so had not Field for Excursions of Fancy and Imagination.[24]

Despite his limited "Excursions of Fancy and Imagination" in his first piece of fiction, in at least two instances, Richardson exhibits a remarkable awareness of the topography of the mind.

Having expressed her fears that Lucifer could disguise himself as the Bull in the yard and that Mrs. Jewkes is the devil's advocate, the anxious Pamela entertains a frightful phantasy which puts a stop to her attempt to escape:

> Well, here I am, come back again! frighted like a Fool, out of all my Purposes! O how terrible every thing appears to me! I had got twice as far again, as I was before, out of the Back-door; and I looked, and saw the Bull, as I thought, between me and the Door; and another Bull coming towards me the other way; Well, thought I, here is double Witch-craft to

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represent an accurate commentary..." Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature (New York, 1956), p. 137.

[24] Samuel Richardson, Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson, ed. John Carroll (Oxford, 1964), p. 54.

> be sure! Here is the Spirit of my Master in one Bull; and Mrs. Jewkes's in the other; and now I am gone, to be sure! O help! cry'd I, like a Fool, and run back to the Door, as swift as if I flew. When I had got the Door in my Hand, I ventur'd to look back, to see if these supposed Bulls were coming, and I saw they were only two poor Cows, a grazing in distant Places, that my Fears had made all this Rout about.[25]

Briefly, this conscious day-phantasy is constructed of two essential components revealing both aggression and anxiety. The first wish is a phantasy of pursuit which appears as a residue of the mental activity of the morning: the fear that escape is ludicrous because she is without "Money or a Friend" as well as the association of Mr. B. and his surrogate Jewkes with aggressive sexuality. Behind this material is a more complex phantasy based on Pamela's latent desire to remain a prisoner in order to gain economic benefits and her own aggressive desire to reduce the potent male to a "poor", bovine creature. The guilt which accompanies the desire to remain in Mr. B.'s household rather than be further "depriv'd" of money is alleviated, at least superficially, by the phantasy which imagines escape to be impossible. Thus, the structure of the phantasy functions as the fulfillment of a wish.

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[25]Samuel Richardson, Pamela (Boston, 1971), p. 137. Unless otherwise indicated, all emphasis is the author's emphasis.

Following the reconciliation between Pamela and Mr. B., Richardson constructs a symbolic dream which is fitting to the occasion:

> My dear Father wept for Joy; and I could not refrain keeping him Company. And My Master saluting me, bid us Good-night, and retir'd. And I waited upon my dear Father, and was so full of Prattle, of my Master's Goodness, and my future Prospects, that I believed afterwards I was turned all into Tongue. But he indulged me, and was transported with Joy; and went to-bed, and dreamt of nothing but Jacob's Ladder, and Angels ascending and descending, to bless him, and his daughter.[26]

It is significant that the central symbol of the dream is the ladder of Jacob. The ladder is associated with economic prosperity and sexual potency and yet, because it belongs to Jacob, it is associated with duplicity because Jacob supplanted his elder brother by means of deceit. For Pamela, the symbol becomes a condensation[27] of material representing her delight in the "prospect" of union with an aristocratic male as well as her phallic nature: she flaunts her newly acquired status by means of a powerful "Tongue", symbolic of her potency. Moreover, the confusion as to whether the dreamer is Pamela or her father connotes union, an oedipal desire.

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[26] Ibid., p. 254.

[27] A fundamental mechanism of the unconscious, condensation is the process by which several associated ideas or images intersect.

By the time Richardson came to write Clarissa, he was prepared to embark on an extended journey of "Fancy and Imagination" and his use of dreams and phantasies provides a focal point for an examination of characterization and motivation. It is difficult to determine the extent to which Richardson was consciously aware of the underlying connotations of his material, but we can deduce from his letters as well as from his extensive use of dreams and phantasies in Clarissa that he possessed a natural, sensitive response to psychological processes. The objective of this thesis will be to analyze closely Richardson's treatment of these dreams and phantasies in order to demonstrate the connection between imagination and reality, conscious and unconscious, as it is embodied in the fiction. For surely, the analysis of dreams and phantasies may be the "royal road"[28] to an understanding of the interplay of forces affecting Clarissa and Lovelace as well as to a knowledge of the wishes underlying the thematic and didactic concerns of the novel. What this thesis will demonstrate is that every dream and phantasy in Richardson's novel is connected with the fictive material of the past and present

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[28]Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation Of Dreams, p. 769.

and derives its energy from a complex series of underlying wishes and conflicts similar to the dynamic unconscious of the mind.

If an artist's "conscious creative combination arises logically from unconscious premisses"[29], then literary criticism must undertake to probe the way conflicting social pressures function as representations of unconscious material. Contrary to Kinkead-Weekes' assumption that a psychoanalytic approach to Clarissa must be based on a preference for "reductive simplicity"[30], the use of psychoanalytic terminology allows the critic of literature a means of investigating the relation between explicit (conscious) and implicit (unconscious) motivational factors in a way that elucidates and appreciates the irreducible complexity of the creative process. Charles Rycroft cautions: "one of the pitfalls of psycho-analytic interpretations of literary works is the fallacy of attributing to fictional characters unconscious motivations and conflicts, which can in fact only legitimately be attributed to their

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[29]Sigmund Freud, "Those Wrecked By Success", The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, ed. and trans. James Strachey (London, 1962), XIV, 329.

[30]Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist, p. 488.

creator."[31] Yet, Leonard Tennenhouse rightly observes that:

> although a character is more than simply an autobiographical projection, and is a highly wrought formal element of the literary text, nonetheless a character takes on for the author, as well as for the reader, an independent personality. This is to say simply that a character is always a product of life and art, the creation of an artist and the recreation of a reader, and therefore we should study character both formally and psychoanalytically.[32]

Certainly, literature involves a process of identification in which both reader and artist, perhaps unwittingly, experience an affinity with fictional characters. In so far as reading may be a vicarious experience, the critic must differentiate judiciously between the fiction and private phantasy.

Any significant contribution to the study of dreams and phantasies is cited and summarized by Freud in his Interpretation of Dreams. The first to approach dreams from the point of view of wish-fulfillment, Freud is unique in that he not only verifies the fact that dreams are based on unfulfilled wishes which are disguised in order to pass the prohibitions of the censor, but he establishes the

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[31]Charles Rycroft, Imagination and Reality (London, 1968), p. 122.

[32]Leonard Tennenhouse, ed., The Practice of Psychoanalytic Criticism (Detroit, 1976), p. 12.

existence of the processes of condensation, symbolization and displacement. For Freud, both literature and dreams are disguised expressions of unconscious phantasies. Like dreams, art is "over-determined"[33] and is the result of a process of revision which organizes mental activity into a formal framework through the manipulation of words. Norman Holland asserts that literature embodies phantasies which it manages to transform "towards significance by devices analagous to the defenses one would find in a man's mind. In other words, the work of art acts like the embodiment of a mental process."[34] If the critic accepts this hypothesis, then it is possible to analyze the themes, motifs, symbols and structure of the dreams and phantasies in Clarissa using psychoanalytic terminology.

Contrary to published criticism, the form this thesis will take is a detailed psychoanalytic investigation of the specific dreams and phantasies in Clarissa in order to demonstrate the underlying motivations of the characters and the

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[33]According to Charles Rycroft, a "symptom, dream-image, or any other item of behavior is said to be over-determined if it has more than one meaning or expresses drives and conflicts derived from more than one level or aspect of the personality." See Charles Rycroft, A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1968), p. 110.

[34]Norman N. Holland, The Dynamics of Literary Response, p. 67.

possible connections between unconscious material and conscious statements and reactions. Chapter Two will concentrate on the nature of Clarissa's masochistic dream prior to her flight. Chapter Three, which will examine the events leading up to the rape, will focus on Lovelace's phantasies of omnipotence. The fourth chapter will discuss the psychological effect of the rape on the characters by examining Clarissa's delirium, Lovelace's dreams and their respective death scenes.

CHAPTER TWO

"A Woman Is Being Beaten"

The world of Clarissa is a world characterized by the conflict between phantasy and the demands of reality. It is a world where perversion, distortion and denial of sexuality prevent the development of reciprocal love, where an irreconcilable antagonism between potency and egoism thwarts and subverts a man-woman relationship. Despite growing critical agreement as to the existence of Clarissa's "unconscious duplicities"[1] or, as Samuel Johnson comments, her preference for something other than truth[2], there has been a tendency in literary studies to elevate the heroine as the mythic embodiment of the persecuted maiden. Certainly, the subsequent fiction of the eighteenth-century exploited the concept of the virtuous heroine as victim by indulging in the eroticism inherent in the plot of the pursued virgin. One finds concomitants to this stereotypic view of woman in M.G. Lewis' Antonia who, "had she still been undefiled she might have lamented the loss of life; but that, deprived of

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[1]Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel, p. 238.

[2]George Birkbeck Hill, ed., Johnsonian Miscellanies (Oxford, 1897), 1, 297.

honour and branded with shame, death was to her a blessing."[3] Following Clarissa's example, she dies. So too, de Sade's Justine seeks true happiness "in Virtue's womb, and that if, in keeping with designs it is not for us to fathom, God permits that it be persecuted on Earth, it is so that Virtue may be compensated by Heaven's rewards."[4]

Ian Watt asserts that Clarissa is "among other things, the supreme embodiment of the new feminine stereotype, a very paragon of delicacy."[5] Similarly, R.F. Brissenden remarks that Clarissa is the "feminine embodi-

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[3]Matthew G. Lewis, The Monk (New York, 1959), p. 375. The first issue of the first edition was released in 1796.

[4]The Marquis de Sade, the complete Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom and other writings (New York, 1966, p. 743. Justine, or Good Conduct Well Chastised first appeared in 1791. It is interesting to note that in an early version of the theme of rape, The Rape Of The Lock, it is Pope's Clarissa who instigates the "rape" by providing the Baron with the weapon and warns Belinda that "she who scorns a Man, must die a Maid". (Canto V, l. 28) Despite the fact that Virtue is considered feminine, the art of being virtuous is a displacement of penetration; "virtue's womb" is a symbol of potency and being virtuous is a weapon which keeps the male in check.

[5]Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel, p. 234.

ment of the sentimental virtues and ideals."[6] For Leslie Fiedler, Clarissa is "simply woman, but she is disconcertingly sexless in her bourgeois form -- no symbol of insatiable passion or teeming fertility, but a savior, a mediator..."[7] Based on sympathetic idealism, such criticism fails to perceive the subtle forces underlying Clarissa's emotional and psychological state prior to the elopement. A detailed analysis of the novel's movement of plot indicates that Clarissa perpetuates and manipulates her role as passive victim: the events surrounding her confinement and abuse are suggestive of a masochistic tendency. Indeed, Arabella's comment of her sister that "she is her own punisher"[8] demands attention in terms of the over-determined ramifications of Clarissa's actions.

When Miss Howe declares:

> I was going to give you a little flippant hint or two. But since you wish to be thought superior to all our sex in the command of yourself; and since indeed you deserve to be thought so, I will spare you. You are, however, at times more than half

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[6]R.F. Brissenden, Virtue In Distress, p. 161.

[7]Leslie A. Fiedler, Love and Death and the American Novel, p. 67. It is important to note that implicit in Fiedler's statement is the association of Clarissa with a man.

[8]Samuel Richardson, Clarissa (London, 1967), 1, 67. All references to Clarissa will be taken from the Everyman edition.

> inclined to speak out. That you do not, is only owing to a little bashful struggle between you and yourself, as I may say.(1, p. 362)

she perceives Clarissa's internal struggle between a wishful phantasy of mute superiority and the desire to vent aggression. It is precisely Clarissa's attempts to keep untarnished her position as feminine paragon of virtue, combined with the "tyranny" of a demanding parent and the rivalry among siblings, which supplies the motive force for the development of a complex phantasy: imagining that she is being excessively chastized, she becomes a pouting, injured child determined to revenge herself on punitive adults.

Freud notes that "many children who believed themselves securely enthroned in the unshakeable affection of their parents have by a single blow been cast down from all the heavens of their imaginary omnipotence."[9] For Clarissa, who has long been considered the "flower and ornament" (1, 385) of the family, any disciplinary measures are received as signs of humiliation and deprivation of love. Certainly, her commencing letter is written by the hand of one destined to become the "Persecuted Maiden":

> I had sometimes wished that it had pleased God to have taken me in my last fever, when

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[9]Sigmund Freud, "'A Child Is Being Beaten'", Sexuality and the Psychology of Love (New York), 1974), p. 115.

> I had everybody's love and good opinion; but oftener that I had never been distinguished by my grandfather as I was: since that distinction has estranged me from my brother's and sister's affections; at least had raised a jealousy with regard to the apprehended favour of my uncles, that now and then overshadows their love. (1, p. 4)

Vitally conscious of her position as "distinguished" favourite, easily offended by parental reprimands, Clarissa consoles herself by imagining the grief she could cause the family by her death. The comfort she associates with the masochistic notion of being "buried alive" (1, p. 87) is accompanied by distortions of the external world. In effect, a nightmarish day-dream is created in which the subject of the phantasy, Clarissa, is a "slave" about to be carried off to "a chapel! a moated house!". She is a "poor silly bird" haunted by grotesque figures bent on destroying her virginity: Solmes emerges as a "monster" and a "savage"; James charges into the room like a "hunted boar at bay"; Lovelace advances like a "restive horse"; the "plump high-fed" faced Arabella bears the "soul of the other sex in the body" of a woman; Uncle Antony, "his face violently working, his hands clenched, and his teeth set" approaches "as if he would have beat" her.

The notion of victimization is further complicated by the erotic energy Clarissa invests in her father in

her willingness to enter a state of "sexual thraldom"[10] with him. David Rubinfine notes Kris' suggestion that the "wish to be loved by the father (genitally) was perhaps regularly conceived by the child as being beaten by him."[11] Certainly, Clarissa's attitude towards her father reveals an inextricable connection between sexuality and aggression. A figure of tremendous power and will, Mr. Harlowe is depicted in Clarissa's letters as the prime villain in the phantasy, the bogey-man determined to pummel his innocent victim into submission. As R. F. Brissenden points out, no one can frighten Clarissa as "the mere thought of her father can"[12] and "she receives his commands like the distant thunderings from Mount Sinai, and the curse he hurls after her as she flees from Lovelace haunts her to her death-bed."[13] What Clarissa soon comes to believe is that her

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[10] I use this term to elucidate Clarissa's willingness to relinquish all money and property to her father's care, her promise to offer herself sexually to no man and her desire to remain forever in the service of her father's household. For a detailed definition of "sexual thraldom", see Sigmund Freud, "Contributions To The Psychology Of Love".

[11] David L. Rubinfine, "On Beating Fantasies", The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, XLVl (1965), p. 322.

[12] R.F. Brissenden, Virtue In Distress, p. 169.

[13] Ibid., pp. 169-170.

father has abnegated and betrayed his duty to his daughter, has cast off the paternal role of protector and has assumed the identity of a procurer marketing a prostitute: for Clarissa, her commodity is her maidenhead,[14] a commodity which her father seems determined to sell and Mr. Solmes eager to purchase.

Ian Watt suggests that "the patriarchal authoritarianism of the Harlowe household is exacerbated by the unrestrained dominance of economic individualism: and Clarissa is caught between the two."[15] Yet, recalling Miss Howe's observation that Clarissa's conflict is "owing to a little bashful struggle between you and yourself", between the dictates of feminine sensibility and what has been called her "toughness"[16], it is possible that the movement of the plot is structured on an artistic day-dream, a

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[14]Clarissa's perception of the relation between sexuality and aggression is made explicit when she states: "How can I promise what I can sooner choose to die than to perform!" (1, p. 234). In addition, it is significant that Clarissa should suffer from a constant headache following the rape (3, p. 211) and that her poem, written in a state of delirium should charge " -- Oh you have done an act/ That blots the face and blush of modesty;/ Takes off the rose/ From the fair forehead of an innocent Love,/ And makes a blister there!'-- " (3, p. 209) What occurs is an upward displacement of the female genitalia which preserves Clarissa's sense of delicacy.

[15]Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel, p. 237.

[16]R.F. Brissenden, Virtue In Distress, p. 167.

masochistic beating phantasy. As H.S. McAllister remarks:

> There is a blind perversity about the Harlowes' sudden unwillingness to compromise with Clarissa, their utter ignorance of the selfish, malevolent motives of James's attacks on her. Even if we can believe in this vicious brother -- his character is briefly motivated and explained early in the novel-- we cannot believe in Clarissa's parents, who suddenly distrust their favorite child, who motivelessly become authoritarian with a child they've humored and loved for eighteen years. It would not be difficult to establish her parents as the sort of people who could behave towards her as they do; but this is unimportant if the novel is realistic. Richardson sacrifices realism on the altar of fantasy -- gratification.[17]

For one who constantly requires an affirmation of her superiority, the phantasy of "a woman is being beaten" provides the impetus for a narcissistic self-image. Indeed, Clarissa's belief that she will emerge from her punishment unscathed[18] establishes a sense of omnipotent control over fate.

Surely, despite protestations of innocence, Clarissa

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[17] Harold Stanwood McAllister, "Apology For Bad Dreams: A Study Of Characterization And The Use Of Fantasy In Clarissa, Justine, And The Monk", a Ph.D. thesis (Alberquerque, New Mexico, Dec. 1971), pp. 117-118.

[18] For example, Clarissa writes: "I ran through the whole conference in my imagination, forming speeches for this person and that, pro and con till all concluded, as I flattered myself, in an acceptance of my conditions, and in giving directions to have an instrument drawn to tie me up to my good behaviour..."(1, 223)

is guilty of perpetuating the conflict and manipulating the "movements of a family so violently bent." (1, 368) A woman who fashions herself after the genteel rules of conduct, Clarissa nevertheless allows herself to be drawn "into a mere lover-like correspondence". (1, p. 110) In spite of her father's commands forbidding the communication by letter and her own avowal of contempt for Lovelace, Clarissa continues the clandestine activity under the pretext that her association with another suitor will give her bargaining power in her struggle to curtail Solmes' advances. (1, p. 110) Following the subsequent confiscation of her writing material, Clarissa, who has ingeniously secreted away a cache of pens and paper, continues her correspondence. However, her activities are soon discovered when she forgets to wash her "inky" fingers, (1, p. 436) a parapraxis[19] which reveals a tension between conscious intent and unconscious wishes. By being discovered, the 'victim' elicits anger and incites her audience to pay her attention.

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[19]Charles Rycroft defines parapraxis as a "faulty action due to the interference of some unconscious wish, conflict, or train of thought." See Charles Rycroft, A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1972), p. 112. For Freud's account of parapraxis refer to The Psychopathology Of Everyday Life, ed. James Strachey (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1975), pp. 300-301.

In the face of mounting sibling rivalry[20] and paternal anger, Clarissa continues to exhibit an air of superiority by sitting "in state like a queen, giving audience", (1, p. 379) a posture bound to increase hostility. With a theatrical flair, she delivers her lines: "Were I to be queen of the universe, that dignity should not absolve me from my duty to you and my father. I would kneel for your blessings were it in the presence of millions --". (1, p. 79) And indeed, she does kneel, with "limbs so supple"[21], at any hint of anger or any raised voice, but not before the stage is set:

> I had put myself by this time into great disorder; they were silent, and seemed by their looks to want to talk to one another, walking about (in violent disorders too) between whiles. I sat down fanning myself (as it happened, against the glass) and I could perceive my colour go and come; and being sick to the very heart, and apprehensive of fainting, I rung. (1, p. 384)

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[20]According to Bruno Bettelheim, sibling rivalry "refers to a most complex constellation of feelings and their cause. With extremely rare exceptions, the emotions aroused in the person subject to sibling rivalry are far out of proportion to what his real situation with his brothers and sisters would justify, seen objectively... The real source of it is the child's feelings about his parents." See Bruno Bettelheim, The Uses Of Enchantment (New York, 1976), pp. 237-238.

[21]Samuel Richardson, Clarissa, 1, p. 90. It is important to note that Lovelace makes a similar observation about Clarissa when he comments that her "terror is too great for the occasion." (2, p. 383)

The experience of watching herself perform in her punishment phantasy serves a narcissistic function in that Clarissa is able to act as her own self-confirming audience.[22]

Prior to her flight, Clarissa identifies Joseph Leman as the confident and "intelligencer" (1,p. 315) of Lovelace. Despite this foreknowledge, she is duped by the voice at the garden door, her only excuse being that "My fright and my distance would not let me be certain; but really this man, as I now recollect, had the air of that vile Joseph Leman." (1, p. 485, my emphasis) The subtle ambivalence inherent in this statement indicates the contradictory nature of Clarissa's emotional and psychological reaction to Lovelace, her father and herself.

The point that must be stressed is that Clarissa makes no positive effort to deliver herself from her persecution and the suffering she undergoes in her position as victim demonstrates tendencies of a morally masochistic

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[22]Robert D. Stolorow, "The Narcissistic Function Of Masochism (And Sadism)", The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, LVl (1975), pp. 441-447.

At one point in the novel, it is stated by Clarissa that "it was one of my arts to pretend to be pained." (1, p. 383) and, indeed, we catch her before the mirror, practising. (1, p. 224)

nature[23]. In a revealing passage, Clarissa confesses:

> Your partial love will be ready to acquit me of capital and intentional faults: but oh, my dear! my calamities have humbled me enough, to make me turn my gaudy eye inward; to make me look into myself! And what have I discovered there? Why, my dear friend, more secret pride and vanity than I could have thought had lain in my unexamined heart.
>
> If I am to be singled out to be the punisher of myself and family, who so lately was the pride of it, pray for me, my dear, that I may be enabled to support my character, so as to be justly acquitted of wilful and premeditated faults. The will of Providence be resigned to the rest: as that leads, let me patiently and unrepiningly follow! I shall not live always. May my closing scene be happy!
>
> (1, pp. 419-420)

What is significant, is that the testimony of "intentional" and "premeditated faults" leads not to an admission of guilt but a deliverance from all charges. Moreover, not only does she resign herself to accept whatever may happen in the future rather than take any alleviatory action but also, Clarissa accepts the role of passive victim "patiently" awaiting death.

That Clarissa accepts the abuse which she records

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[23]Moral masochism is a term used in connection with subjects who, as the result of unconscious guilt, find pleasure in humiliation and mental suffering. Moreover, this form of masochism originates in the death instinct. See Sigmund Freud, "The Economic Problem Of Masochism", S.E., XlX, 159-170.

indicates an indulgence in a beating-phantasy, a phantasy aimed at the repression of the aggression and resentment she feels towards her father. In effect, an inversion of emotion occurs whereby the child's own anger is projected onto the father who becomes, unambiguously, the punishing agent. The feelings of anger are turned defensively into the wishful thought that the father is angry. Furthermore, fear of being reduced by the father to passive submission like her mother, a woman who has accumulated "value by her compliances", (1, p. 61) places Clarissa in a precarious emotional position: the narcissistic delight she takes in practising at the glass (1, p. 224) and in being esteemed as a female paragon is threatened by her aggressiveness. (1, p. 267)

When Clarissa admits, "for I verily think, upon a strict examination of myself, that I have almost as much in me of my father's as of my mother's family" (1, p. 37) she unwittingly calls attention to the masculine, aggressive side of the personality which she finds difficult to keep in check. Not only is Clarissa responsible for having "lopped off one branch of her brother's expectations" (1, p. 54) but she has "unmanned" her uncle by her "sharp-pointed wit", (1, p. 304) a weapon metaphorically described as a"sword".

Moreover, she boasts:

> Were I a man, methinks I should have too much scorn for a person who could wilfully do me a mean wrong, to put a value upon his life, equal to what I put upon my own. (1, p. 282)

The phallic attributes Clarissa displays are in direct conflict with the masochistic, submissive role designed for the female sex. And, as Lovelace soon discovers:

> she is a lion-hearted lady, in every case where her honour, her punctilio rather, calls for spirit. But I have reason more than once in her case to conclude that the passions of the gentlest, slower to be moved than those of the quick, are the most flaming, the most irresistible, when raised. Yet her charming body is not equally organized. The unequal partners pull two ways; and the divinity within her tears her silken frame. But had the same soul informed a masculine body, never would there have been a truer hero. (1, p. 384)

What is exhibited is aggressive sexuality in conflict with the super-ego. The anger and resentment Clarissa feels towards a father who displays a form of potency she will never experience causes, at the same time, a need for punishment. It is, of course, Mr. Harlowe who has aroused Clarissa to action, who has forced her to reveal her aggressive nature, who has provided the threat of defloration. When the condition arises in which aggression threatens discharge, the consequence is the construction of a beating-phantasy which chastizes Charissa for her behaviour: un-

consciously compelled to reveal phallic attributes which challenge Mr. Harlowe, she seeks symbolic castration in the form of the loss of a limb[24]. Clarissa's conflicting desires to achieve gratification through passive submission to her father and her narcissistic urge to phallic superiority contribute to the formation of the masochistic phantasy of being punished which masks, distorts and redirects her aggressive, sexual instincts during waking life, allowing them to emerge, in disguised form, in her dreams.

On the evening prior to her flight, Clarissa's psychological struggle with "those passions of our sex" is revealed in a masochistic phantasy which inextricably connects sexuality with annihilation and ironically predicts the fatal destiny of the besmirched maiden. Clarissa relates:

> I said I had unhappily overslept myself. I went to bed at about half an hour after two. I told the quarters till five; after which I dropped asleep, and awakened not till past six, and then in great terror, from a dream, which has made such an impression upon me that, slightly as I think of dreams, I cannot help taking this opportunity to relate it to you.
>
> "Methought my brother, my Uncle Antony,

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[24]Rather than marry the 'inferior' Solmes, Clarissa offers to "bear the cruellest tortures, bear the loss of limb, and even of life..." (1, p. 101) Following her escape with Lovelace, she reiterates this plea: "I would atone for my fault at any rate, even by the sacrifice of a limb or two, if that would do." (2, p. 277)

> and Mr. Solmes, had formed a plot to destroy Mr. Lovelace; who discovering it, and believing I had a hand in it, turned all his rage against me. I thought he made them all fly into foreign parts upon it; and afterwards seizing upon me, carried me into a churchyard; and there, notwithstanding all my prayers and tears, and protestations of innocence, stabbed me to the heart, and then tumbled me into a grave ready dug, among two or three half-dissolved carcasses; throwing in the dirt and earth upon me with his hands, and trampling it down with his feet."
>
> I awoke in a cold sweat, trembling, and in agonies; and still the frightful images raised by it remain upon my memory.
>
> But why should I, who have such real evils to contend with, regard imaginary ones? This, no doubt, was owing to my disturbed imagination; huddling together wildly all the frightful ideas which my aunt's communications and discourse, my letter to Mr. Lovelace, my own uneasiness upon it, and the apprehensions of the dreaded Wednesday furnished me with.
>
> (1, p. 433)

For Ian Watt, the dream "is primarily a macabre expression of her actual fear of Lovelace; but it is also coloured by the idea that sexual intercourse is a kind of annihilation."[25] Anthony Kearney analyzes the dream in the following manner:

> The dream reveals a confusing turmoil beneath the surface of Clarissa's would-be rational mind. Lovelace appears as the night-marish ravisher who stabs her before burying her, but he is also, in another form, her protector

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[25]Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel, p. 241.

> and champion who sends Solmes and the Harlowes flying off into foreign parts. Between her family and Lovelace, Clarissa is the terrified and 'innocent' victim, and her dream, with its fears of sexual violation and death -- the two closely associated in her mind -- clearly prefigures what fate has in store for her, and what she unwittingly brings upon herself.[26]

In each case, the critical explication of Clarissa's dream fails to perceive the over-determined nature of the dream material or to recognize the basic mechanisms of dream-work: condensation, displacement and considerations of representability.[27] Moreover, the interrelatedness of the dream's scenario, as reported by Clarissa, to the underlying connotations derived from previous experience is never recognized. In other words, it is important to detect the "day-residues"[28] which unite to form a "combined

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[26]Anthony Kearney, Samuel Richardson:"Clarissa" (Southampton, 1975), p. 26.

[27]See page eight of this thesis for a brief definition of condensation. Displacement is the unconscious substitution of one or more unacceptable ideas or impulses for one that appears acceptable. Considerations of representability are concerned with the transformation of ideas and thoughts into images, usually visual.

[28]Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation Of Dreams, p. 265. According to Freud, "day-residues" are impressions of the previous day which provoke the dream and contribute to its content. It is interesting to note that Richardson anticipates Freud when, at the conclusion of the dreams Clarissa suggests that the dream's contents were the result of the events of the previous day. Moreover, the importance of day-residues

references"[29] for and a comprehensible translation of the experiences contacted during the previous day. In addition, to understand the full import of the dream, it is essential to divide the dream "into its elements and to find the associations attaching each of these fragments separately."[30]

If, as Freud postulates, a punishment-dream fulfills a wish that "the dreamer may be punished for a repressed and forbidden wishful impulse"[31], then the connection, in the dream, between sexuality and death certainly satisfies an earlier plea:

> The wench says that he would have come up in his wrath, at my refusing to see Mr. Solmes, had not my brother and sister prevailed upon him to the contrary.

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on dreams is noted by Burton when he states: "Against fearful and troublesome dreams, Incubus and such inconveniences, wherewith melancholy men are molested, the best remedy is to eat a light supper, and of such meats as are easy of digestion, no hare, venison, beef, etc., not to be on his back, not to meditate or think in the day-time of any terrible objects, or especially talk of them before he goes to bed." Robert Burton, The Anatomy Of Melancholy, p. 357.

[29] Ibid., p. 265.

[30] Sigmund Freud, On Dreams, trans. James Strachey (New York, 1952), p. 20.

[31] Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation Of Dreams, p. 711.

> I wish he had! And, were it not for his own sake, that he had killed me! (1, p. 212)

As a defensive measure, the wish to be killed by the father finds fulfillment in a disguised form in the dream: the unconscious displacement of rejection onto the three minor characters, "my Brother, my Uncle Antony, and Mr. Solmes", satisfactorily represses the hostility Clarissa feels towards her father, an anger which is kept under control behind her submissive role in waking life.[32] The erotic energy and potential wrath that pervades Clarissa's duty to her father is never relinquished despite the unresolvable breach in the father-daughter relationship. It merely emerges in a displaced form in Lovelace who offers himself as a collective "father, uncle, brother, and, as I humbly hoped, in your own good time, a husband to you all in one." (1, p. 480)

This introductory material of the dream is provoked by the aunt's warning of the previous evening:

> She then told me they had had undoubted information that a certain desperate ruffian (I must excuse her that word, she said) had prepared armed men to waylay my brother and uncles, and seize me, and carry me off. Surely, she said, I was not consenting to a violence that might be followed by murder on one side or the other, perhaps on both. (1, 425-426)

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[32]See Clarissa, 1, p. 423; 1, p. 427.

The dream-work transforms this information by a process of reversal which aims at disguising the wish that the plot might be realized. Indeed, that Clarissa is aware of Lovelace's plot to waylay the male members of her family prior to her aunt's reprimand and that she feigns ignorance of this information in the presence of her aunt indicates unconscious collusion.

It is important to remember that the father, a highly charged figure, is conspicuously absent in the modification of unconscious material. This fact is in keeping with yet another experience of the dream-day. It had been determined that Clarissa's wedding to Mr. Solmes would take place "in the presence of all my friends except by father and mother, who would not return, nor see me, till all was over, and till they had a good account of my behaviour." (1, p. 426) For Clarissa, the need to be chastized for the anger she feels toward the rejecting parent manifests itself in a disguised form: Lovelace performs the task of penetration.

Having promised to "offer no violence" (1, p. 428) to herself, Clarissa is able to fulfill the masochistic inclination to be beaten and destroyed through the process of displacement in the dream-work. The notion of self-

inflicted punishment[33] reverberates in the dream in the words, "believing I had a hand in it."[34] That she might be responsible for the plot to waylay her brother and uncles is linked clearly with the fear that to follow the advice of Lovelace might lead to the "perpetration of the most violent acts." (1, p. 421) In addition, another of Aunt Hervey's warnings of the previous day is brought to bear on the dream:

> ... let me beseech you to consider, what great consolation you will have on one hand, if you pursue your parents' advice, that you did so; what mortification on the other, that, by following your own, you have nobody to blame but yourself. (1, p. 427)

What the dream material does is to artistically play out the dramatic story of the "mortification" of a young girl who follows her own inclination and, at the same time, to spite the aunt.

A crucial development in the intricate web of connections between conscious and unconscious material occurs

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[33]Clarissa admits: "I will omit neither prayers nor contrivance, even to the making of myself ill, to avoid going." (1, p. 371) In addition, she parenthetically states that perverse fate emerges, with a "strong appearance of self-punishment", from the individual. (1, p. 419)

[34]This part of the dream echoes Clarissa's words to her aunt: "I don't say you have a hand in it..." (1, p. 375)

next: "I thought he made them all fly into foreign parts upon it." For the purposes of analysis, this portion of the dream must be divided further. An overdetermined word, "fly" provides an important association with an earlier fear:

> Should I be either detected in those preparations, or pursued in my flight, and so brought back, then would they think themselves doubly warranted to compel me to have their Solmes: and, conscious of an intended fault, perhaps I should be the less able to contend with them. (1, p. 422)

The guilt arising from an "intended fault" harks back to the accusation in the dream that Clarissa had "a hand" in the plot. Further, in the context of the dream, the notion of "flight" is transformed so as to make Lovelace responsible for her separation from the Harlowes. In other words, the anxiety and fear of being recognized as the instigator of the flight is alleviated by having the others "fly" and by making Lovelace the aggressor.

On another level, the key to the connection between "fly" and the destruction of the virgin is found in a letter composed that day. Clarissa writes: "I will return to a subject which I cannot fly from for minutes together..." (1, p. 420) It is, of course, Clarissa's insistence on writing to Lovelace and her over-indulgence in the use of the pen, which perpetuates her conflict with the family and hastens her flight. Leo Braudy astutely calls attention to the sexual nuances of

the word "pen" and its cognates, penetration and impenetrability. As Clarissa achieves objectification through her letter writing, the "woman with the pen confronts the man with the penis."[35] If the pen is conceived of as a source of potency[36] which she "cannot fly from", then the material in the dream, "made them all fly" may be the result of the guilt associated with her aggressive indulgence in the service of the pen. The unconscious feeling that she is responsible for her separation from the family emerges, in the dream, with a twist: Lovelace is made the instigator of the flight and any harm which may befall her is traced back to him.

The erotic factor in dreams associated with flying has been pointed out by Freud who corroborates Dr. Federen's theory that flying dreams may be associated, because of the

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[35]Leo Braudy, "Penetration and Impenetrability in Clarissa", New Approaches To Eighteenth-Century Literature, ed. Phillip Harth (New York, 1974), p. 202.

[36]In a letter to Sophia Westcomb, Richardson states: "... the Pen is almost the only Means a very modest and diffident Lady (who in Company will not attempt to glare) has to shew herself, and that she has a Mind... By this means she can assert and vindicate her Claim to Sense and Meaning. -- And shall a modest Lady then refuse to write? Shall she, in other Words, refuse to put down her Thoughts, as if they were unworthy of herself, of her Friend, of her Paper. -- A virtuous and innocent heart to be afraid of having its Impulses embody'd, as I may say? Samuel Richardson, Selected Letters Of Samuel Richardson, ed. John Carroll, pp. 67-68.

laws of gravity, with erection.[17] Moreover, J. E. Cirlot notes that the bird was originally a phallic symbol and that a bird in flight is associated with volatization and sublimation.[38] What these connotations of "fly" suggest is that Lovelace, as Clarissa's aggressive agent, has reduced the potency of her male adversaries. In other words, that Lovelace makes three men "fly" implies that he has metamorphosed men into birds and has caused them to ejaculate their potency.

The ambiguity surrounding "into foreign parts" can best be described as a verbal disguise aimed at hiding the meaning of the words through slight displacement. Freud notes that, in the compounding of words, "contradictory concepts are quite intentionally combined, not in order to create a third concept... but only in order to express, by means of the combination of the two, the meaning of its contradictory members..."[39] The most obvious contradictory association with "foreign parts" is private parts; the former being an outward displacement of the latter, which defines the personal regions of the body.[40] That Clarissa considers herself as a

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[37]See Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation Of Dreams, p. 518.

[38]J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary Of Symbols, p. 27.

[39]Sigmund Freud, "Antithetical Sense Of Primal Words", Character and Culture, pp. 46-47.

[40]According to Eric Partridge, A Dictionary of

"person of moderate parts" (1, p. 357) who believes that "familiarity destroys reverence", (1, p. 357) suggests that she views her own sexuality as "foreign", that she wishes to have "it" disassociated from herself and destroyed. Lovelace confirms this connection between "foreign parts" and sexuality when he states: "Every fortified town has its strong and its weak place. I had carried on my attacks against the impregnable parts. I have no doubt but I shall either shine or smuggle her out of her cloak..." (2, p. 406) This sexual implication is confirmed further by the carnal activity associated with "into".[41] In addition, as Eric Partridge documents, "it" is a euphemistic term for the "female sexual organ"[42] and the sexual position associated with "upon" is obvious. Thus, the ambiguity surrounding the dream fragment, "fly into foreign parts upon it", becomes a mask for the latent sexual meaning.

It is appropriate that, in the dream scenario, Clarissa's destruction should take place in the "church-yard". On the dream-day, Clarissa had written to Miss Howe:

Historical Slang, private property is a colloquialism for the generative organ. See p. 726.

[41]Eric Partridge, A Dictionary Of Historical Slang (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, 1972), p. 477.

[42]Ibid., p. 479.

> But supposing I could remain there [London] concealed, to what might not my youth, my sex, and my unacquaintedness with the ways of that great, wicked town, expose me! -- I should hardly dare to go to church for fear of being discovered. People would wonder how I lived. Who knows but I might pass for a kept mistress... (1, p. 422)

As an instigator of the dream, Clarissa's note reveals the anxiety aroused by the prospect of reprobation. This conscious material manifests itself in the artistic construction of the dream by the use of over-determination. The multiplicity of connections arising from the detail of the "church-yard" can be traced to waking experience as well as other details in the dream. Not only does the "church-yard" represent, for Clarissa, a sanctum for the virtuous but it contains the 'plots' of the dead. That exposure and beating should occur in this location fulfills the hidden wish to be punished for entertaining fancies of flight despite the fact that, as a tainted figure, she would be barred from religious domains. This attitude towards 'sinful' thoughts and deeds is emphasized by the notion that her "prayers" and "protestations of innocence" are useless. In her conclusion to the letter to Miss Howe, Clarissa demands:

> and is there, after all, no way to escape one great evil, but by plunging myself into another? What an ill-fated creature am I? Pray for me, my dearest Nancy! My mind is at present so much disturbed, that I can hardly pray for myself. (1, p. 424)

Perhaps, like young Huck Finn, Clarissa has perceived that, "You can't pray a lie."[43]

Inherent in the details of being "stabbed" to the "heart" and "tumbled"[44] to the grave is the process of condensation: the wish to be killed by the father in order to atone for the guilt of the rebellious daughter is combined with the desire to achieve sexual gratification. It has been noted that:

> the fact that moral masochism is unconscious leads to an obvious clue. We are able to translate the expression "unconscious sense of guilt" as meaning a need for punishment at the hands of parental power. We know that the wish, which so frequently appears in phantasies, to be beaten by the father stands very close to the other wish, to have a passive (feminine) sexual relation to him and is only a repressive distortion of it.[45]

The interrelatedness of violent penetration (sexual intercourse) and death has been hinted at on at least two previous occasions, each of which is marked by the intended

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[43]Mark Twain, The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (New York, 1966), p. 213.

[44]The verb "to tumble" has long been a slang term for sexual intercourse. For example, see Shakespeare's Hamlet, IV, V, 62-63:

> Quoth she, 'Before you tumbled me,
> You promised me to wed.'

[45]Sigmund Freud, "The Economic Problem of Masochism", SE, Vol. XIX, 169.

transference of Clarissa from father to suitor. On learning that she must become Mrs. Solmes, Clarissa dramatically cries, "Then went the dagger to my heart!" (1, p. 71) Later, suspecting that a 'plot' has been formed by her family, she states:

> Something is working against me, I doubt. What an uneasy state is suspense! When a naked sword, too seems hanging over one's head. (1, p. 292)

What this information exhibits is the complex dynamic of wish fulfillment. The fear of the "naked sword" which will stab and penetrate the pursued maiden simultaneously disguises and fulfills the masochistic desire to be beaten and destroyed.

In effect, it is Clarissa who possesses the weapon for destruction. As her uncle warns:

> Don't you know where it is written that soft answers turn away wrath? But if you will trust to your sharp-pointed wit, you may wound: yet a club will beat down a sword... (1, p. 304)

By a process of displacement, Clarissa's phallic attributes become associated with Lovelace in the dream.

Having equated sexual intercourse with annihilation, the desire to be thrown into "a deep grave ready dug" among "half-dissolved carcasses" foreshadows, as well as satisfies, the masochistic need to be violated and destroyed:

> Then sir, you shall sooner follow me to the grave indeed. I will undergo the cruellest death - I will even consent to enter into

> the awful vault of my ancestors and to have that bricked up upon me, rather than consent to be miserable for life. (1, p. 380)

Certainly, the desire to "consent" to being "bricked up" is satisfied in the course of the dream.

Underlying the "frightful images" evoked by Clarissa's imagination is the reversal in role from active to passive and the transformation of love for the father into hate. By unconsciously choosing Lovelace as an extraneous tool for her venegeance, Clarissa can also vicariously attack the parental tyrant for disinheriting her from her cosy position as family favourite. In waking life, her admonitory words indict the father and acquit the daughter:

> I called upon her to witness, that I was guiltless of the consequences of this compulsion; this barbarous compulsion, I called it; let that consequence be what it would.
>
> My aunt chid me in a higher strain than ever she did before.
>
> While I, in a half-frenzy, insisted upon seeing my father: such usage, I said, set me above fear. I would rejoice to owe my death to him, as I did my life. (1, p. 430)

Not only is the guilt transferred, but a crime-and-punishment motif is established whereby indulgence in the phantasy of a sexual nature is followed by atonement in the form of being beaten. In effect, Clarissa is penetrated by her father.

It is important to recognize the way in which the beating-phantasy of waking life is exploited in the punishment

dream. The masochistic tendencies inherent in the "latent and unowned inclinations" (1, p. 455) of Clarissa dramatically unfold in the creative structure of mental activity during sleep. Anna Freud has noted that the act of writing out phantasies and dreams is a defense against over-indulgence of them[45] and indeed, Clarissa controls these underlying wishes by communicating her dream to Anne Howe. Ironically, five days after this dream, under the protection of Lovelace, the baffled Clarissa ponders, "little did I dream (foolish creature that I was, and every way beset!) of the event proving what it has proved." (1, p. 475)

Though afraid of Lovelace, Clarissa runs off with him. It is an action which re-establishes, in a tangible way, the torments and persecutions that characterized the father-daughter conflict. Lovelace begins to assume the "consequence and airs of a protector", (1, p. 510) thereby recreating the "state of obligation" (1, p. 510) the doomed Clarissa had fled from. In terms of the scenario, Lovelace emerges as a displacement of Mr. Harlowe, a substitute figure of paternal authoritarianism, a haunting reincarnation

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[45]Anna Freud, "The Relation Of Beating-Phantasies To A Day-Dream." The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis, Vol. 4, 1923, 101.

of the "living scourge exercized upon the rebellious daughter."[46] For Clarissa, the phantasy of "a woman is being beaten" suddenly moves from imaginative indulgence to horrific reality.

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[46]Dorothy Van Ghent, "On Clarissa Harlowe", Samuel Richardson, ed. John Carroll (New York, 1969), p. 62.

CHAPTER THREE

"The Sensual Dream"

The notion of affected passivity inherent in the dream of being beaten is complemented, in the world of the predatory male, by a phantasy of phallic superiority. For Lovelace, woman serves a subservient role in the game of sexual and psychological gratification in which the will to mastery exists as a perverse declaration of potency and a sadistic striving towards uninterrupted entry into the impenetrable virgin. The imagined reward for the successful male is the humiliation, violation and control of the idealized Clarissa:

> I love, when I dig a pit to have my prey
> tumble in with secure feet and open eyes;
> then a man can look down upon her, with an
> O-ho, charmer, how came you there? (2, p. 102)

However fascinating and potentially gratifying Lovelace may regard this erotic phantasy, he is no match for the "downright female wilfulness" (4, p. 326) of a Clarissa who is equally determined to "awaken" her seducer from his "sensual dream". (4, p. 437)

Analysis of Richardson's profligate male has appealed to a number of erudite critics whose attempts to define the nature of Lovelace have been simultaneously grandiose and limited in scope. For John Carroll, Richardson "places

Lovelace in the tradition of the Great Man"[1] who is "metamorphosed from Don Juan to Tristan."[2] In typical boisterous fashion, Leslie Fiedler insists that Lovelace is an "archetypal figure: just as Hamlet signifies only 'hamletism' or Don Quixote 'the quixotic', so Lovelace represents a complex that only his name fully embodies."[3] He is "transformed into the monogomous Seducer, the seducer who has found his life's work in a single woman."[4] According to R.F. Brissenden, Richardson's libertine is an "Iago-like character, with a diabolic air" who eventually becomes "like a man possessed."[5] Such attempts to define the sexual proclivites of Lovelace erroneously assume that there is a particular point in the novel in which the male is transformed into a larger than life figure. Moreover, there is a tendency to minimize the importance Richardson seems to place on the mechanics of phantasy construction in his portrayal of a

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[1]John Carroll, "Lovelace as a Tragic Hero", University of Toronto Quarterly, XLll, p. 19.

[2]Ibid., p. 19.

[3]Leslie A. Fiedler, Love and Death in the American Novel, p. 65.

[4]Ibid., p. 66.

[5]R.F. Brissenden, Virtue In Distress, p. 168.

promoter of "libidinous Desires."[6]

Ian Watt offers a somewhat naive, simple explanation for the promiscuity of the eighteenth-century rogue when he states:

> Lovelace belonged to an age before the public schools had enforced a code of manly reticence upon even the most hypertonic of aristocratic cads; nor did cricket or golf provide alternate channels for the superfluous energies of the leisured male.[7]

Obviously, this statement ignores the complex motivational factors which drive Lovelace to seek mastery over an unwilling woman. Morris Golden pronounces the verdict that Lovelace is "technically mad", as evidenced by his distortions of reality and his "urges towards domination".[8] Unfortunately, Golden never examines adequately the motivational factors responsible for this distortion or the relation between the phantasies and reality. An interesting attempt to come to terms with Richardson's characterization of the aggressor is offered by H.S. McAllister who argues that Lovelace functions as an "emetic, a purge, or a laxative"[9] ad-

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[6]Samuel Richardson, Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson, ed. John Carroll, p. 158.

[7]Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel, p. 223.

[8]Morris Golden, Richardson's Characters, p. 20.

[9]Harold Stanwood McAllister, Apology For Bad Dreams, p. 124.

ministered unconsciously by the author to satisfy, in disguised form, the underlying wishes of the novel, and, by extension, the collective male psyche.

Despite Richardson's imposition of an atmosphere of reality on his fiction through the use of the epistolary form, his characterization of Lovelace is based on an erratic vacillation between phantasy and reality. What Richardson depicts is a man unwittingly caught in a conflict between a desire for emotional detachment to a 'pure' woman and the desire to gratify sexual and aggressive instincts by degrading a woman. In a rare moment of self-awareness, Lovelace confesses: "I imagined for a long while, that we were born to make each other happy: but, quite the contrary; we really seem to be sent to plague each other." (2, p. 270) That he continues to machinate despite his ability to perceive his precarious position is a problem of critical concern:

> And what my motive, dost thou ask? No less than this, that my beloved shall find no protection out of my family; for I know hers, fly she must or have the man she hates. This, therefore, if I take my measures right, and my familiar fail me not, will secure her mine in spite of them all; in spite of her own inflexible heart: mine, without condition; without reformation promises; without the necessity of a seige of years, perhaps; and even to be then, after wearing the guise of a merit-doubting hypocrisy, at an uncertainty, upon a probation unapproved of. Then shall I have all the

> rascals and rascalesses of the family come creeping to me: I prescribing to them; and bringing that sordidly-imperious brother to kneel at the footstool of my throne. (1, p. 148)

To state that Lovelace indulges in a phantasy of superiority is to state the obvious. It is necessary to interpret the complex nature of this phantasy in terms of the underlying, latent wishes, in relation to concurrent flights of the imagination and in connection with their dynamic effect on Lovelace's perception of the external realm in which he desires to establish his empire.

As an articulation of desire, phantasy exists as an elaborate script of organized scenes which are capable of visual dramatization.[10] For Lovelace, the frustration arising from the demands for order and restraint imposed by the social milieu is alleviated imaginatively by the creation of a fictional world in which he can remain"a perfect Proteus." (2, p. 82) He boasts that "Ovid was not a greater master of metamorphosis than they friend" (2, p. 13) and indeed, the scenario attests to Lovelace's success as an impostor: he swaggers across the stage as a "military man", a man of "low degree", a man disguised in wig and linen "unworthy of himself", and a "gouty man" with "hobbling gait". Nor does

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[10] See J. Laplanche and J.B. Pontalis, The Language of Psycho-Analysis, p. 318.

Lovelace restrict his fabrication of false identities to his own person: he engages numerous surrogates to play the parts he cannot. Among his cast of stand ins are Joseph Leman, Doleman, Tomlinson, Miss Montague, Lady Betty, Sinclair, Polly and Dorcas.

For Lovelace, the impostor's wardrobe of identities provides the necessary defensive equipment to protect self-esteem in the external world while, at the same time, allowing the achievement of narcissistic gratification in his phantasy world. Cynthia Griffin Wolff suggests that "there is no real Lovelace behind the mask, that the mask itself is Lovelace, and that the formlessness of his nature, the very absence of a coherent identity, makes it impossible for him to limit himself by engaging in a social role.[11] Yet, Wolff ignores the poignancy of Lovelace's confession:

> Do not despise me, Jack, for my inconsistencies -- in no two letters perhaps agreeing with myself. Who expects consistency in men of our character? But I am mad with love, fired by revenge, puzzled with my own devices, my invention is my curse, my pride my punishment. Drawn five or six ways at once, can she possibly be so unhappy as I? (2, p. 460)

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[11]Cynthia Griffin Wolff, Samuel Richardson And The Eighteenth-Century Puritan Character (Hamden, Conneticut, 1972), p. 105.

The suggestion of "psychic decomposition or fragmentation"[12] inherent in the compulsion to remain "more various than a chameleon" (2, p. 82) is indicative of an underlying narcissistic fragility fearful of exposure: mimetic gestures allow Lovelace to play out a more or less reality-adopted phantasy.[13] And, as Clarissa refuses to take part in his sensual reverie, the inability of the libertine to fuse sexual desire and feelings of love results in the periodic detachment from reality and an absorption in the fabrication of a wishful phantasy.

In the restoration of narcissistic centricity, phantasy plays an important role for Lovelace. Despite his successful removal of Clarissa from her home and father, Lovelace soon realized that "she is less in my power; I more in hers." (1, p. 515) This potential threat to self-esteem triggers off an imaginative scene of omnipotence:

> How it swells my pride to have been able to outwit such a vigilant charmer! I am taller by half a yard in my imagination than I was. I look down upon everybody now. Last night

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[12] Patrick Brantlinger, "Romances, Novels, and Psychoanalysis", in The Practice of Psychoanalytic Criticism, ed. Leonard Tennenhouse (Detroit, 1976), p. 33.

[13] See Helene Deutsch, "The Imposter", Neurosis And Character Types (New York, 1965), p. 332.

> I was still more extravagant. I took off my hat as I walked, to see if the lace were not scorched, supposing it had brushed down a star; and, before I put it on again, in mere wantoness and heart's ease, I was for buffeting the moon. (1, p. 515)

What occurs is an imaginative reparation of self-esteem in which the construction of a fictional world aims to gratify and fulfill infantile wishes by placing Lovelace, as hero, on center stage. Inherent in the motion of swelling in height is the desire for the omnipotent control of woman as well as the infantile wish to possess a magnificent phallus. With the removal of the hat[14] is the exposure of potency for the envy and delight of his audience. Moreover, if, as Robert D. Stolorow suggests, the "sadist may seek 'narcissistic cement' in a feeling of identity with his archaic grandiose wishful self through an exhilarating exercise of extravagant power which creates an illusory sense of total omnipotent control"[15], then the impulse to strike at the

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[14]Refer to Freud's analysis of a dream, "A Hat As A Symbol Of A Man (Or a Man's Genitals), The Interpretation of Dreams, pp. 478-479. The notion of the hat as a symbol of male potency is reiterated by Lovelace when, following his relocation of Clarissa, he removes his disguise: I made my servant pull off my gouty stockings, brush my hat, and loop it up into the usual smart cock." (3, p. 42)

[15]Robert D. Stolorow, "The Narcissistic Function Of Masochism (And Sadism)", p. 446.

moon, the archetypal female symbol[16], could very well be translated as a desire to harm Clarissa.

These unconscious wishes are reiterated in a subsequent letter to Belford:

> What a matchless plotter thy friend! Stand by and let me swell! -- I am already as big as an elephant, and ten times wiser! -- mightier too by far! Have I not reason to snuff the moon with my proboscus? (2, p. 114)

Once again, the displacement of the phallus through symbolization is combined with an aggressive act which sustains Lovelace's omnipotent presence in the eyes of his audience. If, as Freud suggests, representation of thought may take the form of verbal association, then the choice of "proboscus" as a synonym for trunk suggests the desire for an appendage which will probe or penetrate the impenetrable virgin.[17]

This fascination with potency and control is creatively dramatized in a subsequent solar myth:

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[16]See J.E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, p. 216; pp. 318-319.

[17]It is interesting to note that Lovelace's mental association between the elephant and the phallus is reiterated: "But, when I came, whip, was the key turned upon their girls. And yet all signified nothing; for love, upon occasion, will draw an elephant through a keyhole." (4, p. 455) If, as Eric Partride documents, the "keyhole" is a euphemism for the female pudend, then the sexual implications of this metaphor are obvious. See A Dictionary of Historical Slang, p. 505.

> Thous rememberest the contention between the sun and the north wind, in the fable; which should first make an honest traveller throw off his cloak.
>
> Boreas began first. He puffed away most vehemently; and often made the poor fellow curve and swagger: but with no other effect, than to cause him to wrap his surtout the closer about him.
>
> But when it came to Phoebus's turn, he so played upon the traveller with his beams, that he made him first unbutton, and then throw it quite off: nor left he, till he obliged him to take to the friendly shade of a spreading beech; where prostrating himself on the thrown-off cloak, he took a comfortable nap.
>
> The victor god then laughed outright, both at Boreas and the traveller, and pursued his radiant course, shining upon, and warming and cherishing a thousand new objects, as he danced along: and at night, when he put up his fiery courses, he diverted his Thetis with the relation of his pranks in the past.
>
> I, in like manner, will discard all my boisterous inventions; and if I can oblige my sweet traveller to throw aside, but for one moment, the cloak of her rigid virtue, I shall have nothing to do but, like the sun, to blow new objects with my rays. But my chosen hours of conversation and repose, after all my peregrinations, will be devoted to my goddess. (2, 384-385)

What Lovelace boasts is a phantasy of fecundity, the matrix of which is the heroic image of the sun. As J.E. Cirlot notes, the sun is a condensed symbol, inherently ambivalent in nature. On the one hand, the sun is dynamically potent in its capacity for diffusion, its invincibility and its association with sensual energy. On the other hand, the ascent and disappearance of the sun into the darkness is symbolic

of immanence, sin and expiation.[18] In effect, the dualistic nature of the Phoebus figure reflects the ambivalent nature of Lovelace who wishes to destroy the virgin's maidenhead (the cloak of her rigid virtue) and yet to exalt her as a goddess by becoming her "devoted" servant entrapped in "hymeneal shackles". (2, p. 14) In terms of the scenario, this pattern of degradation and exaltation of the female is repeated: the phantasy of potency which culminates in the diffusion of libidinous desires (the blowing of new objects with his rays)[19] is followed ultimately by the cry for expiation.[20]

Cynthia Griffin Wolff offers an astute observation of Lovelace when she comments that he is "the shrieking, completely selfish child grown older but not wiser, his vision of the world begins and ends with himself, and his fantasies all

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[18]See J.F. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols, pp. 317-320.

[19]Refer to Sigmund Freud, "Psychoanalytic Notes Upon An Autobiographical Account Of A Case Of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides) (1911)", in Three Case Histories, ed. Philip Rieff (New York, 1973), pp. 103-186. It is interesting to note the similarity between Dr. Schreber's emasculation phantasy and Redeemer idea and Lovelace's phantasy of potency and Phoebus myth. In each case, the divine rays are symbolic representations of seminal fluid.

[20]Certainly, Lovelace's final cry is the ultimate cry for expiation. See 4, p. 530.

have the story-book illusion of personal omnipotence."[21] Certainly, Lovelace is deluded by a perverse romantic vision of love which embodies infantile wishes as explicitly narcissistic as a babe in swaddling clothes:

> I would have the woman whom I honour with my name, if ever I confer this honour upon any, forego even her superior duties for me. I would have her look after me when I go out, as far as she can see me, as my Rosebud after her Johnny; and meet me at my return with rapture. I would be the subject of her dreams as well as of her waking thoughts. I would have her think every moment lost, that is not passed with me: sing to me, play to me when I pleased; no joy so great as in obeying me. When I should be inclined to love, overwhelm me with it; when to be serious or solitary, if apprehensive of intrusion, retiring at a nod; approaching me only if I smiled encouragement: steal into my presence with silence; out of it, if not noticed, on tiptoe. Be a lady easy to all my pleasures, and valuing those most who most contributed to them; only sighing in private, that it was not herself at the time. Thus of old did the contending wives of the honest patriarchs; each recommending her handmaid to her lord, as she thought it would oblige him, and looking upon the genial products as her own. (2, p. 416)

As a response to Clarissa's refusal to submit to his wishes, this elaborately spun phantasy, the craft of which is the placing of the hero in the lap of unrestricted gratification, reads like a puerile fairy-tale. It is a visionary inven-

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[21]Cynthia Griffin Wolff, Samuel Richardson and the Eighteenth-Century Puritan Character, p. 107.

tion in which the female exists as little more than an adjunct whose duty it is to satisfy her patriarchal lord by repeated command performaces. In addition, the suggestion of polygamous activity attests to Lovelace's virility at the same time as it degrades Clarissa by reducing her to little more than a pimp. For the reader, this phantasy offers a poignant glimpse at the psychical impotence of a man barred from knowing a mutually fulfilling relationship.[22]

As a man obsessed with sexual overvaluation of his penis, Lovelace can never let the rake's mask slip long enough to realize that reciprocal love is forever beyond the reach of the sadistic "spider" and his counterpart, the masochistic "fly".[23] Morris Golden comments that Lovelace is "so dominated by his fantasies of superiority that almost any incident or train of ideas in which he engages develops into one of them".[24] Despite Clarissa's hints that she would marry him tomorrow if urged "in a proper manner", the uncontrollable call to mastery has Lovelace believing

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[22]The inability of Lovelace to love one woman is expressed in a number of concurrent phantasies. For example, he imaginatively devises a scheme based on one year marriage contracts. (3, p. 181) Also, believing that Anne Howe is a puppet chained up on his wires, (2, p. 100) he sets up a plan to kidnap her and her mother. (2, p. 422)

[23]See Clarissa, 2, p. 23; 2, p. 214.

[24]Morris Golden, Richardson's Characters, p. 18.

that "her apparent willingness to think well of a spirit so inventive, and so machinating, is a happy prognostic for me." (2, p. 214) It is only after the rape that Lovelace is startled out of this delusion.

The reader's experience of Lovelace is structured on a chain of phantasies thematically linked by their narcissistic consistency. From his opening letter, he emerges as a "hero in romance", (1, p. 149) a crusader charging into the Harlowe bastion in search of unbridled gratification. And, the story-book atmosphere is held together by phantasies which fend off the tendentious demands of reality. Hence, upon reflection that Clarissa is too "father-sick" and "family-fond" to make a husband happy, Lovelace sinks into a reverie which repares self-esteem:

> It is infinitely better for her and for me that we should not marry. What a delightful manner of life [oh, that I could persuade her to it!] would the life of honour be with such a woman! The fears, the inquietudes, the uneasy days, the restless nights; all arising from doubts of having disobliged me! Every absence dreaded to be an absence for ever! And then how amply rewarded, and rewarding, by the rapture-causing return! Such a passion as this keeps love in a continual fervour; makes it all alive. The happy pair, instead of sitting dozing and nodding at each other in opposite chimney-corners in a winter evening, and over a wintry love, always new to each other, and having always something to say. (2, 187-188)

So out of touch with the external world, Lovelace fails to

perceive that this scene of domestic tranquility could never include the Clarissa that the reader sees.

Nevertheless, this vision has a catalytic effect, for Lovelace's imagination soon indulges in an apostrophized scene of a similar thematic nature:

> And now imagine (the charmer overcome) thou seest me sitting supinely cross-kneed, reclining on my sofa, the god of love dancing in my eyes, and rejoicing in every mantling feature; the sweet rogue, late such a proud rogue, wholly in my power, moving up slowly to me, at my beck, with heaving sighs, half-pronounced, upbraidings from murmuring lips, her fingers in her eye, and quickening her pace at my Come hither, dearest!
>
> One hand stuck in my side, the other extended to encourage her bashful approach -- Kiss Me, love! Sweet, as Jack Belford says, are the joys that come with willingness. She tenders her purple mouth her coral lips will be turned purple then, Jack! : Sigh not so deeply, my beloved! Happier hours await thy humble love, than did thy proud resistance.
>
> Once more bent to my ardent lips the swanny glossiness of a neck late so stately.
>
> There's my precious!
>
> Again!
>
> Obliging loveliness!
>
> O my ever-blooming glory! I have tried thee enough. Tomorrow's sun --
>
> Then I rise, and fold to my almost talking heart the throbbing-bosomed charmer.
>
> And now shall the humble pride confess its obligation to me!
>
> Tomorrow's sun -- and then I disengage myself from the bashful passive, and stalk about the room -- tomorrow's sun shall gild the altar at which my vows shall be paid thee!
>
> Then, Jack, the rapture! then the darted sunbeams from her gladdened eye, drinking up, at one sip, the precious distillation from the pearl-dropped cheek! Then hands ardently folded, eyes seeming to pronounce, God bless my Lovelace!

> to supply the joy-locked tongue: her transports too strong, and expression too weak, to give utterance to her grateful meanings! All -- all the studies of her future life vowed and devoted (when she can speak) to acknowledge and return the perpetuated obligation! (2, p. 251-252)

However idyllic this scene may appear, Lovelace's phantasy of omnipotence subtly degrades the object of his love by reducing woman to a witless nymph. Moreover, this artistic creation suggests an absorption in a sado-masochistic day-dream in which the male repeatedly bruises the "grateful" female lips[25] of a denied, frustrated and suffering virgin.

This delight Lovelace exhibits in the power of his potency reaches its height in a subsequent phantasy which exalts his reproductive capabilities:

> Let me perish, Belford, if I would not forego the brightest diadem in the world for the pleasure of seeing a twin Lovelace at each charming breast, drawing from it his first sustenance; the pious task, for physical reasons, continued for one month and no more!
>
> I now, methinks, behold this most charming of women in this sweet office: her conscious eye now dropped on one, now on the other, with a sigh of maternal tenderness; and then raised up to my delighted eye, full of wishes, for the sake of the pretty varlets, and for her own sake, that I would condescend[26] to put on the nuptial fetters. (2, p. 477)

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[25]There is an implicit suggestion that the lips are an upward displacement of the female genitals. See Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation Of Dreams, p. 509 for confirmation of the symbolization.

[26]My emphasis. Lovelace's desire for a son is re-

In so far as phantasy creatively reproduces an unconscious desire, it is subject also to defensive manoeuvers which translate desires in an acceptable way. Surely, despite Lovelace's insistence that he regards Clarissa as an exalted figure, such fabrications of the imagination subtly degrade the love-object by reducing woman to a milky slave whose prime duty is to function in the service of the male. Indeed, she exists as little more than a harlot and a mother. At the same time, the phantasies of omnipotence place the hero in the passive position for he is acted upon; he is the receiver of Clarissa's libidinous advances and maternal glances and he is rivalrous with his offspring.

The labyrinthine nature of Lovelace's mind makes it necessary to analyze these sadistically tinged displays of mastery in order to determine their possible sources. Lovelace himself offers a self-analytical statement of motivation:

> I have boasted that I was once in love before: and indeed I thought I was. It was in my early manhood -- with that quality jilt, whose infidelity I have vowed to revenge upon as many of the sex as shall come into my power. I believe, in different climes, I have already sacrificed an hecatomb to my Nemisis, in pursuance of this vow. (1, p. 145)

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stated following the rape when he says: "had I an imperial diadem, I swear to thee that I would give it up, even to my enemy to have one charming boy by this lady." (3, 242-243)

Mark Kinkead-Weekes suggests that:

> the real hurt when he was jilted for a coronet was not to his feelings but his pride; and we gather that this was enough to send him into a Byronic kind of exile. For this he has vowed revenge on the whole sex - we note again the touch of childishness. He has now swung full circle from romance to cycnicism, he is pledged to faithlessness and unlimited seduction, but the pattern remains the same. Having felt the power of women to humiliate, he is out to use the power of masculinity to revenge, or simply assert his own ego.[27]

Although this explanation may have an element of truth, the revenger's crusade must be seen as simultaneously exploitive and parasitic in nature: the need to use a woman as an extraneous tool for vengeance is inextricably connected with the dependence he has on woman as his source of perpetual gratification. Hence, when Lovelace boasts: "I have three passions that sway me by turns; all imperial ones. Love, revenge, ambition, or a desire of conquest" (2, p. 495) he unwittingly indicates the conflict between the compulsion to devalue woman for her potential to arouse feelings of anger, envy and inferiority and the need to be fused with a nurturing female.

Ultimately, the finger is pointed at Lovelace's mother as the cause of phantasies thematically centered on

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[27]Mark Kinkead-Weeks, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist (London, 1973), p. 147.

the personal gratification received from an over-indulgent woman. Lord M. insists that "it was his poor mother that first spoiled him" (2, p. 323) and this suggestion is confirmed by Anne Howe: "From his cradle, as I may say, as an only child, and a boy, humoursome, spoiled, mischievous; the governor of his governors." (2, p. 155) The sense of superiority that is reinforced by infantile experience, the phantasy of an ever-nurturing, ever-indulgent mother is, of course, in contrast to the adult's experience of reality which restricts and restrains. What the "imperial" position provides, then, is a rigid defense against the narcissistic rage and envy which accompanies the state of dependency on the female. It is the imaginative fulfillment of a desire for a loving relationship which will not be threatened by the woman who possesses the power to withhold affection.

At the same time, however, the need to have an indulgent female places Lovelace in a precarious position: by being comforted by a woman, he is dependent and therefore passive. Morris Golden comments that, despite Lovelace's "deplorable tendency to put his reveries into practice, he nonetheless exhibits the androgynous male-female urges in everyman."[28] Indeed, in spite of the guise of masculine superiority adopted

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[28]Morris Golden, Richardson's Characters, p. 25.

by the rake, Lovelace confesses: "I have had abundant cause, when I have looked into myself, by way of comparison with the other sex, to conclude that a bashful man has a good deal of the soul of a woman; and so, like Tireseas, can tell what they think, and what they drive at, as well as themselves." (2, p. 55) Interestingly enough, Clarissa makes a similar observation when she comments that "the workings of passion, when indulged, are but too much alike, whether in man or woman." (2, p. 374) Thus, if Lovelace recognizes that he has an identification with women, his internal struggle is even more complex.

It is Clarissa herself who draws attention to this dimension of Lovelace's character when she declares that the rake is "effeminate". As she goes on to explain:

> his outside usually runs away with him. To adorn, and perhaps, intending to render ridiculous, that person, takes up all his attention. All he does is personal; that is to say, for himself: all he admires, is himself: and in spite of the correction of the stage, which so often and so justly exposes a coxcomb, he usually dwindles down, and sinks into character; and, of consequence, becomes the scorn of one sex, and the jest of the other. (1, p. 205)

What becomes evident is that despite the attempts of reverie to reinforce an illusion of omnipotence, Lovelace is ultimately drawn to a woman who is able to reduce him to a milk sop. Indeed, he is barely able to control his desire to sur-

render to her:

> And yet I don't know how it is, but this lady, the moment I come into her presence, half-assimilates [my italics] me to her own virtue. Once or twice (to say nothing of her triumph over me on Sunday night) I was prevailed upon to fluster myself, with an intention to make some advances, which, if obliged to recede, I might lay upon raised spirits: but the instant I beheld her, I was soberized into awe and reverence: and the majesty of her even visible purity first damped, and then extinguished my double flame. (2, p. 400)

Not only is libidinous desire quelled by the woman, but Lovelace seeks to be absorbed by her.

Cynthia Griffin Wolff suggests that the sexual act in Lovelace's estimation "becomes almost identical to the notion of ingestion in his demented view, for it is the means by which the woman is incorporated into the extended and unstructured notion of self which is implied in his use of the notion of power."[29] Certainly, the "notion of ingestion" is a primary dynamic in Lovelace's view of male-female interaction yet, contrary to Wolff's interpretation, it is the male who seeks to be assimilated into the female. Invariably, it is when Lovelace is most out of control with his rake's façade that he is reduced to the passive victim:

> O charmer of my heart!... take me, take me to yourself; mold me as you please; I am wax in your hands; give me your own impression, and seal me for ever yours. (2, p. 80)

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[29]Cynthia Griffin Wolff, Samuel Richardson and the

This plea to be molded into Clarissa's physical image is reiterated on a similar occasion: "The red-hot iron she refuses to strike -- Oh, why will she suffer the yielding wax to harden." (3, p. 154) Clearly, Lovelace desires to be penetrated by the woman who possesses the potent weapon[30] while, at the same time, claiming ownership of her womanly qualities.

As a fusion of sexuality and aggression, the activity of incorporation is in keeping with the desire for union with the ever-nurturing female breast, a union which is nevertheless a source of anger and rage: the charming breasts of the suckling Clarissa[31] also contain the horrors of 'Pandora's box'. (3, p. 155) As a result of the psychical proximity of sexuality as nourishment and sexuality as destruction, the act of obtaining mastery becomes an attempt to destroy that which threatens phallic superiority, as well as the desire to gain infinite possession of the female. For Lovelace, this conflict finds compensation in the defen-

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Eighteenth-Century Puritan Character, pp. 108-109.

[30]Not only does Clarissa hold the poker, but she brandishes a pair of scissors. Moreover, as Lovelace swears, "she was a thief, an impostor, as well as a tormentor. She had stolen my pen." (3, p. 146)

[31]See 3, p. 155.

sive organization of phantasies which reinforce the narcissistic grandiose self. Indeed, Lovelace believes that he is merely obliging the fair sex by acting the rake: "They like an uncontrollable passion. They like to have every favour ravished from them; and to be eaten and drunk quite up by a voracious lover. Don't I know the sex?" (2, p. 209) Yet, despite this boast, Lovelace betrays the fact that he desires to be incorporated with the woman when he disjointedly, and in a flurry of passion, exlaims: "I could have devoured her -- but retaining myself -- You have done me the greatest hurt!" (2, p. 276)[32] He is a "woman-eater" (2, p. 496) whose phantasy of erotic superiority manifests itself in hungry frustration: he wants to swallow the woman whole.

In so far as phantasy fulfills the desire for potency, the imaginative scenes cannot protect their protagonist from the experience of reality or the unacceptable underlying wishes. As a result, confrontation with the "frost-piece" Clarissa continues to "unman" (2, p. 526) the profligate by reducing him to a weakling[33] begging to be haltered and left prostrate[34]. In this position he is more vulnerable

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[32]See also 2, p. 81.

[33]See Clarissa, 3, p. 60.

[34]See Clarissa, 2, p. 80.

to penetration than his victim for he has left himself wide open for psychological rape. As Lovelace states: "Ah! Joseph! Little need for your fears for my angel; I alone am in danger; but were I the free-liver I am reported to be, all this could I get over with a wet finger, as the saying is." (2, p. 151) According to Judith Wilt, Lovelace "seeks intensely to be the sexual object"[35] and indeed, on at least two occasions, he makes the noises of one violently ravished: "Oh, for a curse to kill with! Ruined! Undone!" (2, p. 217)[36]

Ultimately, it is by means of ingestion in the form of rape[37] that Lovelace is able to identify vicariously with his female victim. As a vortex of wild frenzy, the rape marks the nightmarish struggle between the phantasy of potency and his identification with the female psyche. On one level, it is the triumph of the potent male violating his victim in front of a female audience of previous conquests. On another level, the rape indicates Lovelace's ineffectual

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[35]Judith Wilt, "He Could Go No Further: A Modest Proposal About Lovelace And Clarissa", MLA, Jan. 1977, p. 22.

[36]Also, see Clarissa, 3, p. 143.

[37]J. Laplanche and J.B, Pontalis note the existence of "a genital incorporation that is most strikingly manifested in the phantasy of the retention of the penis within the body." The Language of Psycho-Analysis, p. 212

maleness for, not only is Clarissa taken in a drugged state, but the male can only perform with the aid of the masculine Sinclair:

> The old dragon straddled up to her, with her arms kemboed again, her eyebrows erect, like the bristles upon a hog's back, and scowling over her shortened nose, more than half hid her ferret eyes. Her mouth was distorted. She pouted out her blubber-lips, as if to bellow up wind and sputter into her horse-nostrils; and her chin was curdled, and more than usually prominent with passion. (3, pp. 195-196)

With the culmination of this horrific scene, Lovelace's "sensual dream" is forever destroyed and Clarissa's dream is ultimately fulfilled.

CHAPTER FOUR

"Dreams Sleeping and Dreams Waking"

The action of the novel is temporarily arrested by the perfunctory announcement: "And now, Belford, I can go no farther. The affair is over, Clarissa lives." (3, p. 196) From this point on, the "gross fumes of sensuality" (4, p. 16) spread, affecting an audience who sadistically watched the male-female struggle. By the closing scenes, the consequences of the violation of virtue have left no-one untouched and the masculine myth of heroic rape has been irretrievably turned on its head: Clarissa, "like the sweet Philomela, a thorn in her breast, warbles forth her melancholy complaints against her barbarous Tereus" (3, p. 409) but it is Lovelace who has his tongue symbolically pulled out.[1]

Richardson's evasive, rather ambiguous treatment of the act of rape has been a titillating source of speculation for critics. Cynthia Griffin Wolff views the violation as "the last resort of a demented and desperate man; and when this

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[1]According to the classical myth, Tereus had Philomela's tongue removed in order to prevent her from telling of the rape. Nevertheless, she is able to relate her tragedy by embroidering it on a piece of black material.

attempt fails, too, the agony of Lovelace's final defeat resounds like the pronouncement of his doom."[2] Yet, surely, the final cry for expiation bespeaks a meritorious finale in terms of the Christian concept of repentance. Mark Kinkead-Weekes acknowledges the rape as "a last desperate effort to prove the rake's creed true, and preserve Lovelace from having to give up his whole idea of himself."[3] However, in terms of the dénouement, the man behind the rake's mask is ultimately exposed and the notion of masculine superiority is forever abandoned. A unique though seriously flawed explanation of the circumstances of the rape is offered by Judith Wilt who suggests that "parts of the novel leave the strong impression that Lovelace did not rape Clarissa: that the rape either was not fully carried out or was carried out by the male's female 'accomplices'."[4] Yet, Wilt would be hard put to prove that Lovelace's hopes that Clarissa is pregnant[5] are no more than "cheap braggadocio".[6]

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[2]Cynthia Griffin Wolff, Samuel Richardson and the Eighteenth-Century Puritan Character, p. 125.

[3]Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist, p. 235.

[4]Judith Wilt, "He Could Go No Farther: A Modest Proposal about Lovelace and Clarissa", p. 19.

[5]See Clarissa, Vol. 3, p. 243.

[6]Judith Wilt, "He Could Go No Further: A Modest Proposal about Lovelace and Clarissa", p. 29.

When a rake's "illusion of a fancy depraved and run mad" (3, p. 255) collides with a virgin who allows her "fancy" to "run a gadding after a rake", (3, p. 316) the result, in Richardson's world, is rape. With a jolt, the nightmarish circumstances of the rape awaken Clarissa and Lovelace out of their solipsistic phantasies, leaving them standing face to face with strangers. Not only is Lovelace, like a child, forced to realize that his penis is not a sceptre of invincible potency but Clarissa is forced to acknowledge that she can be penetrated.

Mark Kinkead-Weekes rightly comments that Richardson "understood how much lay hidden in the mind that day-light consciousness either repressed or failed to understand... but which dreams or derangement could reveal."[7] And, indeed, it is by means of the artistic structure of dreams and delirium that the psychological effects of the defloration scene are most clearly defined. The subsequent pattern of events unravel in such a way that Clarissa achieves mythopoeic heights[8] with her beatific end[9]. At the same time, Lovelace, despite his

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[7]Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist, p. 231.

[8]The mythic quality of Clarissa's death scene was the inspiration for "Die Tote Clarissa", a dedication poem written by the German poet Friedrich Gottlick Klopstock (1751).

[9]See Clarissa, 4, p. 357. It is interesting to speculate on the verbal association between beat and beatitude.

struggle to hold tight to his phantasy of the hero-rake, goes through a demythification process until he is confronted with his own impotence: he dies a eunuch.

Immediately following the rape scene, it is essential that Clarissa should suffer a period of purgation in the form of derangement if she is ever to be cleansed from the taint of sexuality. The dynamic of the "disordered mind" of the rape victim is artistically explored in ten[10] scraps of paper which manage to convey "how her mind works now she is in this whimsical way" (3, p. 204) while adhering to the rigidly structured epistolary form. What must be recognized is that the disordering and reordering of experience that takes place during delirium is akin to the mechanics of dream-work. It has been stated that dreams are a brief madness and madness a long dream[11] since each form of mental activity is characterized by the flight and association of ideas, the acuteness of visual perception, the reliance on past events and the fulfillment of wishes. In addition, as evident in Clarissa's delirious condition, the vacillating movement of thoughts and attitudes indicates the genesis of a splitting of the

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[10]It is interesting to note that, according to the Dictionary of Symbols, ten is symbolic of the return to unity, of spiritual achievement and marriage.

[11]Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams, p. 162.

personality into two separate and distinct states of consciousness: Clarissa emerges as both punisher and punished, as inferior and superior, as innocent and guilty.

Clarissa's first paper marks the struggle to give order to the dishevelled intellect, to place her rambling thoughts in a framework. It is fitting that her first attempt at communication should be directed to Miss Howe since it had long been their condition of correspondence to "recite facts" (1, p. 4) and provide "minute descriptions" (1, p. 5) of events. What becomes evident in this fragment is Clarissa's inability to articulate the circumstances of the rape:

> I sat down to say a great deal -- my heart was full -- I did not know what to say first -- and thought, and grief, and confusion, and (O my poor head!) I cannot tell what -- and thought, and grief, and confusion, came crowding so thick upon me; one would be first, another would be first, all would be first, so I can write nothing at all. Only that, whatever they have done to me, I cannot tell; but I am no longer what I was in any one thing. In any one thing did I say? Yes, but I am; for I am still, and ever will be,
>
> Your true
> (3, p. 205)

With the rupture of the maidenhead is the loss of identity: Clarissa has forgotten her name. Yet, despite this elliptical fragment, it is essential to note that the state of "thought, and grief, and confusion" never gives way to shame or guilt. As Lovelace angrily remarks, this "eloquent nonsense" rather shows "a raised than a quenched imagination." (3, p. 205)

Mark Kinkead-Weekes suggests that, in the second paper, Clarissa's "love for her father remains real and because of it she asserts that the bond between father and child cannot be broken."[12] Perhaps, but there is a sufficiently ambiguous ring to her words to suggest spite, sarcasm and unbroken stubborness:

> I don't presume to think, you should receive me -- no, indeed! My name is -- I don't know what my name is! I never dare to wish to come into your family again! But your heavy curse, my papa -- yes, I will call you papa, and help yourself as you can -- for you are my own dear papa, whether you will or not -- and though I am an unworthy child -- yet I am your child. (3, p. 206)

There is a determined wilfulness of tone, a subtle hauteur which hurls the burden of responsibility for and the shame of the prodigal daughter in the face of a father who relinquishes his favour. And the sting of her earlier frenzied warning is felt:

> I called upon her [aunt] to witness, that I was guiltless of the consequences of this compulsion, this barbarous compulsion, I called it ... such usage, I said set me above fear... I would rejoice to owe by death to him [father], as I did my life. (1, p. 430)

The inability of Clarissa to rectify her unwitting vacillation between an attraction for and a repulsion from

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[12]Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist, p. 234.

the sexsual, aggressive male poses a threat to the puritanical image she has entertained of herself. In the third paper, she is haunted by a nightmarish vision of the destructive passion hidden within her breast. It is a beast fable which reveals a stable, controlled mental attitude missing in her first ramblings:

> A lady took a great fancy to a young lion, or a bear, I forget which -- but a bear, or a tiger, I believe it was. It was made her a present of when a whelp. She fed it with her own hand: she nursed up the wicked cub with great tenderness; and would play with it without fear or apprehension of danger: and it was obedient to all her commands: and its tameness, as she used to boast, increased with its growth; so that, like a lapdog, it would follow her all over the house. But mind what followed: at last, somehow, neglecting to satisfy its hungry maw, or having otherwise disobliged it on some occasion, it resumed its nature; and on a sudden fell upon her, and tore her in pieces. And who was most to blame, I pray? The brute, or the lady? The lady, surely! For what she did was out of nature, out of character, at least: what it did was in its own nature. (3, p. 206)

Here, the ambivalent nature of Clarissa's struggle with Lovelace is revealed as a desire to reduce the potent male to a powerless "lapdog", a castrated "cub". Here, one recalls Miss Howe's congratulatory remark that Clarissa is "the first of our sex that ever I heard of who has been able to turn that lion, Love, at her own pleasure, into a lap-dog." (1, p. 49) And here, as Cynthia Griffin Wolff comments, "is

where Clarissa's desperate fantasies have led her."[13] Out of this phantasy comes the realization that the lady has been the master of the situation, a realization which is vivid proof of her omnipotent control over the male. Even in her confessions, Clarissa is still imperious and proud.

Kinkead-Weekes erroneously identifies Clarissa's flaw as the sin of spiritual pride, as evidenced by the "language of puritan introspection[14], in the fourth paper. Surely, Clarissa's pride is pride of the flesh and her language strikes a mocking tone:

> How art thou now, humbled in the dust, thou proud Clarissa Harlowe! Thou that never steppedst out of thy father's house but to be admired! Who wert wont to turn thine eye, sparkling with healthful life, and self-assurance, to different objects at once as thou passedst, as if (for so thy penetrating sister used to say) to plume thyself upon the unexpected applauses of all that beheld thee! Thou that usedst to go to rest satisfied with the adulations paid thee in the past day, and couldst put off everything but thy vanity! (3, p. 206)

The theme of carnal pride is sustained in the fifth paper. This time, Clarissa's flaw is diminished by the subtle accusation against a sister who "penetrated my proud heart with the jealousy of an elder sister's searching eye." (3, p. 207)

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[13]Cynthia Griffin Wolff, Samuel Richardson and the Eighteenth-Century Puritan Character, p. 151.

[14]Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist, p. 235.

The sixth paper, like an inverted epithalamion, laments the loss of the maidenhead before the nuptial threshold: "Who now shall assist in the solemn preparation? Who now shall provide the nuptial ornaments, which soften and divert the apprehensions of the fearful virgin?" (3, p. 207) Not only does the virgin fear penetration but rape signals the ultimate narcissistic wound: the tainted woman can no longer be exalted as the object of envy:

> No court now to be paid to my smiles! No encouraging compliments to inspire thee with hopes of laying a mind not unworthy of thee under obligation! No elevation now for conscious merit, and applauded purity, to look down from on a prostrate adorer and an admiring world, and up to pleased and rejoicing parents and relations. (3, p. 207)

What this scene embodies is a puerile phantasy not unlike a fairy-tale in which the princess is indulged ceremoniously by her admiring audience. Moreover, there has been a total reversal of the moral conscience noted in the fourth paper.

By the seventh paper, the anger and rage is turned directly against Lovelace. In a bitter sardonic piece of prose, Clarissa looks down on her aggressor as from a pulpit to deliver her fire and brimstone sermon:

> Thou pernicious caterpillar, that preyest upon the fair leaf of virgin fame, and poisonest those leaves which thou canst not devour!
>
> Thou fell blight, thou eastern blast, thou overspreading mildew, that destroyest the early promises of the shining year! that mockest the barbarous toil, and blastest the joyful hopes, of

> the painful husbandman!
> Thous fretting moth, that corruptist the fairest garment!
> Thous eating canker-worm, that preyest upon the opening bud, and turnest the damask roses into livid yellowness!
> If, as religion teaches us, God will judge us, in a great measure, by our benovolent or evil actions to one another -- O wretch! bethink thee, how great must be they condemnation! (3, pp. 207-208)

With the shake of a finger, the confession that the lady "was most to blame" is obliterated, Lovelace is reduced to vermin and the "sharp-witted" tongue of Clarissa regains the rhetoric of a pride-ridden superior being.

In the two succeeding papers, this rediscovered sense of superiority gives Clarissa the impetus to deny any duplicity of intention: "Yet God knows my heart, I had no culpable inclinations! I honoured virtue! I hated vice! But I knew not that you were vice itself!" (3, p. 208) Nevertheless, the final paper is a poetic expression of Clarissa's vacillating consciousness, a prayer for peaceful solitude and a swan song to signal death.

Mark Kinkead-Weekes offers a somewhat naive interpretation of the movement of the papers when he states: "What we have been watching is a personality disintegrated and remade; a successful search for reorientation after what Richardson clearly thought was the most damaging and

challenging blows a woman could suffer."[15] Yet, in terms of the scenario, Clarissa never mends her broken "head" or repairs her divided unconscious. In effect, what the papers provide is a narcissistic regrouping of her grandiose sense of self, a reparation of self-esteem. Her final paper marks a complete reversal from its predecesor:

> O my Miss Howe! if thou hast friendship, help me,
> And speak the words of peace to my divided Soul,
> That wars within me,
> And raises ev'ry sense to my confusion.
> I'm tott'ring on the brink
> Of peace; and thou art all the hold I've left!
> Assist me -- in the pangs of my affliction!
>
> When Honour's lost, 'tis a relief to die:
> Death's but a sure retreat from infamy.
>
> Then farewell, Youth,
> And all the joys that dwell
> With Youth and Life!
> And Life itself, farewell!
>
> For Life can never be sincerely blest.
> Heav'n punishes the Bad, and proves the Best.
> (3, p. 209)

What occurs is the final splitting of consciousness into "Bad" and "Best". Her ramblings unwittingly lead to the construction of a new delusional system in which one part of herself seeks purification in order to embrace an ever-loving Father while

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[15] Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist, p. 240.

the other part, that part of herself which has been 'poisoned' by sexuality, seeks "a hold deep enough to cram this unhappy body." (3, p. 235)

For his own part, Lovelace is left ineffectual after the rape: his phantasy of mastery has been exposed as a vapourish sham and he is rendered impotent. Despite all efforts to reinstate himself on the throne of masculine superiority, he can only sit by while Clarissa shows him to be a "fool", a "miscreant", an "unmanly blockhead".

The events of the rape are re-enacted in a modified form in an elaborate plot, half dream and half reverie,which is designed to fulfill Lovelace's desire for control. What the dream offers is a new version of the rape, a version aimed at restoring earlier phantasies and proving the validity of the rake's maxim, "once subdued and always subdued":

> Methought it was about nine on Wednesday morning that a chariot, with a dowager's arms upon the doors, and in it a grave matronly lady [not unlike Mother H. in the face; but in her heart O how unlike!] stopped at a grocer's shop about ten doors on the other side of the way, in order to buy some groceries: and methought Dorcas, having been out to see if the coast was clear for her lady's flight, and if a coach were to be got near the place, espied this chariot with the dowager's arms, and this matronly lady: and what, methought, did Dorcas, that subtle traitress, do, but whip up to the old matronly lady, and, lifting up her voice, say, Good my lady, permit me one word with your ladyship!

"You seem, madam, to be a very good lady; and here, in this neighborhood, at a house of no high repute, is an innocent lady of high rank and fortune, beautiful as a May Morning, and youthful as a rosebud, and full as sweet and lovely; who has been tricked thither by a wicked gentleman, practised in the ways of the town; and this very night will she be ruined, if she get not out of his hands. Now, O lady! if you will extend your compassionate goodness to this fair young lady, in who, the moment you behold her, you will see cause to believe all I say: and let her have a place in your chariot, and remain in your protection for one day only, till she can send a man and horse to her rich and powerful friends; you may save from ruin a lady who has no equal for virtue as well as beauty."

Methought the old lady, moved with Dorcas's story, answered and said, "Hasten, O damsel, who in a happy moment art come to put it in my power to serve the innocent and the virtuous, which it has always been my delight to do; Hasten to this young lady, and bid her hie hither to me with all speed; and tell her that my chariot shall be her asylum: and if I find all that thou sayest true, my house shall be her sanctuary, and I will protect her from all oppressors."

Hereupon, methought, this traitress Dorcas hied back to the lady, and made report of what she had done. And, methought, the lady highly approved of Dorcas's proceeding, and blessed her for her good thought.

And I lifted up mine eyes, and behold the lady issued out of the house, and without looking back, ran to the chariot with the dowager's coat upon it, and was received by the matronly lady with open arms, and "Welcome, welcome, welcome, fair young lady, who so well answers the description of the faithful damsel: and I will carry you instantly to my house, where you shall meet with all the good usage your heart can wish

for, till you can apprise your rich and powerful friends of your past dangers, and present escape."

"Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, worthy, thrice worthy lady, who afford so kindly your protection to a most unhappy young creature, who has been basely seduced and betrayed, and brought to the very brink of destruction." Methought, then, the matronly lady, who had by the time the young lady came to her, bought and paid for the goods she wanted, ordered her coachman to drive home will all speed; who stopped not till he had arrived in a certain street not far from Lincoln's Inn Fields, where the matronly lady lived in a sumptuous dwelling, replete with damsels who wrought curiously in muslins, cambrics, and fine linen, and in every good work that industrious damsals love to be employed about, except the loom and the spinning-wheel.

And methought, all the way the young lady and the old lady rode, and after they came in, till dinner was ready, the young lady filled up the time with the dismal account of her wrongs and her sufferings, the like of which was never heard by mortal ear; and this in so moving a manner, that the good old lady did nothing but weep, and sigh, and sob, and inveigh against the arts of wicked men, and against that abominable Squire Lovelace, who was a plotting villain, methought she said; and, more than that, an unchained Beelzebub.

Methought I was in a dreadful agony, when I found the lady had escaped; and in my wrath had like to have slain Dorcas, and our mother, and every one I met. But, by some quick transition, and strange metamorphosis, which dreams do not usually account for, methought, all of a sudden, this matronly lady was turned into the famous Mother H. herself; and, being an old aquaintance of Mother Sinclair, was prevailed upon to assist in my plot upon the young lady.

Then, methought, followed a strange scene; for, Mother H. longing to hear more of the young lady's story, and night being come, besought her to accept a place in her own bed, in order to have all the talk to themselves. For, methought, two young neices of hers had broken in upon them in the middle of the dismal tale.

Accordingly, going early to bed, and the sad story being resumed, with as great earnestness on one side, as attention on the other, before the young lady had gone far in it, Mother H. methought, was taken with a fit of the colic; and her tortures increasing, was obliged to rise to get a cordial she used to find specific in this disorder, to which she was unhappily subject.

Having thus risen, and stepped to her closet, methought she let fall the wax taper in her return; and then [O metamorphosis still stranger than the former! What unaccountable things are dreams!] coming to beg again in the dark, the young lady, to her infinite astonishment, grief, and surprise, found Mother H. turned into a young person of the other sex: and although Lovelace was the abhorred of her soul, yet, fearing it was some other person, it was matter of some consolation to her, when she found it was no other than himself, and that she had been still the bedfellow of but one and the same man.

A strange promiscuous huddle of adventures followed; scenes perpetually shifting; now nothing heard from the lady but sighs, groans, exclamations, faintings, dyings -- from the gentleman but vows, promises, protestations, disclaimers of purposes pursued, and all the gentle and ungentle pressures of the lover's warfare.

Then, as quick as thought (for dreams, thou knowest, confine not themselves to the rules of the drama) ensued recoveries, lyings-in, christenings, the smiling boy, amply, even in her own opinion, rewarding the suffering mother.

> Then the grandfather's estate yielded up, possession taken of it: living very happily upon it: her beloved Norton her companion; Miss Howe her visitor; and (admirable! thrice admirable!) enabled to compare notes with her; a charming girl, by the same father, to her charming boy; who, as they grow up, in order to consolidate their mammas' friendships (for neither have dreams regard to consanguinity), intermarry; change names by Act of Parliament, to enjoy my estate -- and I know not what of the like of the incongruous stuff...
>
> But I forgot to tell thee one part of my dream; and that was that the next morning the lady gave way to such transports of grief and resentment, that she was with difficulty diverted from making an attempt upon her own life. But, however, at last was prevailed upon to resolve to live, and to make the best of the matter: a letter, methought, from Captain Tomlinson helping to pacify her, written to apprise me that her Uncle Harlowe could certainly be at Kentish Town on Wednesday night June 28, the following day (the 29th) being his birthday; and he doubly desirous on that account that our nuptials should be then privately solemnized in his presence. (3, 248-251)

Structured on a complex of wishes, this dream dynamically fulfills the phantasies of waking life. The source of the earliest movement of the dream, the calculated escape of Clarissa, can be traced immediately to the previous day when, after engaging the sympathy of Dorcas, Clarissa designs to "throw myself into the first open house I can find; and beg protection till I can get a coach, or a lodging in some honest family." (3, p. 245) Moreover, Lovelace's confession

that if Clarissa were to effect an escape "the triumph she will have over me upon it will be a counterbalance for all she has suffered. I will oblige her if I can" (3, p. 247) is allowed disguised fulfillment in the dream. By imagining her successful escape with the aid of his surrogate, Dorcas, Lovelace can atone for the guilt of his actions and , at the same time, allow himself to regain her on his own terms.

The portion of the dream, "brought to the very brink of destruction", harks back to Clarissa's delirious cry; "I'm tottering on the brink/ of peace." (3, p. 209) This time, however, Lovelace not only acts as her persecutor, but he becomes the agent of rescue. In the dream, Clarissa's fearful ejaculation is followed by her effective escape and her slandering of Lovelace, the "unchained Beelzebub". Once again, the language of the dream has reproduced a phrase from waking life for, following the actual rape, Lovelace had acknowledged himself in an identical manner.[15] In a sense, then, the rake has identified himself with his victim.

Inherent in his fabrication of phantasy is the

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[15]See Clarissa, 3, p. 202.

process of metamorphosis[16] so characteristic of Lovelace's imaginative inventions in waking life. We again recall the inability of the rake to maintain his own identity, his compulsion to avoid detection. More important, the fact that he is transformed from a woman into a man recalls the ambiguous circumstances of the rape in which he requires the aid of mother Sinclair in order to affect his performance. And, Clarissa's frantic ramblings echo: "Alas! you have killed my head among you -- I don't say who did it!" (3, p. 211) Certainly, the underlying wishes of the phantasy of mastery, the need to merge with the female and the need to vent aggression, are the disguised intentions of this transformation process.

In the subsequent action of the dream, the rape is re-enacted in all its frenzied confusion. With a sudden scene change, the dream switches to a re-enactment of an earlier phantasy that Clarissa will bear the fruit that attests to Lovelace's potency. This imagined fecundity is made more powerful when connected with the previously held belief that Miss Howe loves him. She too bears a child, perhaps the

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[16] From a psychological point of view, Richardson's re-construction of a dream is incredible in its shifts of scene and frequency of metamorphosis. In effect, Richardson anticipates Freud's theories of dream-work, of condensation, displacement and means of representability, by a hundred years.

outcome of his kidnapping scheme, as a monument to his potency. The most demented portion of this part of the dream is the incestuous marriage he imagines between his son and daughter: with childlike narcissism, he must lay claim to all objects which can reflect and mirror his omnipotence and strengthen his grandiose sense of self.

The final instalment of the dream is a salve to sooth the guilty conscience. Not only does Clarissa's aquiescence relieve the anxiety that Clarissa is suicidal but, at the same time, it proves once and for all that "once subdued" is "always subdued". So Lovelace awakens refreshed, his unconscious wishes, fulfilled.

If, as Freud postulates, the form of the dream reflects the underlying wishes and subject matter, then the omnipotent stance of the narrator, maintained in the archaic style and the use of parenthetical statements, attests to underlying wishes: Lovelace feigns control over the fate of Clarissa. With the arrival of Tomlinson's letter, Lovelace dons the greatest, most powerful disguise of all: he imagines himself to be an artist figure who can magically transform contrivances and'excursions of fancy and imagination' into reality. Of course, Lovelace fails to realize that Clarissa is not an actress in a play, that she entertains her own inventions and that "such a lively fancy as hers will make a reality of a

jest at any time." (4, p. 260) With the realization that he cannot transform dreams into reality, Lovelace exclaims:

> What shall I say now! - - I who but a few hours ago had proposed out of hand to begin my treaties of dreams sleeping and dreams waking, and was pleasing myself with the dialoguings between the old matronly lady and the young lady; and with the two metamorphoses (also lately assured that everything would happen as my dream chalked it out), shall nevermore depend upon those flying follies, those illusions of a fancy depraved, and run mad. (3, p. 255)

He can no longer confuse phantasy and reality.

With the final escape of Clarissa, it becomes evident that the image of the hero-rake has soured; the puerile, make-believe world of phantasy has given way to a nightmare. Awakening in a "cursed fright", Lovelace relates the contents of a dream:

> Methought I had an interview with my beloved. I found her all goodness, condescension, and forgiveness. She suffered herself to be overcome in my favour by the joint intercessions of Lord M., Lady Sarah, Lady Betty, and my two Cousins Montague, who waited upon her in deep mourning; the ladies in long trains sweeping after them; Lord M. in a long black mantle trailing after him. They told her they came in these robes to express their sorrow for my sins against her, and to implore her to forgive me.
>
> "I myself, I thought, was upon my knees, with a sword in my hand, offering either to put it up in the scabbard, or to thrust it into my heart, as she should command the one or the other.

> "At that moment her Cousin Morden, I thought, all of a sudden, flashed in through a window with his drawn sword. Die, Lovelace! said he, this instant die, and be damned, if in earnest thou repairest not by marriage my cousin's wrongs!
>
> "I was rising to resent this insult, I thought, when Lord M. ran between us with his great black mantle, and threw it over his face: and instantly my charmer, with that sweet voice which has so often played upon my ravished ears, wrapped her arms round me, muffled as I was in my lord's mantle: O spare, spare my Lovelace! and spare, O Lovelace, my beloved Colonel Morden! Let me not have my distresses augmented by the fall of either or both of those who are so dear to me!
>
> "At this, charmed with her sweet mediation, I thought I would have clasped her in my arms: when immediately the most angelic form I had ever beheld, all clad in transparent white, descended in a cloud, which opening, discovered a firmament above it, crowded with golden cherubs and glittering seraphs, all addressing her with: Welcome, welcome, welcome! and encircling my charmer, ascended with her to the region of seraphims; and instantly, the opened cloud closing, I lost sight of her, and of the bright form together, and found wrapped in my arms her azure robe (all stuck thick with stars of embossed silver) which I had caught hold of in hopes of detaining her; but was all that was left me of my beloved Clarissa. And then (horrid to relate!) the floor sinking under me, as the firmament had opened for her, I dropped into a hole more frightful than that of Elden; and, tumbling over and over down it, without view of a bottom, I awakened in a panic; and was as effectually disordered for half an hour, as if my dream had been reality.
>
> (4, 135-136)

The most notable feature of the dream is the tumbling movement which signals the transformation of the wish to be rescued in-

to a need to be punished. It is at this point that censorship of suppressed thought breaks down and Lovelace is given a shocking glimpse at his hidden wishes and fears.

Through the process of condensation, this action of the dream takes on a psychical intensity for, drawing upon Lovelace's character to this point, it is clear that the fall derives its symbolic significance from a number of phantasies. First, this movement marks a reversal of his earlier boasts that the profligate will "tumble" his "prey into a pit". As an inversion of sexual roles, the action of the dream indicates that it is the male who is "ravished", tumbled and left passive while the female ascends, superior. Second, the vapourish dissolution of Clarissa signals the final act of deprivation and rejection from the nurturing female who feigns love. Finally, to be tumbled into a pit of darkness, symbolically associated with being swallowed up in the vagina,[16] marks the ultimate act of incorporation. Each of these components, heretofore kept under control by the instinct to mastery, comes closer to consciousness as Lovelace witnesses that Clarissa is the "triumphant subduer". (4, p. 323)

For two-thirds of the novel, the reader is caught in the web of the narrative's foreplay, initiated by Lovelace's

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[16]Eric Partridge, A Dictionary of Historical Slang p. 699.

compulsion to melt the "frost-piece" and Clarissa's determination to die gratified by the hands of her father. It is with the climax of the defloration of the maiden that the ultimate revenge on a life restrained by puritanical fears of the flesh and the confining sterility of paternal authoritarianism. The phantasy of being beaten has entered its final stage, has moved from masochism into sadism[17] as the child establishes her supremacy over her father. Indeed, her calculated death marks the final union with the Father. Triumph of orgasmic proportions is achieved on her death-bed as Clarissa pleads, arms extended, to her heavenly "husband": "--come -- O come -- blessed Lord -- JESUS!" (4, p. 347) But not before she has set herself up as a mythic Christ figure[18]: like a saviour taking on the sins of her family, Clarissa passes her hands over the crowd in a gesture of benediction:

> and I besought her, when a little recovered, to complete in my favour her half-pronounced blessing. She waved her hand to us both, and bowed her head six several times, as we have since recollected, as if distinguishing every

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[17] See Sigmund Freud, "Instincts And Their Vicissitudes", S.E., XlV, pp. 117-140.

[18] We recall Clarissa's words prior to the rape: "All I wish for, is the power of relieving the lame, the blind, the sick, and the industrious poor, whom accident has made so, or sudden distress reduced." (2, p. 395) Moreover we once again note the theme of androgeny.

> person present; not forgetting the nurse and the maid-servant; the latter having approached the bed, weeping, as if crowding in for the divine lady's last blessing and she spoke faltering and inwardly: Bless -- I bless -- bless you all--, (4, p. 347)

And so, Clarissa dies under the most grandiose delusion of all.

Martin Price offers a naive, evasive observation of Clarissa's preparation for death when he states that "if she prepares herself as the bride of Christ we need not shake our heads with post-Freudian condescension; she is herself making clear the disjunction between kinds of love, between the order of charity and Lovelace's order of the flesh or the Harlowe's love of power."[19] Price certainly fails to come to terms with the results of Clarissa's suffering -- she is the only one who benefits from her self-condemnation. Indeed, the entire family and all her aquaintances are left to suffer shame, guilt and unending remorse. As Dorothy Van Ghent confirms, "she keeps her cake while eating it -- a proverbial paradox that expresses aptly what happens in dreams, where the forbidden wish is indulged under the guise of non-indulgence."[20] And, in a macabre sense, Clarissa has to be raped in order to achieve her goal.

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[19]Martin Price, To The Palace Of Wisdom (Carbondale and Edwardsville, 1970), p. 284.

[20]Dorothy Van Ghent, "On Clarissa Harlowe", p. 64.

It is Lovelace, despite his own delirious mental condition, who draws attention to "the inconsistencies of her forgiving unforgivingness." (3, p. 508) As he later elaborates: "But I'll have none of her forgiveness! My own heart tells me I do not deserve it; and I cannot bear it! And what is it but a mere verbal forgiveness, as ostentatiously as cruelly given, with a view to magnify herself and wound me deeper?" (4, p. 326) Surely, Clarissa's posthumous letters bear this notion of duplicity out, for her words of exoneration are undercut by inculpation. Through a process of doing and undoing, her pardons are qualified by a reminder of guilt.[21]

In effect, Clarissa's character is inherently ambivalent: she is split into the asexual "angel" and the enchantress "Circe" (3, p. 318) who turns men, not into swine, but into castrated "cubs". Hers is a power which reduces men to weaklings. As Colonel Morden unwittingly points out:

> How wounding a thing, Mr. Belford, is a generous and well-distinguished forgiveness! What revenge can be more effectual, and more noble, were revenge intended, and were it wished to strike remorse into

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[21] In particular, we note the "forgiving unforgivingness" of Clarissa's final letter to Lovelace. Not only does she thank Lovelace for shortening her life but she insists: "I have long been greatly above you; for from my heart I have despised you, and all your ways ever since I saw what manner of man you were". (4, pp. 436-437)

a guilty or ungrateful heart!
(4, p. 430)

It is fitting that Clarissa should provide the major symbol for the novel: the "crowned serpent with its tail in its mouth" circumscribing the name, "CLARISSA HARLOWE". As a symbol of eternity, the ouroboros alternately mocks and compliments the stasis of Clarissa's psychological condition. By dating the inscription in correspondence with the date of her initial flight, she reveals the narcissistic element of her psyche, her self-fecundation.[22] Furthermore, the self-consuming phallus decrees the dynamic effect of masochism: ultimately, her passive submission is a mask for her potent aggressiveness.

Yet, the novel does not end here. In the final analysis, the tragedy belongs to Lovelace whose penitance is not tinged with the delusions which characterize Clarissa's closing scene. Kinkead-Weekes insists that the rake's final words signal the height of "pride and self-dramatization"[23] but surely, his death evokes a true sense of catharsis found lacking in Clarissa. Here, is a humble acknowledgment

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[22]As J.E. Cirlot documents, the ouroboros, the snake biting its own tail symbolized self-fecundation because of the narcissistic suggestion of a self-sufficient Nature. See A Dictionary of Symbols, pp. 246-247.

[23]Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist, p. 275.

of guilt:

> Blessed - - said he, addressing himself no doubt to Heaven; for his dying eyes were lifted up. A strong convulsion prevented him for a few moments saying more, but recovering, he again, with great fervour (lifting up his eyes and his spread hands) pronounced the word blessed. Then, in a seeming ejaculation, he spoke inwardly, so as not to be understood: at last he distinctly pronounced these three words,
>
> LET THIS EXPIATE!
>
> (4, p. 530)

It is the final ejaculation of a man who has been forced to abandon his make-believe world where "dreams sleeping and dreams waking" abound.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

It has been the purpose of this thesis to offer a psychoanalytic investigation of dreams and phantasies in Richardson's Clarissa. What this study demonstrates is that the novel consists of patterns of psychological activity in which conscious statements and reactions emerge, in disguised forms, in the dreams and phantasies. Through the use of displacement, condensation and symbolization, these dreams and phantasies provide insight into the underlying motivations of Clarissa and Lovelace.

If, as this thesis postulates, Clarissa is imprisoned in self-deception at the time of her death and Lovelace dies with an acute awareness of his culpability, then the critic must raise inevitable questions concerning the effect of dreams and phantasies on characterization. The analysis of Clarissa's dream prior to her flight indicates that her conflict with Lovelace unwittingly repeats her conflict with her father. In fact, it becomes evident that Clarissa's masochistic passivity is calculated to reap vengeance on a father who threatens to injure her narcissistic self-image. As a result, despite the exaltation of Clarissa as the exemplar of her sex, the analysis of her dreams and phantasies

reveals that her masochistic (passive) attitude masks a sadistic (aggressive) tendency. Similarly, Lovelace's phantasies of potency are revealed as defensive manoeuvres aimed at denying his own effeminacy. In addition, Lovelace's delirium and dreams reveal that the male is ineffectual and in danger of being unmanned by the potent female.

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