'SHADES OF THE PRISON-HOUSE':

THE DISCIPLINING OF THE VICTORIAN LITERARY ORPHAN

BY

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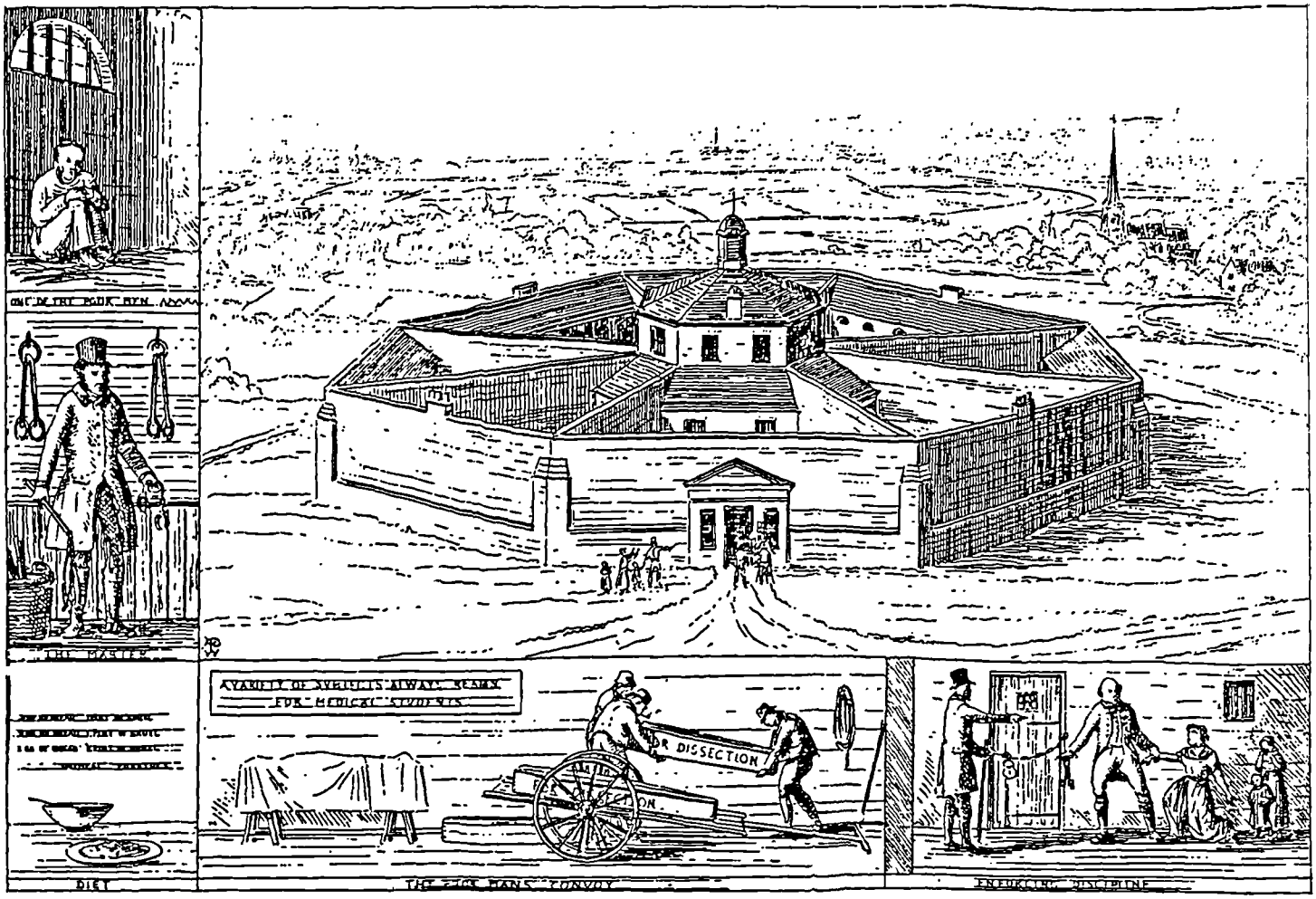
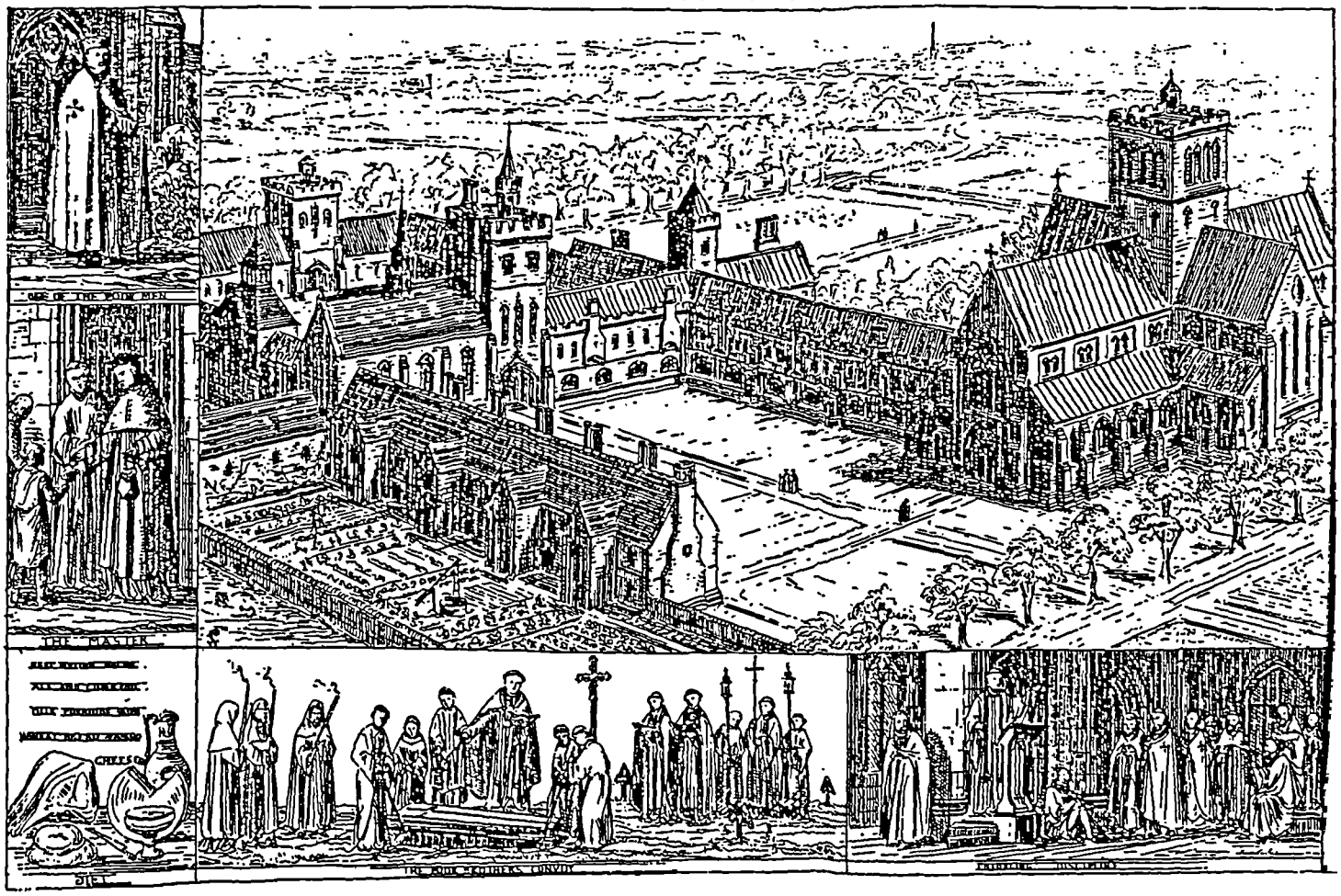
MODERN POOR HOUSE



CONTRASTED RESIDENCES FOR THE POOR

ANTIENT POOR HOYSE.



It was sad to see the child who had no name or lineage, watching the other children as they played, not knowing how to talk with them, or sport with them, and more strange to the way of childhood than a rouge dog. It was sad, though in a different way, to see what instinctive knowledge the youngest children there, had of his being different from all the rest.

- Charles Dickens, 'The Haunted Man'

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3 Frontispiece from the National Edition of Charles Dickens's *Little Dorrit*, part I (London: Chapman & Hall Ltd., 1907), vol. XXIV. *page 189a*

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Abstract

The Victorian fictive orphan as an aesthetic trope hypostatises a cultural moment in which the bourgeois ideology of the family attains a socio-political universal status. This thesis considers how the mode of narrating (what I will call the penal narrative) the orphan in mid-Victorian literature reflects the ideology of the age: this penal narrative is a product of the Grand Narrative of the family which surveys and attempts to neutralise the orphan. This neutralisation manifests itself in the production of orphan fictional autobiographies which are increasingly confessional in nature. The 'Introduction' undertakes to contextualise the fictive orphan in three ways: cultural-historically through a consideration of the rise of the bourgeois ideology of the family; aesthetically through a consideration of Wordsworthian Romanticism which fetishised the child; and theoretically through a consideration of Girard's notion of the scapegoat, Althusser's concept of ideology and Foucault's documentation of disciplinary techniques. The first chapter on Victorian Orphan Popular Literature deals with the production of the orphan as trope; establishing the orphan as representative of both a textual attitude and of the discursive regime of the period which articulates this new structure of feeling. This chapter considers how the discourse of orphanhood, in intersecting with other Victorian cultural discourses (especially high culture, religion and popular literature) forms a literary subgenre. The second chapter will analyse Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop* in which the orphans function primarily as redemptive child-orphans who do not grow. The third chapter deals with the novels *Jane Eyre*, *Vanity Fair* and *David Copperfield*. This chapter reads these narratives as penal narratives - functioning to neutralise and assimilate the orphan. The resistance offered by the orphan figures arises from their spiritual power inherited from their Romantic aesthetic genealogy. Chapter Four, in considering *Villette* and *Little Dorrit*, identifies a shift in the function of fictional autobiographical narrative from the creation to confession. In these narratives the notion of orphanhood is also extended to a socio-political status as Lucy Snowe and Arthur Clennam are orphan outcasts bereft of the family of the nation-state. This chapter also explore to what extent these narratives interpellate the reader into an agent for bourgeois ideology. Chapter Five reads George Eliot's *Silas Marner* as a hybrid between high art and fairy tale which endeavours to mythologise the notion of family (in a Barthesian notion of myth). This chapter will form the conclusion of the thesis in its attempt to extend the notion of the orphan as a cultural trope and ultimately an imperial trope.

Introduction: The Family and the Orphan-Scapegoat

I.1 Synopsis

The Victorian fictive orphan as an aesthetic trope hypostatises a cultural moment in which the bourgeois ideology of the family attains a socio-political universal status. Consequently, as the family progressively constitutes a metaphor for the Victorian nation-state[1], the orphan figure assumes a metaphoric status as the representative of the 'Other' Victorians - namely, the marginalised poor, the alienated lower classes, women and the colonised peoples subjected under the empire. In short, the orphan embodies the marginalisation and difference located within the heart of Victorian culture which the family tries to assimilate and thus to neutralise. In doing so, the ideology of the family, in conjunction with other ideologies *e.g.*, scientific discourse, tries to posit the Victorian nation-state as universal and thus creates an ahistorical moment - a moment which in robbing the cultural and historical specificities serves to 'orphan...the Victorian age of its sense of its own past'[2].

The first section of this chapter will endeavour to establish the historical context of the rise of the bourgeois ideology of the family and to highlight the defining characteristics of this ideology. I will explore how this ideology manifested itself in middle class everyday life and its response when under threat. Then I will attempt to establish a parallel aesthetic contextualisation of the Victorian orphan figure, tracing its literary genealogy to a Wordsworthian Romanticism which fetishised the child. This fetishism, I will argue, created a cult of childhood which led directly to the spiritual and artistic empowerment of the solitary orphan figure in early Victorian fiction. The ramifications of this contestation on fictional autobiography in which, as Nina Auerbach argues 'Orphanhood...[has come] to stand for pure selfhood'[3] - as the 'primary metaphor for the dispossessed, detached self' whose 'solitude energises him as a visionary artist'[4] - are very significant in their effect on the mode of narrating the orphan. Equally influential on the mode of narrating the orphan is the notion of the family as ideology which begins to encroach, in the form of a confessional narrative, on the fictional autobiographical narrative. Implicit to my argument is the identification of the figure of the Victorian literary orphan figure as a site of contestation for the competing ideologies of the

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[1] *cf.* Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle-Class* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1992).
[2] Nina Auerbach, 'Incarnations of the Orphan,' *English Literary History* 42 (1975): 410.
[3] *Ibid.*, 403.
[4] *Ibid.*, 395.

Romantic individual and the Victorian bourgeois ideology of the family. In the third section, I offer a theoretical conceptualisation of the cultural site in which the contestation of the orphan's selfhood takes place. I will explore René Girard's concept of how a community vents its violence through a process of scapegoating with a view to suggesting links between the practice of ritualised violence in primitive societies and Louis Althusser's notion of the practice of material rituals in a capitalist formation in order to account for the historical specificities of the mid-Victorian community. It is through a process of scapegoating, whereby the scapegoat becomes both the embodiment of difference which threatens the familial community and simultaneously the difference necessary for the family's unified self-definition, that the family ideology attempts to achieve this neutralisation. In what becomes a binary dynamic the family ideology has to define itself against its 'Others'. The figure of the orphan, as one who by definition falls outside this family ideology, exists as an uninterpellated individual against whom the family defines itself. In the final section I will, in linking Foucault to Althusser, utilise Foucault's conceptualisation of the repressive mechanisms of the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) and State Apparatuses (SAs). Althusser defines the ISAs as including religious, educational, and legal institutions, the family, the political system, communications industry and cultural products, while the SAs include the Government, the Administration, the Army, the Police, the Courts, and the Prisons.

What I will be primarily concerned with, in this thesis, is not the actual dynamics of the scapegoating process but rather how the mode of narrating the orphan in mid-Victorian literature reflects the ideology of the age. Thus, I will offer a suggestion of how the theoretical conceptual model outlined above could be seen to affect both the way in which the orphan is represented and the mode of narration in mid-Victorian fiction in general. In doing this, I will focus on the representation in literature both of the Ideological State Apparatus and, where necessary, the State Apparatus as the agencies of the family ideology which systematically target the orphan. The rise of modern penal discourse in Victorian England, which I suggest corresponds with the increasing use of the repressive State Apparatus (the creation of the Bow Street Runners and the subsequent rise is police detection, the increasing use of penal colonies, etc.), gives rise to a penal narrative which has ramifications in literature beyond the rise of the genre of detective fiction. I want to suggest that this penal narrative is a product of the Grand Narrative of the family which surveys and attempts to neutralise the orphan. This neutralisation manifests itself in the production of orphan fictional autobiographies which are increasingly confessional in nature.

I.2 Socio-Cultural Contextualisation

The middle classes took shape in the late decades of the 1700's and the early decades of the 1800's. Historically, the late Regency, early Victorian era was a period of growth and upheaval for England. The forging of class both produced and required 'the endemic separation of social categories which [exaggerated...] differences between groups [...]to create a "semblance of order"'[5]. In this section, I will first explore the identity of the middle class membership and the key characteristics of the bourgeois ideology.

Membership in the middle classes was mainly determined by income which could range from a few hundred pounds *per annum* to a few thousand pounds.[6] As Louis Althusser argues in 'On Ideology', the middle classes gained power during the nineteenth century by debunking the aristocracy and laying claim to moral and cultural authority. Or as Davidoff and Hall argue:

> [They] sought to translate their increasing economic weight into a moral and cultural authority. Their claim to moral superiority was at the heart of their challenge to an earlier aristocratic hegemony. They sought to exercise this moral authority not only within their own communities and boundaries, but in relation to other classes[...they critiqued] the established dominance of the landed class and[...believed] in their capacity to control and improve the working class.[7]

What the middle classes sought, as Pierre Bourdieu argues, was the social reproduction of the cultural economy through the agency of class and education.[8] As the industrial and provincial middle classes gain power they differentiate themselves from their working class employees through a class definition of family and Evangelical religious belief.

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[5]M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), 15.

[6]Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850* (London: Routledge, 1987), 23.

[7]*Ibid.*, 30.

[8]*cf.* Pierre Bourdieu, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London: Sage, 1977) and *Language and Symbolic Power* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1991).

> Foremost among those distinctive identities was the association between the middle class and a Christian way of life so that by mid century adherence to evangelical Protestant forms had become an accepted part of respectability if not gentility.[9]

This differentiation eventually translated into a differentiation of space. Initially, the middle classes separated themselves from what they saw as the corrupt influence of society - on a physical level by moving away from the working classes into the suburbs and on a social level by constructing an alternate social community through the church or chapel. 'Categories of purity and pollution, the separating of the useful from waste, weeds and rubbish were invoked by scientific and sanitary movements to control noxious materials, sights, sounds, smells - and people'.[10] However, this demarcation progressively became a defining feature of the middle class home.

> [There were] concrete threats which surrounded many middle class families. Along with the continuing political unrest, the exigencies of poverty, brutality, pressing sexuality, disease and death were all to familiar. Against these, people struggled to control their destiny through religious grace and the bulwark of family property and resources. These shields took practical as well as symbolic form in middle class homes and gardens and in the organisation of the immediate environment through behaviour, speech and dress.[11]

As the Tory journalist T.W. Croker commented in 1843, there was a kind of 'Christian tint over the general aspect of society'[12]. It was definitely the zeal of the serious Christians which 'played a vital part in establishing the cultural practices and institutions which were to become characteristic hallmarks of the middle classes'[13]. It is difficult to understand these middle classes outside of a religious context.

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[9]Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 76.
[10]*Ibid.*, 27.
[11]*Ibid.*, 357.
[12]Quoted in H. McLeod, 'White collar values and the role of religion', in G. Crossick (ed.), *The Lower Middle Class in Britain*, 1979.
[13]Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 76.

> It was religious force and moral probity which allowed men to make the claim that 'Christian men emerging from the bosom of their families carry godliness with them'[14].

The linkage of Christianity, godliness and the family was crucial. 'Christians shared a core of beliefs in the central importance of the family...[and] that the home must be that basis for a proper moral order in the amoral world of the market'[15]. The private then forms the ideological foundation for the shaping of the public in its image.

> The extent of the Evangelical drive was associated with the crisis they felt confronted English society, particularly after the French Revolution. The nation, they believed, was suffering from moral degeneracy. Events in France were a warning of what was to come if individuals did not inspire a revolution in the 'manners and morals' of the nation, a transformation which must begin with individual salvation[...]Individual faith was the key to moral regeneration, and the primary setting for maintaining faith was a religious family and household.[16]

For the family the orphan becomes the scapegoat - necessary for ideological definition and unification.

The family was in reality a wide ranging and inclusive concept - it often referred to anyone under the roof (*i.e.*, servants, visitors, lodgers as well as children and relatives). But what is crucial is that the family was strictly a hierarchical and patriarchal structure in which the father was the most powerful figure. In addition as the literal family increasingly became associated with middle class culture[17], so too did the concept of the family form a cornerstone in bourgeois ideology.

As these middle classes gain control of the State Apparatuses and 'aspired for inclusion in the governing strata',[18] the bourgeois ideologies of the family and Evangelical religion form the dominant ideology to which all are subjected. This

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[14]T.W. Davids, 'England's obligations to her pious men'. Sermon preached at Lion Walk Congregational Church, Colchester April 9, 1848, *Essex Sermons* (Colchester, no date).

[15]Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 74.

[16]*Ibid.*, 82-3.

[17]*cf.* Dorothy Crozier's work on the family in 'Kinship and occupational succession', *Sociological Review*, 13 (1965).

[18]Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 23.

dominant subject position reinforces itself by displacing its anxieties, failures, and occasionally desires, on to the 'Other' - in this case the orphan. At this point it is necessary to define the term orphan. I use the term orphan not only in its literal sense *i.e.*, a child bereft of parents, but also in its metaphorically suggestive sense as one marginalised from the dominant ideology of the family. Hence, I will analyse not only the literary representation of the literal orphan but also of those (foundlings and adult-orphans) who are represented in discourse as metaphoric orphans lacking the definitive familial links. This lack often directly translates into a lack of crucial social links.

However, in direct contradiction to the bourgeois claim to the family, Marx was arguing that capitalism, the source of empowerment for the bourgeoisie and bourgeois ideology, was actually destroying both the familial arrangement of the patriarchal feudal society and basic interpersonal relationships.

> The bourgeoisie has torn apart the many feudal ties that bound men to their 'natural superiors', and left no other bond between man and man than naked interest, than callous cash payment[...]The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and turned the family relation into a pure money relation[...]In place of exploitation veiled by religious and political illusions, it has put open, shameless, direct, naked exploitation.[19]

More recently, Harold Perkin has read the birth of class as not only destroying this larger family model but as working to alienate the classes from each other.

> The birth of class - the breakdown of the old vertical relationships of patronage[...]was from the point of view of the old society a process of alienation: alienation, that is, of the middle and lower ranks or orders from the higher[...]Alienation proceeded from both ends of the scale. Emancipation was counterbalanced, and indeed provoked, by a rejection on the part of the higher ranks[...of] paternal protection and responsibility.[20]

This alienation of the classes produced by capitalism was further solidified in the adoption of Evangelical belief[21] as a key element of bourgeois ideology while the

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[19]Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967, 82).

[20]Harold Perkin, *Origins of Modern English Society* (1969. London: Routledge, 1991), 182.

[21]However it should be noted here that Methodist-Evangelicalism was originally a low Church movement which sought to proselytise the rural and urban poorer classes. This proselytising desire should be read in conjunction with the workings of bourgeois ideology as an act of agency.

working classes increasingly adopted an indifference to religion. This indifference became perceived as a threat to bourgeois ideology.

> What was new in the Industrial Revolution, apart from the acceleration and increased scale of change, was the development for the first time not merely of scepticism or atheism in isolated individuals or groups but of entire social layers in which non-allegiance to any church was the norm and adherence the exception[...]It spread to large areas of the urban working class up to the craftsman level, and even affected a considerable section of the middle class. Indeed, it helps to explain one of the sharpest paradoxes of the nineteenth century, the emergence, in the midst of the greatest revival of religious faith since the middle ages, of the agnosticism or indifference which was to be the dominant spiritual position in modern Britain.[22]

However, the working class threat perceived by bourgeois ideology actually arose from their own capitalist practices. Perversely, it is the alienation of the working class from established religion (thus encouraging radical religious practices, *e.g.*, Luddites and Chartists) or from religion entirely that led the bourgeois to perceive the working class as morally degenerate and thus feeding into middle class claims to moral authority.

Ut supra, the rise of capitalism, in destroying the feudal society also destroyed the familial nature of this society. But in addition, the demands of capitalism and the demands of the labour market, also threatened to destroy the fabric of the individual family unit. In 1836, Lord Ashley noted that, 'Domestic life and domestic discipline must soon be at an end; society will consist of individuals no longer grouped into families; so early is the separation of husband and wife, of parents and children'[23]. The economic hardship of the working class combined with the rise in child labour redefined what was perceived as traditional family relationships. In 1836 in *Artisans and Machinery*, Philip Gaskell issued a warning about the threat that the degeneration of the larger familial organisation posed to society:

Also, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2, the bourgeoisie used religion to assert their moral and spiritual authority.

[22]Perkin, *Origins of Modern English Society*, 202-03.

[23]E. Hodder, *Life and Work of 7th Earl of Shaftesbury* (1923), 234.

> A household thus constituted, in which all the decencies and moral observances of domestic life are constantly violated, reduces its inmates to a condition little elevated above that of savage. Recklessness, drunkenness, parental cruelty and carelessness, filial disobedience, neglect of conjugal rights, absence of maternal love, destruction of brotherly and sisterly affection, are too often its constituents, and the results of such a combination are moral degeneration, ruin of domestic enjoyments, and social misery.[24]

As the middle classes claimed moral authority the perceived working class immorality posed a threat to society and defined a target for middle class endeavours: the moral instruction of the working class. The middle classes feared not only the moral degeneration of the poor but also this effect on the upbringing of children. Increasingly, during the 1830's and 1840's the bourgeois ideology represented working class parents as unable to fulfil the role of moral and religious instructor either because of the physical demands of their life or because of their own moral degeneration. The lack of proper instruction within the family was compounded by the fact that intense factory work was contributing both to the physical and moral degeneration of the children of the poor. The increasing tendency to employ children as a source of cheap labour instead of their parents was contributing to the situation described in the *Leeds Intelligencer* in 1832 in which 'children [are] to be kept to work till their limbs are distorted, their health destroyed, their morals corrupted, their minds misinformed'. With capitalism's destruction of the normal familial relationships, children were no longer receiving the moral and religious training traditionally assumed as the family's responsibility and in fact were, through overwork in factories, actually being deprived of their childhood.[25] The moral degeneration that was initially established in the factories and left uncorrected at home, the middle classes argued, developed on the street as unemployed children were left to wander the streets.

Society's failure to provide for its poor caused a crisis in the collective bourgeois claim to moral authority. This historical world, with its population explosion and the ever-increasing new cities, was actually both producing street 'savages', street 'arabs' and orphans whose very nature was defined by their

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[24]P. Gaskell, *Artisans and Machinery: the Moral and Physical Condition of the Manufacturing Population* (1836), 89.

[25]This perception lead to the 1833 Royal Commission which recommended the measures which were eventually adopted in the 1833 Factory Act.

homelessness, and replicating the colonial viewpoint by discursively associating its poor with colonial subjects. Once on the streets, these street children were represented by the middle classes as outside the scope of their moral and religious ISAs and hence, as the threat to the family - the scapegoat 'Other' living on the margins. This Otherness takes many forms. In some cases, these street children were criminalised either because of their own criminal actions arising from necessity or because of a perception of criminality which arose through group association or through discursive association. Mayhew, a critic of the Ragged Schools, continually associated street children with young criminals - an association which represents these children as posing a threat. The result of this ideological demonising of these children made it difficult, 'even for a sympathetic observer, to perceive street children as other than criminal'[26]. Such discursive criminalisation was then supported by early eugenic endeavours which, in disregarding the obvious results of deprivation, started to perceive the features of street children as akin to those of criminals. 'We have seen that head, in prisons, many a time. A sullen, lowering, overhanging, beetle-browed, heavy head, with confused eyes in it that will look anywhere rather than at other eyes'[27]. As increasing numbers of street children were represented as existing beyond the influence of the various ISAs, these children were seen as existing beyond the institutions of civilisation and became perceived as 'savages'[28].

The identification, in the 1840's and 1850's, of street children as savage, combined with the notion of the noble savage as being in the childhood stages of the race contributed to the increasing Victorian view of all childhood as a state of savagery. Dickens in his 1848 'The Haunted Man' depicts a street child as 'A baby savage, a young monster, a child who had never been a child, a creature who might live to take the outward form of man, but who, within, would live and perish a mere beast'. Later Lombroso makes the linkage between the criminal behaviour of civilised adults as the normal behaviour of children[29].

Once identified as both the criminal and the savage threat from within, the street child increasingly becomes the target for missionary endeavours within the English cities. The middle classes form Ragged schools in an endeavour to recuperate and thus neutralise this threat. '[The] Christian Church might be the most

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[26]Hugh Cunningham, *Children of the Poor: Representations of Childhood Since the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 111.
[27]Henry Morley and Charles Dickens, 'Boys to Mend,' *Household Words*, 5 (1852): 601.
[28]Cunningham, *Children of the Poor*, 104.
[29]*Ibid.*, 130.

potent engine ever given to man for civilisation, education, and prevention'[30]. The middle classes felt that the inability to recuperate, and thus make invisible, these street children posed a threat for their claim for moral authority. Dickens himself wrote in 'The Haunted Man' that 'there is not a country throughout the earth on which [the street child] would not bring a curse. There is no religion upon earth that it would not deny; there is no people on earth it would not put to shame'. Ironically, throughout the Victorian era a new 'family' group is being formed in the margins and it consists of children, 'savages', criminals, the insane and, I will argue, orphans.

Subsequently, as a response to the threat from within, the newly powerful industrial and provincial middle classes fetishised the family as a buffer against the encroaching products of the capitalist world. In other words, the middle classes intensified their notion of difference as a combative strategy to unify themselves in the face of such turmoil and transition. Although at their historical conception the middle classes were fragmented and divided, this thesis looks mainly at mid-Victorian fiction as a cultural product of the middle classes - a time when, as Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall argue, these middle classes 'had been welded together into a powerful unified culture'[31], historically and conceptually. It is as a result of the rise of capitalism that, by mid-nineteenth century, class solidified into both a hegemony and a social institution.

When the Victorian theologian, John Henry Newman, in his work *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*, directly equated the orphan's condition with that of the general human soul in his time, he actually identifies two central lines of argument which I shall be developing. First, he defined the soul as a manifestation of a particular moment in history - which in turn is a product of a number of social, religious and scientific factors. Newman also, very helpfully, reads the condition of the orphan as an archetype for the condition of society in his time - it was this very condition that the middle class family sought to purge by identifying it as the scapegoat. Newman echoed the religious crisis that was gripping the mid-Victorian era and threatening not only the ideology of the middle classes but also the cultural identity of Victorian England.

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[30]Walter Besant, 'The Ragged School Union,' Contemporary Review, 65 (1894); 699. See also Cunningham, *Children of the Poor*, 120.

[31]Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 23.

> [If I saw] a boy of good make and mind, with the token on him of a refined nature, cast upon the world without provision, unable to say whence he came, his birth-place or family connexions, I should conclude that there was some mystery connected with his history, and that he was one, of whom, from one cause or another, his parents were ashamed. Thus only should I be able to account for the contrast between the promise and the condition of his being. And so I argue about the world;- *if* there be a God, *since* there is a God, the human race is implicated in some terrible aboriginal calamity. It is out of joint with the purposes of its Creator.[32]

Indeed, the orphan becomes a metaphor of the Victorian age.

I.3 The Orphan as an Aesthetic Trope

However, the early Victorian literary orphan's Romantic genealogy already invested it with a holy power. This aesthetic genealogy, which I will explore briefly, is one which had already fetishised the child figure as divine.

> Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
> The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar:
> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home.[33]

This quotation from William Wordsworth encapsulates the Romantic belief in the inherent nature of the soul and its close relation to spiritual knowledge which fetishised the child as the manifestation of an essential divine origin. This Romantic literary and ideological inheritance can be seen as another source of the suggestiveness of the early Victorian fictional orphan figure by its empowerment of the orphan figure. From his/her arrival, 'trailing clouds of glory' (Ode, 65), the orphan possesses a tremendous amount of personal power as an artistic and spiritually redemptive figure. The dominant ideology (the middle class family) is

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[32]John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua,*

[33]William Wordsworth, 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality From Recollections of Early Childhood,' *Wordsworth: Poetical Works,* ed. Thomas Hutchinson, revised by Ernest De Selincourt (1904; London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 58-66. All further references to this poem will be from this edition and will be indicated in parentheses in the text, denoted by *Ode.*

threatened by this individualistic power yet simultaneously wishes to harness the redemptive power (in moral terms). This ambivalent desire results in the progressive neutralisation and recuperation of the orphan figure in Victorian fiction.

In the opening of *Ode: Intimations of Immortality From Recollections of Early Childhood*, Wordsworth establishes both the spiritual genealogy of the soul, and its function as that of an inner beacon reminding the individual[34] of his/her spiritual heritage. The poem provides a clear indicator of the essentialist nature of the Romantics' view of the individual's spirituality. Wordsworth felt that this spiritual nature, which was manifested most strongly in the child who was fresh from the Creator, progressively diminished throughout adolescence until it disappeared in adulthood.[35]

> The Youth, who daily farther from the
> east
> Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
> And by the vision splendid
> Is on his way attended;
> At length the Man perceives it die away,
> And fade into the light of common day.
> (*Ode*, 71-6).

Wordsworth's subsequent explorations of the implications of this innocent childhood state established that the child, having arrived directly from the Creator, possesses a spiritual aura, which manifests itself as a visionary ability to perceive and commune with the Creator. 'Mighty Prophet! Seer blest!' (*Ode*, 114).

For my purposes, the most important aspect of this Romantic view is that the spiritual state of the child becomes the archetype for the chosen few adults who possess an ability to retain this infant sensibility. These few who manifest this spiritual state then function in the role of priest of the tribe. Equally important is the New Testament notion of the priest as one who is unsullied by an earthly genealogy: 'Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually' (St. Paul to the Hebrews VII, ii, iii)[36]. Thus, the orphan's condition, as one without any discernible earthly parents and hence missing a vital social link, becomes the

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[34]The term individual is used here in a way which anticipates Althusser's use of the term to refer to one not yet subjected by ideology.

[35]This disappearance can be read as being a result of being recuperated into the dominant earthly ideology.

[36]All biblical references will be to the King James version of the Old and New Testaments.

necessary state for the priest. The priest, being the mirror of Christ who also had no true earthly genealogy, acts in a redemptive role. According to Wordsworth this role of priest has been subsumed by the modern day poet - or the artist in general.

> Poetic numbers came
> Spontaneously, and cloth'd in priestly robe
> My spirit, thus singled out, as it might seem,
> For holy services.[37]

The poet is 'a man speaking to men: a man...endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness, who has a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind'[38]. The Poet, like Christ, is to act as an envoy of love and a 'rock of defence for human nature' because as an 'upholder and preserver' he carries 'everywhere within him relationship and love'[39]. More specifically, the poet possesses a unique visionary ability.

> Poets, even as Prophets, each with each
> Connected in a mighty scheme of truth,
> Have each for his particular dower, a sense
> By which he is enabled to perceive
> Something unseen before (*The Prelude*, XII, 301-5).

The Poet's task then is to transcribe for others the vision that he has the ability to perceive. In Romantic philosophy, artistic creation then becomes an act of holy inspiration: 'While the sweet breath of Heaven/Was blowing on my body, felt within/A corresponding mild creative breeze' (*The Prelude*, I, 41-3). Thus, the Poet's power derives from a divine sovereign and he uses narrative as a divine revelation.

Both the visionary and creative powers result in the poet's possessing the same personal freedom that the child possesses. 'Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might/Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height' (*Ode*, 125-6). This freedom is the freedom from the 'prison-house' (*Ode*, 67) of society and its ideologies, shades of which descend on the individual after birth and the

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[37]William Wordsworth, *The Prelude or The Growth of a Poet's Mind (1805)*, ed. Ernest De Selincourt, corrected by Stephen Gill (1970; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) I: 60-3. All further references to this poem will be from this edition and will be cited in parentheses in the text, denoted by *Prelude*.

[38]William Wordsworth, 'Preface to the Second Edition of Several of the Foregoing Poems Published, With an Additional Volume, Under the Title of *Lyrical Ballads*.' *Wordsworth: Poetical Works* ed. Thomas Hutchinson, revised by Ernest De Selincourt (1904. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 737.

[39]*Ibid.*, 738.

subsequent separation from the Creator. This sense of individual freedom, as a defining characteristic of the Romantic child and of the artist, will become increasingly important during the course of Victorian literature as the orphan figure, 'the outcast' (*The Prelude*, II, 261) or scapegoat, (as opposed to the 'inmate' of this active universe) will, initially at least, embody the spiritual power and the personal freedom of the child/Poet. A point in anticipation of Girard can be offered here - the marginality that the Romantics, or in this specific case Wordsworth, identify and celebrate as the necessary state for 'freedom', Girard identifies as the debilitating but necessary state for the scapegoat; '[the] exterior or marginal individuals incapable of establishing or sharing the social bonds that link the rest of the inhabitants'[40]. The state of taboo has become the precondition for holiness.

The Romantics' focus then is on the self: the spirituality of the self; and the self in nature. Wordsworth's *The Prelude*, significantly subtitled *The Growth of a Poet's Mind*, is a detailed documentation of the early childhood influence on the creative artist. It is also an epic of the self which epitomises the Romantics' overriding interest in the growth of the spiritual child into a spiritual individual. Significantly, *The Prelude* establishes both the power and the freedom of the artist in the act of creating, or recreating, her/his own identity through fictional autobiography. The artist's constructing of his/her identity through a rereading of his/her remembered history, identifies these fictional autobiographies as palimpsests. The fictional autobiography then becomes a monument to the power the artist derives from the divine sovereign and a narcissistic endeavour - the outcome of which is the creation of identity. *Ut supra*, as orphanhood becomes the necessary state for the artist, its legacy in fictional autobiography is that the orphan emerges as the metaphor for the detached self whose 'solitude energises him as a visionary artist'[41] and whose 'orphanhood becomes his glory'[42].

I.4 A Theoretical Conceptualisation of the Orphan

This solitude which confers on the orphan an artistic and redemptive power simultaneously identifies, in a pre-sacrificial stage, the orphan as scapegoat.

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[40]René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. by Patrick Gregory (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977) 12.

[41]Nina Auerbach, 'Incarnations of the Orphan,' 395.

[42]Nina Auerbach, 'Incarnations of the Orphan,' 404.

> The surrogate victim is [not] simply foreign to the community. Rather he is seen as a 'monstrous double'. He partakes of all possible differences within the community, particularly the difference between within and without; for he passes freely from the interior to the exterior and back again. Thus, the surrogate victim constitutes both a link and a barrier between the community and the sacred. To even so much as represent this extraordinary victim the ritual victim must belong both to the community and to the sacred.[43]

Thus, in early Victorian fiction the orphan, in occupying the subject position of the scapegoat, is an ambiguous figure seen as both redemptive and threatening to the familial community. This figure gradually becomes the 'monstrous double' of mid-Victorian fiction, embodying all difference yet acting as an agent of the family ideology. In Victorian England, as opposed to earlier communities, the dominant subject position (in this case bourgeois ideology) destroys the scapegoat through neutralisation, functioning in much the same way as myth (*cf.*, Roland Barthes 'Myth Today'). This neutralisation is a process of recuperation by which the dominant ideology of the family recuperates and subjects the 'orphan', or in Althusser's terms, the 'individual'. This individual is one who has yet to be interpellated by the ideology and therefore has yet to become a 'subject'. I will, as the thesis title indicates, demonstrate how this ideology quickly becomes repressive in its attempts to neutralise 'bad' subjects or individuals like the orphans - ultimately not only recuperating these figures as agents but actually beginning to reproduce these orphan figures in order to ensure its self-definition and unity. I will also consider the extent to which, in literary representation, certain orphan figures resist this attempted assimilation and the extent to which these same orphan figures act as agents for the dominant discourse of the family.

In these following sections, I will endeavour to account for the transformation of the orphan from an agent of redemption to an agent of the dominant discourse. In order to do this it is necessary to rely on a theoretical conceptual framework which involves: René Girard's notion of collective communal behaviour and the use of ritualised scapegoating and violence; Louis Althusser's interpretation of modern society as continuing to function in a ritualised fashion in the material; an Althusserian reading of Victorian society (or its fictional representation) as controlling these material practices and rituals through both State Apparatuses (SAs) and Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs); and Michel Foucault's documentation of the increasing use of repressive techniques to achieve the goals of

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[43]Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 21.

the ISAs. While the historical and cultural specificities of both Girard and Foucault are not identical with that of early to mid-Victorian England, I will suggest important and persuasive linkages which make the use of these theoretical approaches as *conceptual* models legitimate. *Ut supra*, the linkage between Girard and Althusser is based on Althusser's own identification of the ritual as becoming material in nature and practice. Althusser's own examination of England of the post-Industrial Revolution firmly locates his work within the cultural historical milieu of Victorian England. Finally, Foucault's own use of Bentham's concept of the Panopticon in tracing of the rise of the penal discourse in modern society, while problematic in the manner in which he has appropriated Bentham, is especially pertinent for the fiction of the time covered.

I.5 The Orphan as Scapegoat

To understand how the orphan comes to manifest the surrogate victim and/or scapegoat (and hence become the target for ideological recuperation) in early to mid-Victorian fiction it is first necessary to offer a theoretical model of how communities define themselves and how these communities function. René Girard, in *Violence and the Sacred* , traces the stabilising role of ritual violence in 'primitive'[44] societies. By identifying the movement of the assumption of vengeance from being the responsibility of the individual to that of the state, Girard offers a persuasive equation of sacrifice with legal punishment which enables him to argue an equivalence between 'primitive' societies and modern societies, despite his own particular starting point in early Greek and African case studies.

> While acknowledging the differences, both functional and mythical, between vengeance, sacrifice and legal punishment, it is important to recognise their fundamental identity. Precisely because these three institutions are essentially the same they tend to adopt the same types of violent response in times of crisis.[45]

In addition, Girard's reading of the community as primarily a familial organisation, 'it is the entire species *considered as a large family clan* that the sacrificers beseech not to seek vengeance'[46], that is suggestive for a reading of modern society.

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[44]Girard uses this term in a modern anthropological sense according to which the term primitive describes a type of communal structure.

[45]René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 25.

[46]*Ibid.*, 13.

Indeed, other scholars have found both Girard's theory of community and his use of Freudian theories of collective familial violence, as persuasive models for their own study (*cf.* Lynn Hunt's book on *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* in which she applies both Freud and Girard's conceptual models to a reading of the French Revolution as ritualised violence).

Girard's model starts by examining the ritual practice of violence, in the form of sacrifice, in 'primitive' societies as a means of purging the society by channelling individual violent impulses. This violence, which takes the form of a ritualised display, serves to protect the community from its own violence, and hence destruction, by uniting the society and establishing order. The specific focus of this ritualised violence is the scapegoat or the surrogate victim - chosen to embody the ills that are threatening the society. The sacrificial victim is a 'substitute for all members of the community, offered up by the members themselves[...in whose figure] the elements of dissension scattered throughout the community are drawn[...]and eliminated[...]by its sacrifice'.[47] By attributing the ills to the surrogate victim and subsequently venting its violence on this scapegoat the society both vents its violence and reaffirms itself in its unification against the scapegoat. The scapegoat is a person, animal or object which is chosen not because of any sense of guilt[48] but because of marginal social position which makes it lack a crucial social link, establishing it as 'Other'. This lack of position virtually ensures that after the sacrifice the community will not become engulfed in the violence of vengeance.[49]

This 'Other' also exists on a symbolic level representing the dissension and difference found within the community which threatens its unified and homogenous nature. The scapegoat 'Other' then embodies both the threat to the community and the difference against which the community defines itself. It is quite significant that, ultimately, the community has to produce these outsiders - either literally and/or ideologically - in order to perpetuate its self-definition and sense of unified homogeneity. In times of cultural crisis the search for, or production of, these scapegoats is essential in trying to reaffirm the community. One such cultural crisis that can threaten a society, as Girard argues, and which is particularly relevant to the mid-Victorian age,[50] is the disintegration of a powerful religious framework that previously unified a society.

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[47]*Ibid.*, 8.

[48]*Ibid.*, 4.

[49]*Ibid.*, 13.

[50]Mid-Victorian Evangelicalism increasingly faced dissension in the middle classes and lack of faith in the working classes.

> When the religious framework of a society starts to totter, it is not exclusively or immediately the physical security of the society that is threatened; rather the whole cultural foundation of the society is put in jeopardy. The institutions lose their vitality; the protective façade of the society gives way; social values are rapidly eroded, and the whole cultural structure seems on the verge of collapse.[51]

In order to counteract, to neutralise and to disguise the effects of the cultural crisis, the society attributes the blame for this crisis to the scapegoat, venting its fear and violence on the scapegoat. But with this final attribution of blame to the scapegoat comes, paradoxically, an attribution of a healing power. With the destruction of the scapegoat comes the salvation of the community, hence, the scapegoat is not only seen as responsible for the calamity, but through its own destruction responsible for the resultant peace.

> The surrogate victim[...]inevitably appears as a being who submits to violence without provoking a reprisal; a supernatural being who sows violence to reap peace; a mysterious saviour who visits affliction on mankind in order subsequently to restore it to good health.[52]

After its elimination, the scapegoat becomes invested with the religious power as saviour of the community. The scapegoat becomes the new religious fetish of the community.

> On the one hand [the scapegoat] is a woebegone figure, an object of scorn who is also weighed down with guilt[...]On the other hand, we find him surrounded by a quasi-religious aura of veneration; he has become sort of a cult object.[53]

As indicated in the opening quote, the scapegoat manifests all of the paradoxes of the community and its belief: s/he is both one of the community and yet marginal; s/he embodies the differences threatening the community and yet simultaneously unites the community; and s/he embodies both the violence and the redemption. In short, the scapegoat embodies both the untouchable and the divine.

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[51]René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 49.
[52]*Ibid.*, 86.
[53]*Ibid.*, 86.

Hence, this theory proposes a model paradigm in which it is possible to see how a dominant community responds to the threat of violence from both without and within by a ritualised sacrifice of a scapegoat. It is this sacrifice, and hence indirectly the scapegoat, that transforms violence into harmony and reunites the community. Thus a community under threat needs to redefine and reunite itself in opposition to the scapegoat 'Other'. While Girard's conceptual model, combined with the Romantic genealogy, is extremely suggestive, it does fail to take into account more complex social structures and institutions developing in nineteenth century England, and the question not only of how they disseminate power but of who controls this power and on what basis. For that reason, it is necessary to enlarge on Girard's reading of the community and Wordsworth's reading of the child/orphan by exploring the links between these readings and a more materialist reading of society - such as the offered by Louis Althusser in his essay, 'On Ideology'.

I.6 The Orphan as Uninterpellated Subject

> The subject acts insofar as he is acted upon by the following system[...]: [bourgeois] ideology existing in a material ideological apparatus, prescribing material practices governed by a material ritual, which practices exist in the material actions of a subject acting in all consciousness according to his [individual] belief.[54]

The link René Girard offers between sacrifice and legal punishment is further developed on a materialist level in Louis Althusser's theories on ideology and the State. In 'On Ideology', Althusser postulates that modern capitalist societies do still function in a ritualised fashion which is remarkably similar to the Girardian notion of community. For Althusser, the rise of capitalism transforms the basis of these rituals into the material; inscribed within materialist, capitalist practices and institutions which themselves are dictated by the dominant ideological apparatus. It is this consideration of the institutional apparatus and its control, necessary to any conceptualisation of modern capitalist societies, that adds a layer of complex class contestation which Girard's analysis of individual members' direct social influence fundamentally lacks. It is significant for this model that Althusser (working within the historical and cultural specificity of the rise of capitalism in England during the Victorian era - the literature of which this thesis deals with) identifies the control of this ideology and its dissemination through the State Apparatus as the site of class

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[54] Louis Althusser, 'On Ideology', *Essays on Ideology* (London: Verso, 1984) 44.

struggle. In this case, as the bourgeoisie are the victors, the ISAs and SAs are the site of middle class[55] power. It is also crucial that Althusser attributes to ideology the power to interpellate the subject and thus, to make individuals, subjects. Here Althusser offers a materialist basis to ideology which, I would like to suggest is a useful connection between ideology and the 'imprisoning' influence of society to which Wordsworth refers. This distinction between individuals and subjects adds another useful theoretical layer to Girard's model of the community in identifying a process by which individuals within the community can be given certain subject positions - like that of scapegoat - which are not only literal but ideological. The industrial and provincial middle classes therefore, in a sense, take over the role of the community in modern capitalist society. It is the middle classes that, under threat, need to find a scapegoat for self-definition and ideological unification.

Althusser's notion of an individual becoming a subject through ideology signifies that it is ideology that not only creates the subject, but anticipates it. Hence only through ideology can we come to understand the subject.

> The existence of the ideas of [...the subject's] belief is material in that his ideas are his material actions inserted into material practices governed by material rituals which are themselves defined by the material ideological apparatus from which we derive the ideas of that subject.[56]

Because the predominant ideology of the early to mid-Victorian era was that of the emerging and increasingly powerful middle classes or bourgeoisie, it is important to explore the ramifications of the importance this ideology placed on the family. Althusser argues that the ideology of the family serves to interpellate the child as subject before s/he is born.

> Before its birth, the child is therefore always-already a subject, appointed as a subject in and by the specific familial ideological configuration, in which it is 'expected' once it has been conceived.[57]

The orphan, as one who falls outside this family ideology exists as an uninterpellated individual against whom the family defines itself. Therefore, the family ideology locates in the orphan all the ills threatening this ideology and the

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[55] Although Althusser does not always specify what he means by the middle-class, in this thesis I use the term to refer specifically to the industrial, provincial, and metropolitan middle classes.

[56] Louis Althusser, 'On Ideology', 43.

[57] *Ibid.*, 43.

social structure. However, instead of sacrificing the orphan, the orphan's power as an individual not fully subjected needs to be not only neutralised, but the orphan as individual needs to be recuperated by the ideology of the family. This recuperation of the scapegoat signifies not only the neutralisation of the orphan's threatening power but also the recuperation of the orphan's redemptive power. Significantly, then, it becomes necessary for the ideology of the family to keep producing these orphans/individuals in order to perpetuate its self-definition and to reproduce the relations of ideological production.

It was during this historical period (early to mid-Victorian England) that the bourgeoisie gradually assumed power. As Althusser writes:

> In England[...]the Revolution was particularly 'successful'[...because] the English bourgeoisie was able to 'compromise' with the aristocracy and 'share' state power and the use of the State apparatus with it for a long time.[58]

Once the middle classes with their Evangelical family ideology manage to gain control of State power, then their hegemony is exercised over the State through what Althusser identifies as ISAs because they serve to disseminate the ideology of those in power.[59]

The ideology of the middle classes then becomes inserted into the practices of the ISAs. These ISAs form the basis on which the middle classes enact their challenge to the ruling class and ensure both the subjection of the exploited and the recuperation of the individual orphan by the ideology.

> In fact, the State and its Apparatuses only have meaning from the point of view of the class struggle, as an apparatus of class struggle ensuring class oppression and guaranteeing the conditions of exploitation and its reproduction.[60]

Althusser makes a distinction between the repressive State Apparatus (SA) which exist in the Public sphere and which often 'function by violence',[61] and the ISA which exist in the Private sphere and function by ideology. This thesis will examine

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[58]*Ibid.*, 27.
[59]*Ibid.*, 20.
[60]*Ibid.*, 58.
[61]*Ibid.*, 16-7.

how the ISAs, and when necessary the SAs, are represented in literature as instruments which serve to perpetuate the ideology of the family and systematically target the orphan scapegoat and all that s/he increasingly is supposed to represent and the threat that this poses to the family unit. These ISAs function by a method of instruction that works to ensure subjection to the ruling ideology. The ISAs most powerful in Victorian fiction are represented as the family, the Church, the School, the Legal institutions and Cultural materials (including literature and pamphlets).

> The School (but also other state institutions like the Church, or other apparatuses like the Army) teaches 'know-how', but in forms which ensure *subjection to the ruling ideology* or the mastery of its 'practice'. All the agents of production, exploitation and repression, not to speak of the 'professions of ideology' (Marx), must in one way or another be 'steeped' in this ideology in order to perform their tasks 'conscientiously'[...]the high priests of the ruling ideology.[62]

The nineteenth century is one faced by a growing religious crisis (of the type that Girard, quoted earlier, identifies as threatening to the fabric of society) that threatens symbolically to orphan everyone with the ideological 'death of God' - something which would permanently destroy the Absolute family (the holy family) as the Absolute Subject around which the family ideology is centred. As a result, it becomes increasingly important to produce these scapegoat individuals in order to reaffirm the power of the family. What happens to the individual that offers resistance to the process of subjection to the ideology? At this point of resistance it becomes necessary to invoke the repressive SAs.

> Caught in this quadruple system of interpellation as subjects, of subjection to the Subject, of universal recognition and of absolute guarantee, the subjects 'work', they 'work by themselves'[...]with the exception of the 'bad subjects' who on occasion provoke the intervention of one of the detachments of the (repressive) State apparatus.[63]

Examples of this repression can be not only symbolic but very real.

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[62] *Ibid.*, 7.
[63] *Ibid.*, 55.

> ISAs function massively and predominantly *by ideology*, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic.
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> Thus Schools and Churches use suitable methods of punishment, expulsion, selection, etc., to 'discipline' not only their shepherds, but also their flocks. The same is true of the Family[...]the same is true of the cultural IS Apparatus.[64]

Michel Foucault extends Althusser's notion of the interpellated subject to a decentred subject. Foucault's early work, much of it in early post-Revolutionary France, has significance for Victorian literature in his use of the Panopticon and his examination of the rise of modern penal discourse. I want to suggest that one tangible cultural product of this penal discourse is the penal narrative which characterises the mode of narrating the orphan in Victorian literature. For my purposes the most significant aspect of Foucault's early work, *Discipline and Punish* (as indicated in the thesis title) is his systematic examination of the use of punishment and discipline as not only methods of repressive SAs but increasingly as the methods used to disseminate ideology in ISAs.

> It would be wrong to say that the soul is an illusion, or an ideological effect. On the contrary, it exists, it has a reality, it is produced permanently around, on, within the body by the functioning of a power that is exercised on those punished[...]This is the historical reality of this soul, which unlike the soul represented by Christian theology, is not born in sin and subject to punishment, but is born rather out of methods of punishment, supervision and constraint.[65]

Michel Foucault's notion of the soul is in direct contradiction to the Romantic notion of the soul as essential. Part of this can be explained by the differing historical perspectives: the view Foucault encapsulates, namely that the modern soul has no inherent reality but rather is the construct of socio-historical forces, is one which anticipates, in many ways, the fragmentation of twentieth century discourse. Foucault, then, traces the birth of the 'modern', a type that, according to Marshall Berman, is born in the nineteenth century and whose 'modernist culture and consciousness' can be traced to Karl Marx's generation of the 1840's[66] - in the

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[64]*Ibid.*, 19.

[65]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (1977; Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1991), 29.

[66]Berman, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (London: Verso, 1991), 88.

historical period immediately after the Romantic decades. Thus, it is primarily in the nineteenth century, which Berman refers to as 'a world where everything is pregnant with its contrary'[67], that Foucault traces the 'genealogy of the modern soul' in the history of punitive power. For Foucault then, the soul is devoid of an inherent spirituality, rather it is the site where the power relations are exercised through the technology of discipline. Foucault sees the soul as born, not in freedom but 'in constraint'. The linkage to be made between Althusser and Foucault lies in the notion of the soul. Despite the claim in the quotation above that the soul is not an ideological effect, what Foucault develops is a notion of the soul that is primarily Althusser's notion of the subject - one that is interpellated and called into being by ideology. What is most significant about Foucault's work for this theoretical conceptual model is his focus on the means by which ISAs and dominant group seek to recuperate and neutralise bad subjects, individuals, and for my purposes orphan scapegoats.

In summary, the dual nature of the orphan as scapegoat can be used not only to comprehend the tensions existing in the way the orphan is represented in early to mid-Victorian fiction, but also to offer an explanation for the diminishing of the literary orphan's freedom and power from the beginning to the end of the Victorian era. The Romantics view the orphan as possessing both an inherent spirituality and an inherent freedom. Foucault does not view the individual as free but rather as 'born in constraint'; the soul is not inherent but rather is a product of ideological interpellation and the internalisation of external disciplinary forces. More generally, Foucault, in tracing the history of discipline technology, simultaneously traces a shift in the definition of truth from being essentialist and spiritual in nature, originating from the Divine, to a tool of constraint produced by power relations. Simultaneously, one can trace the shift in the perception of the nature of the individual's soul from essentialist in nature, to becoming an object for subjection in power relations, and ultimately to becoming an agent for power relations. Even in the very definition of power Foucault rejects an essentialist definition for one which establishes power as a product of socio-historical factors. 'Power is not an institution, and not a structure; neither is it a certain strength we are endowed with; it is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society'.[68]

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[67]*Ibid.*, 35.

[68]Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 3 vols. trans. by Robert Hurley (1978; Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1990) 1: 93.

I.7 The Orphan as Subject and Agent

Gramsci identifies the Victorian age as the time when power shifts 'from rule to hegemony'.[69] Foucault argues that it is during this historical period that ideology becomes closely associated with power and it is the interaction of the manifestation of this power, in the new technology of discipline, which produces the Foucauldian individual or the Althusserian subject: 'Power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production'.[70]

Foucault centres his genealogy of the soul on Bentham's conception of the Panopticon. It is in the structure of the Panopticon, the conceptual basis of most Victorian prisons, that Foucault finds 'the diagram of the mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form...It is in fact a figure of political technology'.[71] Simultaneously, the inception of the Panopticon corresponds with a moment in history when the perception of criminality shifts in accordance with the rise of capitalism and the bourgeois ideology which increasingly valued property.

> The shift from a criminality of blood to a criminality of fraud forms part of a whole complex mechanism, embracing the development of production, the increase of wealth, a higher juridical and moral value placed on property relations, stricter methods of surveillance, a tighter partitioning of the population.[72]

The bourgeois ideology subsequently redefines criminality and the relation of these new criminals to society. The end result is something Foucault describes as 'a closer penal mapping of the social body'.[73]

Influenced by the rise of penal discourse, bourgeois ideology manages to scapegoat the orphan through discursive criminalisation. Marginalisation is one of the criminal's main identifying characteristics - something also common to the orphan. The criminal, as a punishment, is removed from society, while the orphan

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[69]Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. and trans. by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (1971; London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1991), 245.
[70]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 194.
[71]*Ibid.*, 205.
[72]*Ibid.*, 77.
[73]*Ibid.*, 78.

is born in a state that is outside society, having no family and therefore no social place. In fact, in Victorian times the generally accepted motive for crime is the criminal's environment of alienation and deprivation: this is the same environment that the orphan occupies throughout Victorian fiction. So when Buré, in 1840, comments that 'crime is itself due rather to the fact that one is in society as an alien, that one belongs to that 'bastardised race', to that 'class degraded by misery",[74] he uses the same terms that characterises the discourse that narrates the orphan as scapegoat in Victorian fiction. The orphans are becoming not only part of, but simultaneously symbolic of, that burgeoning dispossessed underclass. The French July monarchy drew up a plan in which 'delinquents, undisciplined soldiers, prostitutes and orphans [would] take part in the colonisation of Algeria'.[75] More recently in the British context, the British government in the post World War Two years up until 1967 followed the same policy by sending out 'orphans' (*i.e.*, children who were told they were orphans but in many cases were not) to populate the colonies with 'good white British stock'[76]. Many were abused and treated as slaves in their new institutional homes.

This marginalisation was a forerunner to the ways in which the Darwinian theories of a hierarchy of species were applied to class and race. These early views were also applied to criminals and other marginalised figures who came to be considered as members of a subspecies. Another implication of this approach was the argument that class had biological as well as economic roots: class terminology was applied to the process of classification of species. Part of the reason that the orphan can be scapegoated so effectively is the lack of a crucial social link with this community - in this case the lack of a family and hence membership in the dominant ideology. This left the orphan in a vulnerable position as his lineage, in the form of parents, was not immediately discernible and thus his origins became suspect. The result was, as scapegoat, the orphan could be either celebrated or demonised: the unknown nature of his origins could be heavenly or demonic.

The focus of the technology of discipline then becomes the marginal figure. The scapegoat orphan, as akin to the criminal and the epitome of the uninterpellated individual, is therefore the most vulnerable and discernible bad subject that bourgeoisie needs to recuperate and therefore neutralise. Since the Panopticon, the repressive State Apparatus enforcing the ISAs, is the theoretical site

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[74]E. Buré, *De la misère des classes laborieuses en Angleterre et en France*, 1840, II: 391.
[75]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 279.
[76]'The Leaving of Liverpool', BBC1, July 14-15, 1992.

of all initial disciplinary endeavours, it will be useful at this time to outline briefly the methods by which the disciplinary technology achieved its aim of ideologically sacrificing and recuperating the scapegoat.

Based on earlier English models, the main disciplinary method was the use of solitude. Isolation was to provide:

> A 'terrible shock' which, while protecting the prisoner from bad influences, enables him to go into himself and rediscover in the depths of his conscience the voice of good; solitary work would then become not only an apprenticeship, but an exercise in spiritual conversion.[77]

The reference to solitary work becoming 'an exercise in spiritual conversion' suggests a shared root, which will be explored in more detail later, between Foucault's predominantly Catholic model of the methods used by repressive SAs and the methods inscribed within Evangelicalism of mid-Victorian England. The use of isolation guarantees total ideological recuperation, it is ' a power that will not be overthrown by any other influence; solitude is the primary condition of total submission'[78].

Isolation is used in conjunction with surveillance. It is through surveillance that observations about the individual are noted and are ultimately used collectively, with the observations of many other individuals, to generate a set of norms.

> The exercise of discipline presupposes a mechanism that coerces by means of observation; an apparatus in which the techniques that make it possible to see induce effects of power[...]Side by side with the major technology of the telescope, the lens and the light beam[...]there were the minor techniques of multiple and intersecting observations, of eyes that must see without being seen; using techniques of subjection and methods of exploitation, an obscure art of light and the visible was secretly preparing a new knowledge of man.
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> For a long time this[...]underlying principle was found in urban development, in the construction of working class housing estates, hospitals, asylums, prisons, schools.[79]

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[77]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 122.
[78]*Ibid.*, 237.
[79]*Ibid.*, 170-71.

The idea of surveillance is integral to Bentham's design of the Panopticon - where there are multiple layers of observation, each layer viewing, unobserved, the one below and simultaneously, each layer aware of the possibility of being observed at any given moment. The power of surveillance then is entwined with the inability to detect the surveillance, but only to have the knowledge of the possibility of being under surveillance. Thus the surveillance is 'permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action...the inmates should be caught up in a power situation of which they are themselves the bearers'.[80] In other words, the individual under surveillance is actually taking responsibility for the continuation of reform in his own psyche - he is interpellated into the ideological agent of the dominating power.

Foucault's discourse of discipline is strikingly similar to the self-discipline required by the discourse of Evangelicalism. The central component of this Evangelical belief is the continual effacement of the self through self-discipline. 'Real religion teaches and inclines us to put self last'.[81] This self-effacement and moral control is maintained through eternal vigilance - in the form of self-examination and self-surveillance.

> The 'undivided surrender' of the heart to 'holy obedience' was the aim of the serious Christian matched by a constant fear of backsliding. From this concern with the pervasiveness of sin, the sense of oneself as depraved, weak and inadequate came the obsession with self-examination...The scrupulous emphasis on diary keeping, on New Year's resolutions, on birthday books and the annual casting up of accounts before God were all part of the effort to watch over one's own soul, and for mothers to watch over the souls of their children.[82]

In a socio-historical context this process of individual reform occurred within the family and the family home. 'The overlooking of "home dealings" was particularly important since every serious Christian knew that the one place where moral order could be maintained and recalcitrant time and nature be brought more securely under control was in the home'.[83] On the metaphoric and cultural level the site of reform is now located in the soul and is to be achieved through the ISAs. This marks the beginning of the process of internalisation of the disciplinary power -

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[80]*Ibid.*, 201.

[81]Rev. J.G. Breay, *A Memoir of the Rev. John George Breay, Minister of Christ Church Birmingham, with Correspondence and a Sermon* (Birmingham, 1840), 79.

[82]Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 87-8.

[83]*Ibid.*, 89.

which will begin to subject the individual. The criminal, like the scapegoat, participates in his own punishment. The criminal becomes an enemy of society because of his criminality, yet simultaneously he is a member of society. As the punishment is administered in the name of society, the criminal participates in his own punishment. 'The least crime attacks the whole of society; and the whole of society - including the criminal - is present in the least punishment'.[84] In much the same way, the 'good' Evangelical subject was not only to internalise the discourse but to reproduce it and thus by contrast, throwing into relief 'bad' subjects and identifying scapegoats.

> This outlook fostered humanist compassion for the helpless and weak: women, children, animals, the insane, the prisoner. However, this benevolent concern was tempered with the drive to control these same groups who were regarded as closer to nature and peripheral to , if not outside the social order.[85]

Like the methodology that Foucault documents, the Evangelical ideology becomes a means of controlling its members and a definition of social membership. Evangelicalism becomes 'the one thing needful'[86] as a social link.

The criminal's threat to society continually leads back to other social phenomena as well. Industrial capitalism as an important element in the middle class ideology - the control of which gave the middle classes the dominant position - was instrumental in the redefinition of criminality. There is a strong link between disciplinary techniques, such as surveillance and industrial capitalism.

> This was the problem of the great workshops and factories, in which a new type of surveillance was organised[...]what was now needed was an intense, continuous supervision; it ran right through the labour process[...]As the machinery of production became larger and more complex, as the numbers of workers and the division of labour increased, supervision became ever more necessary and more difficult.[87]

Surveillance becomes one foundation of modern society - the roots of which are found in the Victorian era in the discourses of Evangelicalism and discipline.

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[84] *Ibid.*, 90.
[85] *Ibid.*, 25.
[86] *Ibid.*, 103.
[87] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 174.

Crucially, the Panopticon and the associated technology of discipline give rise to power, which in turn produces both reality and truth. It is necessary to consider how this technology produces truth and how this production of truth affects, for the purposes of this study, the fictional discourse of the century. I want to suggest that the Panopticon, in fact, becomes a metaphor in the discourses of the nineteenth century and gives rise to a penal narrative. 'Metaphysically the prison is inescapable - reaching even to a person's whole mode of discourse and creating even Nietzsche's 'prison-house of language'[...] nothing escapes the limitations of the carceral[...and] the domination of the prison in other 19th century forms of discourse'.[88]

This metaphor of the Panopticon not only affects nineteenth century discourse, but also the mode of fictional autobiographical narrative. In addition to the Panopticon becoming a metaphor for discourse, the family becomes a metaphor for the discourse of society and the nation-state. Increasingly, the family is seen as a microcosm of the state and as such is set up as a model of peace, harmony and purity. In addition being seen as a socio-economic building block for the middle classes (the family, the workplace and the Church were all organised on the paternal model), marriage and the family become the building block for the nation-state.

> Marriage is generally the origin of the elementary community of which larger communities[...]and ultimately the nation are constituted and on the conjugal state of the population, its existence, increase and diffusion, as well as manners, character, happiness and freedom ultimately depend.[89]

At this point, the family, as the 'one thing needful' has become a universal metaphor for nation-state. Again, this family, now the nation-state, is reliant on its 'Others' to reinforce and perpetuate its self-definition. As such, the orphan then becomes a universal metaphor for the marginalised dispossessed - women, the working classes, the poor, the Irish, the gypsies, and the colonised.

The combination of the disciplinary methods of isolation and surveillance eventually produces a process of internalisation whereby the method of reformation is not only applied to, but is eventually absorbed by, the individual. With the mind

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[88]Jeremy Tambling, 'Dickens and Foucault,' *Critical Essays on* Great Expectations, ed. Michael Cotsell (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co, 1990), 185.

[89]Registrar General, 'Introduction', *Census of 1851.*

as the site for the imposition of power, the carceral objects of disciplining and conformity are complete when the effects are internalised and actively reproduced.

> He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. By this very fact, the external power may throw off its physical weight; it tends to the non-corporeal; and, the more it approaches this limit, the more constant, profound and permanent are its effects.[90]

The final proof of the active reproduction of the internalisation of the dominant discourse is not only in the idea of keeping oneself under surveillance, but in the idea of confessing a 'truth' - which is actually a perpetuation of the dominant discourse. Ann Martin is a specific historical example: 'urged by her husband and children, in late middle age she wrote a series of highly successful books on domestic life'[91]. Both of these points - the idea that one keeps oneself under surveillance and that one confesses the 'truth' of one's nature - have important ramifications for the form of the fictional autobiography, the vehicle the Victorian literary orphan most commonly utilises. Ironically, the very device that is so empowering to the artist/orphan of the Romantic and early Victorian period, *i.e.*, the fictional autobiography, becomes another means of disempowering, and repressing, the later orphan figure because now the requirement to confess the truth is a means of interpellation by the family ideology. The fictional autobiography ultimately becomes the external result of the process of having kept oneself under surveillance.

I.8 Fictional Autobiography: The Orphan's Penal Narrative

The confession, with its strong religious connotations dating back to St. Augustine, is a ritual that Foucault feels 'Western societies[...]rely on for the production of truth'.[92] The confession, in penal history, was the climax of the process of verification of the criminal's nature. It was the method of producing a

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[90]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 202.
[91]Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes*, 64.
[92]Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 1: 58.

'living truth[...]it was also the act by which the accused accepted the charge and recognised its truth[...]Through the confession, the accused himself took part in the ritual of producing penal truth'.[93] The confession then became the crucial act of purification of the criminal's soul before the punishment. 'If the condemned man was shown to be repentant, accepting the verdict, asking both God and man for forgiveness for his crimes, it was as if he had come through some process of purification: he died, in his own way, like a saint'.[94] Indeed, the truth perpetuated by the dominant group, namely that confession is an act of freeing oneself, becomes widely accepted in society.

> The obligation to confess is now relayed through so many different points, is so deeply ingrained in us, that we no longer perceive it as the effect of a power that constrains us; on the contrary, it seems to us that truth, lodged in our most secret nature, 'demands' only to surface; that if it fails to do so, this is because a constraint holds it in place, the violence of a power weighs it down, and it can finally be articulated only at the price of a kind of liberation. Confession frees, but power reduces one to silence.[95]

This is of crucial importance, 'confession frees, but power reduces one to silence', since it is mainly through the gaining of a voice (most commonly through the ability to tell her/his own story and thus create her/his own identity - whether it be a whole fictional autobiography or a short narrative within the larger narrative) that the orphan is able to realise her/his freedom and power - which includes redemptive power. So the reduction to silence effectively neutralises the orphan's power of personality and redemptive power, thus making her/him impotent.

The direct relevance of this to fictional autobiography is perhaps obvious. The process that was once empowering - the ability to recreate the identity - now becomes the final stage in the absorption and active reproduction of the dominant discourse. The fictional autobiography is now not only the product of self-surveillance, but is a form of confession. The orphan's identity therefore becomes a construct of the very society within which, as an orphan, s/he is marginalised. The ultimate consequence of all this is that identity becomes a matter of ideological control. The scapegoat has been not only neutralised and recuperated but also becomes the agent for ideology. Through the course of Victorian fiction, we have

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[93]Michael Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 38.
[94]*Ibid.*, 67.
[95]Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 1: 60.

moved away absolutely from the Romantic notion of identity as autonomous and inherent to Foucault's notion of identity as a social construct. Indeed, the individuals are now being produced as products of the disciplinary process. 'Discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise'.[96]

Thus, the shift in the focus of the orphan's fictional autobiography, from creation to confession, signifies the progressive loss of power of the Victorian literary orphan as the bourgeois ideology neutralises and thus assimilates him/her.

> The child, the patient, the madman, the prisoner, were to become, with increasing ease from the eighteenth century[...]the object of individual descriptions and biographical accounts. This turning of real lives into writing is no longer a procedure of heroization; it functions as a procedure of objectification and subjection.[97]

The crucial significance of the fictional autobiography as confession is its relationship to the reader and how it ultimately empowers the reader.

> The confession is a ritual of discourse in which the speaking subject is also the subject of the statement; it is also a ritual that unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console.[98]

The reader, the Victorian middle classes, is no longer a target for redemption but rather is the authority who requires and judges the confession. Thus, *ut supra*, society begins actively to produce individuals to interpellate into subjects. In fact, discourse (all discourse and this must include literature) in the end serves to support the accumulation of knowledge which is then used for the discipline and suppression of the individual. 'Our society is one not of spectacle, but of surveillance;[...]the circuits of communication are the supports of an accumulation and a centralisation of knowledge'.[99] All this starts to point to the fact that the bourgeois Victorian society was actively colonising its own marginalised individuals.

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[96]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 170.
[97]*Ibid.*, 192.
[98]Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 1: 61.
[99]N.H. Julius, *Leçons sur les prisons*, 1831, I.

Not only were they to be used in actual colonial endeavours, but they themselves were victims of colonisation. The first insidious effect of the extension of the power of the disciplinary technology throughout society was to deprive the individual of his power.

> A 'political anatomy', which was also a 'mechanics of power', was being born; it defined how one may have a hold over others' bodies, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed and the efficiency that one determines[...]In short, it [discipline] dissociates power from the body;[...]it reverses the course of the energy, the power that might result from it, and turns it into a relation of strict subjection.[100]

The use of the disciplinary technology and the use of prisons in the nineteenth century ultimately represents another extension of the new class power that was arising as a product of capitalism, namely the colonising of the legal system.

> [The prison] is also an important moment in the history of those disciplinary mechanisms that the new class power was developing: that in which they colonised the legal institution.[101]

The colonisation of the legal system, and thus the central image of the Panopticon which was to have such influence on the discourse of the day, ultimately means that the new class power was colonising the marginalised individuals - symbolically represented by the orphan figure in fiction - in their own society. On a fictional level, Dickens's work is full of reluctant discharges, most notably in *Little Dorrit* and *A Tale of Two Cities*. In fact, Dickens in 1861 developed a reading entitled, 'The Bastille Prisoner' from *A Tale of Two Cities*, which he particularly liked although ultimately never read in public. The achievement of the submission through the control of the individual, is an imperial technique designed to fully colonise.

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[100]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 138.
[101]*Ibid.*, 231.

> When you have thus formed the chain of ideas in the heads of your citizens, you will then be able to pride yourselves on guiding them and being their masters. A stupid despot may constrain his slaves with iron chains; but a true politician binds them even more strongly by the chain of their own ideas; it is at the stable point of reason that he secures the end of the chain; this link is all the stronger in that we do not know of what it is made and we believe it to be our own work,[...]On the soft fibres of the brain is founded the unshakeable base of the soundest of Empires.[102]

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In the following chapters, I will trace the construction of the penal narrative as a tool of reforming the orphan figure. The first chapter, 'Victorian Popular Orphan Literature', will deal with the production of the orphan as trope. Although the chapter will offer a selective survey of the popular orphan literature of the time, it will be establishing the orphan as representative of a textual attitude in as much as it is representative of the discursive regime of the period. The production of orphans - whether textual, ideological or literal - can be seen as part of the same discursive practice which articulates the same structure of feeling. The bourgeois began to rely on literary production for the disciplining of the orphan. The discourse of orphanhood, in intersecting other Victorian cultural discourses - especially high culture, religion and popular literature - forms a literary subgenre that crosses the boundaries between fiction, prose, poetry and also high and low art. In the ideological context, popular orphan literature was used as a mode of distributing bourgeois ideology both in terms of patronage of the poor and as an ideological tool. The bourgeois sought to influence popular culture, identified primarily as working class culture, as part of the bourgeois moral crusade. The fairy tale or biblical nature of most of this material only thinly masquerades the bourgeois ideology in which what the bourgeois perceive as virtues are rewarded and vice is very firmly punished.

The second, third and fourth chapters will endeavour through a close textual and discourse analysis to explore how the penal narrative increasingly functions as a disciplinary device to interpellate the orphan and ultimately to form the basis of the representation of the orphan in high art. The second chapter, 'Angels and Devils', will look at Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop*: two hybrids

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[102]Servan, J. *Le Soldat Citoyen*, 1780, 35.

straddling high and popular art. The orphan characters - Oliver Twist, Rose Maylie, and Little Nell - function primarily as redemptive child-orphans who do not grow. All these orphans exist as uninterpellated figures whose marginality is distinctly exhibited in their angelic features. Their marginality is linked to their redemptive role, once this has been fulfilled they are they assimilated into the ideological configuration: in Oliver and Rose's cases they are assimilated into the family; and in Little Nell's case she is interpellated into the religious ideology, fulfilling the textual anticipation of her entering into the spiritual family. However, in *Oliver Twist* can also be found the scapegoated 'orphan', Fagin, who is demonised because of his unknown origins and 'Other' identity as Jew. Fagin is the scapegoat who not only represents the difference found within that must be destroyed, but also the criminalised 'Other' who unifies the community in his destruction.

The third chapter, 'Shades of the Prison-House', is the pivotal chapter in the thesis. In this chapter, the representation of the orphan is as criminal 'Other'. The three narratives, *Jane Eyre*, *Vanity Fair*, and *David Copperfield* function as penal narratives - neutralising and assimilating the orphan. In all three narratives the orphans are able to offer a certain resistance to this process of reform; a resistance founded primarily in their Romantic aesthetic genealogy which invests them with a certain spiritual power. This chapter also traces the disciplinary ethos of this penal narrative in its representation of the ISAs and SAs as well as its self-conscious position within the ISAs.

Chapter Four, '"True" Confessions', in continuing the development of the penal narrative in Chapter Three, examines the shift in the function of fictional autobiographical narrative from the creative and empowering construction of identity to the confessions of the criminalised orphan. Both narratives, *Villette* and *Little Dorrit* , (the latter set primarily in a prison), function ultimately as penal narratives and serve to produce the orphans necessary for the ideology's self-definition. In these narratives, the notion of orphanhood is also extended to a socio-political status as Lucy Snowe and Arthur Clennam are orphan outcasts bereft of the family of the nation-state. This chapter will also examine to what extent these narratives work to interpellate the reader into acting as agent for the dominant ideology.

Chapter Five, 'The Mythologising of the Family', will look at George Eliot's *Silas Marner* as a hybrid between high art and fairy tale which endeavours to mythologise the notion of family. The bourgeois ideology of the family has attained

the powerful status that Roland Barthes allocates to myth as a totalising, universal concept. The family also becomes the model for the nation. Bourgeois ideology is regularly producing orphans as outcasts of all ages and it is the redemptive power of the orphan Eppie who is able to redeem Silas - but by doing so she acts as agent for the ideology of the family which assimilates Silas Marner. This chapter will also form the conclusion of the thesis by attempting not only to summarise the argument but also to extend the notion of the orphan as a cultural trope and ultimately an imperial trope.

Chapter One - Popular Orphan Literature in the Victorian Period

How was a man to be explained unless you at least knew somebody who knew his father and his mother?[103]

As a trope orphanhood permeated the popular imagination of Victorian culture. In this thesis, I will be exploring how the discourse of orphanhood intersects with other Victorian cultural discourses, especially high culture, religion and popular literature. The Victorian orphan literature forms a literary subgenre that crosses the boundaries between fiction, prose, poetry and also high and low art. In this chapter, I will be considering the production of the narrative of the orphan as trope and more specifically, the use of popular literature as an agency for mediating the structure of feeling[104] representing the discourses of orphanhood and the family. In particular, I will be examining the bourgeoisie's production of the narrative orphan and the orphan as text. I will be developing a variation of Althusser's argument in claiming that such textual production of orphans is a necessity for the bourgeois ideology in order that they might inscribe (and reproduce) this ideology within these texts. In this ideological context, I will also examine the use of popular orphan literature as a mode of disseminating bourgeois ideology both in terms of its patronage of the poor as fulfilment of bourgeois aspirations to aristocracy and as a mode of reinforcing values. One of the purposes of this popular orphan literature is to influence popular culture, seen primarily by the bourgeoisie as working class culture, as part of their moral crusade. Having represented the working class culture as morally degenerate, the bourgeoisie sought to identify a cause. In this manner a narrative is constructed in which popular culture - particularly popular literature - is represented as the source of the corruption of the working class. Hence, the bourgeoisie start to produce and distribute popular literature which contributes to the penal narrative in its reformative impulse: Dickens himself, in his *Household Words*, 'purveyed to large audiences a similar mixture of useful information, edifying tales, and cautionary advice against...immorality and crime'[105]. In fact the fairy tale nature of most of this material only thinly masks the bourgeois ideology in which what the bourgeoisie perceive as virtues are rewarded and vice is very firmly punished. In general, 'many educators consciously turned to fiction to solve problems of the transmission of the

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[103]George Eliot, *Silas Marner* ed. Q.D. Leavis (1944. London: Penguin, 1985), 51.

[104]I am using this term in Raymond Williams's sense as outlined in his book, *Marxism and Literature*(1977. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 128-35.

[105]Perkin, *Origins of Modern English Society*, 307.

ideology. Fiction had the advantage of a much more nearly universal availability: anyone educated to the level of basic literacy was accessible through a story'[106]. One of the most interesting characteristics of this cultural production of the orphan is that, while being deeply rooted historically in its articulation of the specificities of a cultural moment, it attempts to hide itself in ahistoricity. The desire to produce an ahistorical narrative can be read as an attempt to elevate ideology into the powerful status of myth.[107]

In this chapter I will identify some of the defining characteristics of this subgenre in tracing the roots of this bourgeois reforming endeavour in the works of Hannah More and the Cheap Repository of Moral and Religious Tracts. I will then highlight a sample of the survey of the popular orphan literature in order to identify how this literature was being used by the middle classes as a vehicle for the moral instruction and disciplining of the working classes by scapegoating the orphan figure.

1.1 Literary Genealogy of Victorian Orphan Literature

The moral genealogy of this bourgeois construction of popular literature can be easily traced back to Hannah More's tracts and the tracts of the Cheap Repository which first started publishing in March 1795. The age of the 1790's was the age of turbulent politics and popular violence - not unlike the turbulent politics of the Chartist debate, suffrage movement, abolitionist debate and the Creationist-Darwinian debates of the Victorian era. If the destruction of the feudal system, class alienation, growing scepticism or indifference were contributing to the moral degeneration of the poor, then the culture of the poor, namely popular fiction, was thought by the Evangelicals to contribute to, or even further, this moral degeneration. Popular fiction, therefore, became the target of Evangelical endeavours and to address this moral threat the Evangelicals, spearheaded by Hannah More, started to publish moral pamphlets which consciously adopted 'the forms, writing styles, and even distribution channels of popular literature...[in an endeavour] to infiltrate and subvert...the day-to-day lives and culture of the

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[106]J.S. Bratton, 'Of England, Home, and duty: the image of England in Victorian and Edwardian juvenile fiction,' *Imperialism and Popular Culture*, ed. John Mackenzie (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1992), 76.

[107]This notion of myth is that of Roland Barthes found in 'Myth Today' in *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (1972; London: Verso, 1993),109.

poor'[108]. Ultimately, however, these tracts not only sought to shape the culture of the poor, but also to reinforce, or recreate, the ideology that was under threat. Ford K. Brown argues that the Evangelical tracts endeavour to find religious justification for the existing hierarchical social order.[109] Or as Susan Pederson argues, 'Just as the tracts stressed the importance of order and hierarchy within the family, so too they looked to the reinvigoration of the ties of hierarchy and dependence between rich and poor'[110]. The dependence to which Pederson refers is not only the charity towards the poor, but the notion of moral dependence. In other words, by example and other methods, the higher classes were responsible for instructing the poor on the issue of moral conduct. Thus, the tracts argue for a maintaining of moral standards within the higher classes as moral degeneration, on this level, would be seen to have tragic social ramifications. This aristocratic claim to moral authority and the duty of patronage is the same claim made by the bourgeoisie in the nineteenth century. As the bourgeoisie assumes the role of the aristocracy, the attempt at patronage can be identified in the patronising tone of the bourgeois cultural product - particularly when dealing with the trope of orphanhood and the ideology of the family. This is clearly represented in *David Copperfield*, where the downfall of the bourgeois 'master' (David's inability to control his servants) leads to the moral downfall of his children - which can also be said to include his servants and the lower social classes under his influence - because the 'master' is responsible for the instruction of those under his responsibility on the tenets of a moral life.

In a more specific sense, the responsibility of the higher classes is equivalent to the responsibility of the parent to their children - the parents have absolute responsibility for the moral instruction of their children. Hence, the tracts also target the domestic life of the poor in order to condemn vices (idleness, ambition, fair-going, superstitious belief, drink, lapsed church-going, and an overly active social life) and to praise virtues (temperance, industriousness, humility, honesty, piety, and patriotism). In this way, these moral tracts are actually attempting, in a patronising way, to construct a moral value system for the poor, and to discipline the poor into conformity to this system.

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[108]Susan Pedersen, 'Hannah More Meets Simple Simon: Tracts, Chapbooks, and Popular Culture in Late Eighteenth-Century England,' *Journal of British Studies* 25 (January 1986): 88.

[109]Ford K. Brown, *Fathers of the Victorians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 123-55.

[110]Pedersen, 'Hannah More Meets Simple Simon: Tracts, Chapbooks, and Popular Culture in Late Eighteenth-Century England,' 94.

The Evangelical tracts initiated by Hannah More endeavour to revive a moral society based on class difference, patronage and a strict social hierarchy. In exploiting their role as moral agents More emphasised the upper class role of 'example, patronage, and even surveillance in reforming the poor'[111]. On the whole, Pederson argues that More's model, and the larger Evangelical endeavour to reform the poor, was 'essentially collaborationist, even colonizing'[112].

Perhaps it is not surprising that the Evangelical tracts were more successful with the higher classes than with the poor. The higher classes were eager to assume the mantle of moral responsibility as it belonged to a social system of strict hierarchy in which they were at the top. The Evangelicals then, set out to alter the consciousness of the poor with the ultimate aim of reforming them and this they set about doing through the infiltration of popular culture. Through the Cheap Repository, it is possible to trace 'the return of the upper classes to popular culture, but as crusaders, not participants'[113].

1.2 Popular Orphan Literature

> *The State is a parent to its people; has a parental care and watch over all poor children, women labouring of child, sick persons, and captives.*[114]
>
> - Charles Dickens, 1852.

Most of the popular orphan literature of the Victorian era is strongly rooted in the Evangelical tract ethos of the late eighteenth century. However, in Victorian culture this is an area where the bourgeois ideological claims to moral authority are contested and authenticated. The control of the institution of literature as an ISA is no longer in the hands of the aristocracy but the bourgeoisie; it is through popular literature that class difference is articulated and bourgeois ideology is hegemonised.

All of the Victorian popular orphan fiction considered here is very minor fiction and takes the form of short pamphlets, verse, or short novels. Although there is an orphan figure in almost all the fiction of the time, the works chosen are those

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111 *Ibid.*, 108.
112 *Ibid.*, 108.
113 *Ibid.*, 110.
114 Charles Dickens, Letter to Forster, 15 March, 1842. *Letters of Charles Dickens*, III: 13.

that are specifically concerned with the problems of orphanhood. These works all correspond to the working of a larger Metanarrative: the narratives function as an ideological apparatus offering education which corresponds to the specificities of bourgeois ideology, *i.e.*, a Christian, capitalist morality. By the 1850's this Christian moral narrative, in becoming more disciplinary in focus, comprises a penal narrative. In narrating the orphan as a textual attitude symbolic of a moral or disciplinary problem, the tales offer, with unrelenting earnestness, only the most rudimentary of plots, peopled with characters that function merely as signifiers. The figure of the orphan, without exception, signifies not only the uninterpellated individual but also 'Otherness'. This 'Otherness' takes two forms: the pathetic 'Other' in need of patronage; or the orientalised[115] 'Other' representing difference within Victorian society. The narrative not only represents the recuperation and assimilation of the orphan figure but also, in interpellating the reader into assuming moral responsibility for the orphan figure (the influence of More's tracts and their aim of moral instruction can be identified here) and later functioning to discipline the orphan, the narrative works to mediate bourgeois ideology. Throughout the tales, this ideology is transmitted through the construction of the self-help narrative which mediates a bourgeois aesthetic. By pursuing this aim, this popular fiction identifies the authors as ministers, or even crusaders, and targets the readers and larger society for reformation. Occasionally, a few narratives aspire to high art by plagiarising better known writers, such as Dickens, in an attempt to be more imaginatively powerful.

The 1830's and 1840's

The orphan popular literature of the 1830's and 1840's is characterised primarily by an intersection of the religious and social narratives - both of which work to perpetuate the bourgeois ideology of the family. The intersection of the religious and social narratives elicits the epistemological break in the perception of the orphan discussed in the previous chapter. This intersection partially represents the conflicting attitudes regarding childhood: the Romantic philosophy of the essential innocence of the child and the disciplinary Calvinistic discourse which seeks to interpellate children, represented as lacking in essential innocence, into moral adults. The intersection of the religious and social narratives in the early Victorian popular literature works in conjunction with the bourgeois capitalist ideology in which the perception of the nature of the orphan moves from a

[115]*cf.*, Edward Said's *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978).

spiritualised redemptive figure to an uninterpellated individual whose scapegoating is necessary to the ideology of the family. As the parameters of this lack of subjection are entirely familial and ultimately social, the orphan exists as a social trope - entirely constructed and produced by social ideologies. The redemptive power earlier attributed to the orphan is now subsumed by the bourgeois ideology itself.

The intersection of the Evangelical and social narratives produces a discourse that is, in its focus around the family and in particular the father figure, absolutely patronising. Both narratives centre around the ideology of the family whether it be the individual family unit, society as a familial configuration, or the larger Christian spiritual family with God as the Absolute father figure. The spiritual family is not only the Absolute ideology which the bourgeois ideology models itself after but at these moments is made to work in conjunction with bourgeois ideology giving the middle classes a spiritual as well as a moral authority. In the early tale, 'The Clergyman's Orphan; Or, The Child of Providence' (1834) found in *The Clergyman's Orphan, and other tales*, the intersection of the social and religious narratives explicitly equates the orphan's loss of family with the loss of membership in the larger spiritual family. The orphans', Jane and Mary's, lack of the knowledge that their father was a clergyman (a fact kept a secret by their Dissenting uncle), signifies a lack of knowledge of their larger spiritual family. Letters written by Jane and Mary's now deceased mother, function as the bourgeois Christian voice when they raise the question, with very obvious sentimentality, 'Who will perform for them a mother's part! Who will teach them to lift their hands in prayer, and to lisp the name of Jesus?' (88). Not surprisingly, this narrative identifies the role of spiritual education as a gendered one to be performed by the mother. The virtuous woman is usually represented as the holder of spiritual belief in both high and low art, contributing to the well discussed stereotype of the woman as the angel of the hearth. Significantly, the parents, from beyond the grave are able to bring about their children's conversion to Christ - through the vehicle of their governess, Margaret, who was taught in Sunday School by Jane and Mary's mother, and by Jane's reading of a sermon her father wrote. With this conversion, illustrating that parental and spiritual bonds are more powerful than death, the narrative reaffirms the power of the family ideology. The author's words, 'God searches the heart' (40) identifies the all-seeing Absolute Father using a disciplinary discourse.

In orphan popular literature the intersection of the religious and social narratives most often take the form of the discourse of self-help. Self-help is used

as narrative to mediate the same bourgeois aesthetic, as argued in the previous chapter, that was actually destroying the family narrative and producing orphans. Contrary to what the self-help narrative tries to represent, this narrative does not empower the orphan but rather, in producing 'productive' Christian subjects who know their place in and their duty to society, empowers bourgeois ideology. This self-help narrative is a crucial point of difference between the bourgeoisie and the aristocrat: membership in the bourgeoisie is available to all who are industrious and successful, while membership in the aristocracy is only available by birth or by patronage and therefore pre-determined. The narrative, *Jane Clark, the Orphan Girl* found in *Harper's Miscellany* (1834) centres around this discourse of self-help in an obvious endeavour to construct a moral form of capitalism. The narrative is critical of the central heroine, Jane's' rich uncle, Philip Garon, for being a money-oriented capitalist who is 'interested only in profit' (183), while establishing Jane as virtuous due to her lack of materialism. Even though this portrait is critical of an amoral capitalism, it only deals with greed as a vice and fails to interrogate capitalist discourse. The main concern of the narrative is to establish a bourgeois set of virtues. Jane, in displeasing her uncle by giving away the money he has given her for a new wardrobe to a poor mother and her children, establishes these virtues to be patronage, thrift and self-denial. Jane's virtuous behaviour identifies her as assimilable; the narrative ends with Jane's integration, through marriage to Frederick Hubert, into the familial structure and the reproducing of this structure through children. The narrative is careful to mask its own ideology by explicitly stating that the orphan Jane's happiness is a product of her own self-help: 'an humble dependence on her own exertions, thereby avoiding that helpless wretchedness, to which some young persons, negligent of their proper improvement, and relying entirely on parents, have brought themselves' (200). By trying to establish orphanhood as empowering, the narrative obfuscates the fact that Jane, as a middle class orphan, displays the proper virtues to enable her to be assimilated. It is through this process of assimilation that the narrative not only works to establish the power of the bourgeois ideology but justifies the rise of capitalism and the bourgeoisie. The orphan's lack of parents translates, in a capitalist narrative, into a lack of patronage in a feudally modelled society. On an ideological level, this self-help discourse, in representing the bourgeoisie (those free of patronage) as empowered and self-made, mirrors bourgeois ideology.

In using the orphan to represent 'Otherness' and difference, as argued in the previous chapter, Victorian society replicates colonial discourse and ultimately colonial power against its 'Others' in its process of constructing a discourse of

civilisation and savagery. One area where this discourse of civilisation and savagery is easily identifiable is in early Victorian orphan adventure narratives. These narratives, such as Peter Buchan's *The Orphan Sailor: A Tragic Tale of Love, of Pity, and of Woe* (1834), construct the orphan as 'Other' as well as constructing discourses of civilisation, patriotism and imperialism. In doing so these narratives represent, and justify, imperialism as a patriotic impulse in order to mask the nature of the capitalist ideology behind it. Like *The Orphan Sailor*, the orphan adventure tales are deeply masculinist emphasising the militaristic hierarchical structure of the ship with its all-male sailors; the masculine nature of these tales in turn reflects the gendered representation of the patriotic impulse and the imperial endeavour. In these tales, the ship acts as the microcosm of society, reflecting social structures and often reinacting current social debates. This can be seen in the larger social significance that can be determined from the tensions signified between the characters on the ship. In addition, the ship acts as the transmitter of both the imperial ideology and its agents. The male orphan figure, as orientalised 'Other' in the Victorian society, is a popular choice to be used in narratives that not only explore social power structures and the imperial ideology but which also explore notions of savagery and 'Otherness'.

In *The Orphan Sailor*, the historical specificity is that of the Mediterranean under the control of the then world power, Algeria. By orientalising the Algerians as a despotic foreign threat to the English, the tale works to justify the English imperial impulse as a civilising impulse. In the tale, the orphan William is taken prisoner by Algerian pirates and is sold as a slave in Algiers. This literal enslavement can be read as representative of a parallel discursive enslavement that the orphan experiences in England - a comment on the nature of the centre of the English Empire. The tale is tragic, after William escapes and is reunited with his true love Jessie, she is killed during their voyage in another shipwreck and William is discursively returned to his original state outside the family as an orphan 'friendless and forlorn'.

Orphan adventure narratives are a valuable tool in the progressive mythologising of the bourgeois ideology. Many of these narratives represent a return to a pastoral existence in order to obfuscate the pressing urban problems that confronted them. This representation of England as rural and pleasant will become as Martin J. Weiner identifies, 'the Southern Metaphor'[116]. Such a retreat constructs

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[116]M.J. Weiner, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 41-2.

an essentialist notion of the origins of society as pure and timeless. In doing so, these tales work, through the location of an identifiable origin of society, to mythologise bourgeois ideology and its assumptions as an ideal form of civilisation - one that is being corrupted under the historical reality of developing urbanisation. This mythologising of bourgeois ideology works towards signifying this ideology as transparent and the natural order of things - a process which denies the recent construction of the bourgeoisie and its roots in materialism and exploitation. Charles Wall's *The Orphan's Isle* (1838) is an excellent example of such a pastoral retreat and is also an interesting inversion of the concerns of *The Orphan Sailor.* This inversion can be partially explained by the differing class concerns embodied in the main characters. In *The Orphan Sailor,* the main character William is obviously of the impoverished, migrant street population whereas *The Orphan's Isle,* written as an autobiographical fragment, portrays children identified as middle class by their family upbringing and their education. Shipwrecked on an island (the orphan's isle) the author and his sisters live with the indigenous people. The pastoral nature of this narrative lies in the 'savages' instructing the orphans. In other words, the orphans 'learn' from the natives and after a suitable period of instruction are re-assimilated into society. The premise of this tale is not only that the pressing urban reality society faces is unable to offer the necessary instruction to its orphans (its 'savages'), but also that there exists a paradisal island where people have a 'pure' understanding of bourgeois ideology as an essential social configuration and an eternal truth.

A consideration of *The Orphan Sailor* and *The Orphan's Isle* together raises interesting points which anticipate the concerns of the next orphan adventure narrative under consideration, *The Orphan of Waterloo* (1840) which is concerned with issues of family ideology, and with imperialism from both within and outside of England. In *The Orphan Sailor* the orphan is both victimised within society, represented by the ship, and actually enslaved. Throughout both the victimisation and the enslavement the orphan William is able to display inherent qualities such as bravery, daring and resourcefulness. However, the tale works to interpellate the orphan as ultimately pathetic - one who is doomed to a life of tragedy regardless of his endeavours. Such a pathetic representation is intent on arousing within the reader feelings of pity and woe. Obviously, the self-made narrative does not extend to correcting injustices or reprieving others from the fate dictated by their lack of class position. In *The Orphan's Isle,* the bourgeois children are shipwrecked on a mythical isle to undergo moral instruction by pure, noble savages. Here ideology works with the power of myth, making itself transparent and working to interpellate

subjects. The use of fiction and the foreign detail enlist an imaginative response to an ideological discourse. Elements of both of these tales, combined with the discourse of self-help are easily identifiable in Lady Isabella Stoddart's (pseudonym Martha Blackford) *The Orphan of Waterloo* which is another product of the English imperial impulse. The demonised foreigner, Napoleon, is vanquished by the morally superior English, but this historical specificity - like that of Algeria - serves as an orientalised backdrop to celebrate successful English military exploits and, in their defeat of Napoleon, encode their superiority in the narrative.

Hubert, an orphan and the main character of *The Orphan of Waterloo*, acts as a saviour figure (both figuratively and literally) to his cousin William who is the product of his mother's indulgent upbringing. As an orphan living with distant relatives Hubert, although comfortable, is differentiated from the aristocratic lifestyle of his cousin's family. The portrayal of the mother's ruinous indulgence of her son William is supposed to signify the degenerate aristocracy corrupting and weakening their offspring. *Ut supra*, on a social level, such degeneracy present within the patronising class, the aristocracy, would have ramifications throughout society. Hubert, free from the taint of aristocracy, displays all the gendered bourgeois virtues of a self-made hero: bravery, daring, intelligence and self-sacrifice. Not only does Hubert (whose interpellation by the English through a process of renaming which identifies him now as George - alluding to St. George the Patron Saint of England and leader of heroic exploits) save William, who is ill with fever in Chile where he has fled after he has disgraced himself, but along the way George acts as the 'saviour and preserver' (215) of Don Diego by saving his life during their shipwreck. Easily identifiable within this representation is that Hubert/George fetishises the familial tie - however tenuous - to the extent that he endangers his life repeatedly in order to save his brother. Ultimately, George restores William to his family and they both go to pursue studies at Oxford. In this ending middle class virtues (bravery, fortitude, morality) and ideology (*i.e.*, self-help and being self-made) are seen as the equivalent as birth and therefore are rewarded. Again, behind the transparent nature of this tale, in its portrayal of middle class virtues as not taught but inherent to one's nature, can be read the ideological workings of the bourgeoisie in which these virtues and the concerns of this tale are in fact not ahistorical but firmly rooted in a cultural specificity. In fact, Hubert/George's heroic reinstatement of William is representative of the morally superior bourgeoisie redeeming the degenerate aristocracy.

Increasingly during the 1840's the central orphan figure is not only the subject of the ideology of the family but the active agent mediating the bourgeois ideology. In the narratives in which the religious and the social discourses (the private and the public) intersect the orphan as agent appears to be returning to the Romantic role of spiritual redeemer. However, when examined closely the 'redemption' perpetuated by these orphan-agents is actually a form of social interpellation; the appropriation and production of the orphan figure as social redeemer mediates the bourgeois claims to moral authority and more importantly, spiritual authenticity. In producing the orphan as ideological agent these narratives are more explicit in identifying their disciplinary motivation and hence can be read as the earliest of the penal narratives. A good example of the bourgeoisie's attempts to claim spiritual authenticity for the disciplinary workings of their ideology can be found in the evocation present in *The Orphan; or the True Principles of Religious Education Illustrated* (1841) of the bible, quoting Proverbs xxii.6, 'Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart'. This narrative, a bourgeois cultural product, works on a disciplinary level. However, in this particular tale the orphan Henry Wilmott, who is being raised by his aunt and uncle, is one who is fully interpellated by bourgeois ideology. Hence, the tale constructs an image of the spiritually interpellated orphan as one who manifests bourgeois virtues through his continual acts of patronage which enact bourgeois pretensions to aristocracy: Henry saves his allowance for the benefit of the poor; he buys a large print bible and new dress for the elderly Martha Hall; and he furnishes a new labourer's cottage. The trite conclusion reaffirms the ideal of the productive Christian member of society.

> Through the whole of Henry Wilmott's career might be traced, by his actions and dispositions, the deep sense he entertained of real religion - that which was shown in a well-spent life, a happy and contented mind, and a heart full of charity towards all mankind (152).

One of the best examples of this type of narrative in which the orphan works as spiritual agent for bourgeois ideology is the anonymous tale *The Orphan's Friend* (1842) published by the Religious Tract Society. In this tale, the main orphan character Mr. Freeman, now an adult, is to care for his newly orphaned niece and nephew. The act of naming Freeman signifies the power of his original uninterpellated position as orphan. The tale's explicit purpose is disciplinary in desiring 'to relate some of the kind things he [Mr. Freeman] said to comfort the

hearts of several bereaved children[...]in the hope that what was so useful when first spoken, may continue to be of service' (9). Mr. Freeman, now an orphan agent of the discourse of the family, works to interpellate other orphans through the use of orphan-specific religious education. In consoling the orphan children with the knowledge that God has a special regard for orphans (26), 'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive' (Jeremiah, xlix, 11) (23), Mr. Freeman offers Evangelical religion as a patronising discourse mediating the bourgeois ideology of the family: in the figure of God exists the Absolute father and fellow Christians form the members of the Absolute spiritual family. As the Absolute Christian family is comprised of mainly bourgeois capitalist members, the faith in the capitalist ethos is a necessary prerequisite for membership.

The Orphan's Friend, as an intersection of the cultural and religious narratives centred around the trope of orphanhood, provides a comprehensive overview of biblical teachings on the orphan which at first may appear slightly subversive in content, in that they seem to claim a form of social consideration for the orphan, but ultimately are related to the patronage of the orphan. The orphans are taught that as orphans the bible provides for them the right to share in half the produce of the land (Deut., xiv, 29; xxvi, 12,13) (27); and, as society is considered a large family, the other citizens are obliged to make a feast for the orphan population (Deut., xiv, 11-14). In addition, God acts as the Father (Psa., lxviii, 5), Helper (Psa., x, 14), Judge (Psa., x, 18), Preserver (Psa., cxlvi, 9), Redeemer (Prov., xxiii, 10,11) and Witness on behalf (Mal., iii, 5), of the orphan. In teaching both his niece, nephew, and the larger orphan readership about the protection offered by God to the orphan, Mr. Freeman is working not only to ensure their eternal life, but also, through recuperation, to differentiate them from orientalised street 'arabs' and 'savages'. 'Now, contrast with your condition the state of the orphan child of the poor idolater: there is no kind teacher...to tell of a Father in heaven, and à guide who will be with him in all his ways; the child often lives neglected, and dies unpitied' (104-5). Christianity is an essential component of the bourgeois ideology of civilisation: in the figure of Mr. Freeman is expressed the larger cultural need to interpellate the orphan as Christian '[the orphan] can never be friendless nor fatherless whilst you cry unto God' (135).

The tale is also interesting in its construction of an orphan spiritual culture ('The Orphan's Hymn', 'The Orphan's Lament', 'The Orphan's Prayer', 'The Contented Orphan' - *cf.*, Appendix A) which forms a point of intersection between the penal and the patronising narratives. As the title suggests, 'The Orphan's Hymn'

is the text of a hymn about the 'helpless' orphan. In this hymn, the orphan is admitting his/her own state of powerlessness. Significantly, the orphan is represented in a disciplined position of penance on his knees 'looking up' to God the Father who is in a position of power. The orphan reinforces his powerlessness in his embrace of discipline. He eagerly pleads to be 'instruct[ed] in God's holy will and taught the duties to fulfil'. In fact, in the ultimate self-nullification the interesting penitent orphan pathetically accepts death in order not to be left alone. The 'Orphan's Lament' exhibits much the same power relations as in 'The Orphan's Hymn', but in this poem the orphan identifies his only home as being with God. God now is fulfilling all the parental roles - comforting, listening, advising and shaping. This poem, as penal narrative, contains a reference to the all-seeing eye of God and the surveillance the orphan is subjected to, but in this poem the orphan displays a more thorough internalisation of the disciplinary discourse by begging to be able to confess to God. The reference to the orphan as guilty is interesting because the notion of guilt is not only linked to the sinner but to the criminal. The orphan's condition continues to be constructed as a disempowered one as an alien whose destiny is controlled by God. The orphan's power here lies in his/her pathetic attraction as one, who in being 'helpless, guilty, friendless, poor'[117], begs for saving, comforting and protecting. This orphan is pleading for reintegration in the family, although simultaneously accepting that his orphanhood is the will of God, and perhaps is the necessary state, *i.e.*, weaned[...]from things below', to 'aspire above' - choice quotations which echo the Romantic aesthetic genealogy of the orphan. 'The Contented Orphan' as a religious form mediates the bourgeois discourse of self-help in its representation of one who accepts a lowly path and a humble mind, offering an interesting source for Dickens's penitent, Uriah Heep. The embracing of duty, labour and class position by the orphan indicates a figure already in the throes of discipline. The orphan is obviously being indoctrinated to accept his lowly class position, and to work hard in order to secure heavenly comforts and the 'favour' of God.

The broadening cultural concern with orphanhood in all its manifestations is demonstrated in the 1842 reprint of *Abiah, Or, The Record of a Foundling* ed. by L. Smith. *Abiah*, a collection of three poems and a short narrative legend, is an 1842 republication of the 1643 Oxford legend entitled 'The Orphan; The Foundling; Abiah' in response to the specific historical need to raise money for an orphan foundling discovered in Newgate Market in May 1842. The foundling child specifies

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[117]This is an interesting mix of adjectives which point to the development of a strengthening penal narrative.

an instance in which the family produces orphans through abandonment. In this particular historical case, in Newgate Market May 1842, the renaming of the foundling Abiah meaning 'the Lord is my Father' is an act of interpellation by the very ideology which produced this orphan. The actual process of naming both emphasises this idea of belonging to the larger spiritual family of God and establishes the Romantic aesthetic spiritual genealogy of the foundling. Abiah's unknown, perhaps spiritual, genealogy serves to emphasise his identity as uninterpellated 'Other'. This 'Otherness' is manifested in his 'uncommon clothing' and 'singular' characteristics, 'which appear quite natural in him, exhibiting a marked difference from the other child reared at the same breast' (4). The plot of the Oxford legend displays the often repeated mechanics constructed by early foundling and orphan literature: the unknown parentage; the threatened inheritance; and the final revelation of a long lost legacy (reminiscent of *Oliver Twist* and anticipating *Jane Eyre*, as well as its inversion in *Great Expectations*). In the Oxford legend the master marries his true love Miss St. Maur and then promptly dies after having impregnated her. After childbirth, while Miss St. Maur is extremely weak, her disreputable younger brother-in-law (another constructed example of degenerate aristocracy) sets fire to the home in order that he may inherit his brother's estate. In the process he destroys the remnants of the family and produces another orphan. This specific destruction of the family symbolises the social destruction of the familial configuration of society which the bourgeois often liked to attribute to the actions of the degenerate aristocracy. The mother perishes but the child is rescued by a servant and sent to Miss St. Maur's family home with another servant. On the way, the servant accompanying Abiah is killed and Abiah is raised as a foundling. Ultimately, Abiah's true parentage is discovered and he claims his rightful name, inheritance and social place. Abiah's ultimate fate as a foundling is differentiated from that of the orphan in that the diseovery of his rightful family name automatically grants him a social place whereas the orphan is considered to have no family and hence no social place.

However, the consequence of Abiah's foundling status, namely that of enforced marginalisation ('degrees and orders were beyond his reach' {18}), is that which defines the Victorian literary orphan's experience: 'He had to meet the silent scorn of the proud and noble vulgar! In the midst of society he was alone! lonely![...]There is a void in his heart which nothing seems calculated to fill' (18-19). The final poem of the collection, entitled 'Abiah', seeks to obfuscate the alienation and loneliness created by this enforced social marginalisation by emphasises Abiah's membership in the spiritual family and constructing his home as in Heaven.

No parent owns Abiah here,
No home Abiah claims to share;
No father's love, no Mother's glory,
A Foundling Child is his sad story.

Say not, he has no Father's love;
There's One who dwells in heaven above,
Whose love is love beyond all others,
Stronger than the love of mothers.
Father's and mother's may forsake,
But his will never, never break;
The Parent of the fatherless!
Their shelter and refuge in distress!
Here may Abiah claim a home,
More precious than an earthly one;
A happy home in heaven above,
Safe in the arms of Jesus' love;
Nor sad the little Foundling's story,
Who thus attains a home of glory (9).

In highlighting the child's eternal happiness to be found in heaven, the poem decentres the current suffering experienced by the foundling in an attempt to interpellate and thereby un-orphan Abiah by claiming for him a spiritual lineage, a 'Father', and a 'home of glory'.

The last tale of the 1840's to be considered, G. Fisk's tale *The Orphan's Trial* (1847), marks a continuation of the retreat from the pressing urban reality destroying the family and the larger Chartist social unrest through an insistence of the 'Southern metaphor' and Romanticism. However, it is possible to identify in such a retreat the progressive mythologising of the bourgeois ideology of the family as the working class examples to be found are lacking in Christian education and thereby constructed as degenerate. *The Orphan's Trial* is a tale in blank verse about the orphan Lucy who is characterised by her inherent nobility of nature, soul and stature. Lucy exists as an embodiment of the ideals of aristocracy to which the bourgeois aspired: nobility, strength, and high moral virtue:

And Lucy, with her tall form so stately,
Looked like a sapling ash, round which the vine
Clings for support...
Far more, the noble soul that dwelt with,
And gave to every feature the impress
Of its deep thought, its pure imaginings,
Its fearless spirit, its enduring love,
Its hope, its faith, and its unfeigned devotion (19).

The subplot which involves Lucy and her friend Rose exists primarily to emphasise, through contrast, Lucy's inherent qualities. Yet in this subplot can also be read the bourgeois construction of the working classes - in this specific case the rural working class - as degenerate in their Christian illiteracy. Rose is the indulged daughter of two elderly working class parents. Rose, unlike Lucy, is unschooled in Christian learning: for bourgeois ideology this lack of Christian knowledge determines Rose's degeneracy. In Rose's characterisation, the emphasis is entirely on her imaginative qualities: she is untaught in faith.[118] Contrary to the Romantic link of the imagination with spirituality, Fisk implicitly links the excessive importance that imagination plays in Rose's life to self-indulgence. Rose rejects a possible suitor, Henry, because he does not measure up to her imagination. Rose falls ill of fever - again linked to her excessive imagination which foreshadows, perhaps, the fevers of Lucy Snowe of *Villette*. This fever ultimately spreads and kills her elderly parents. The nature of Rose's illness now changes to a sickness of the soul. Ultimately, Rose perishes for want of love. In this bleak conclusion of the subplot the tale works to establish working class parenting as worse than no parenting.

Lucy, in contrast, because of her class position, has been schooled early both in religious education and in sorrow.

> But one[...]stood apart, alone
> With her own thoughts, and they were very sad.
> She was a child with none of childhood's joys;
> A girl, and no one in this world to love.
> And as her gaze fixed on that happy group
> She felt how different was her lot to theirs[...]
> To dance, and laugh, and sing! and seem so glad!
> While she could weep for grief (3).

In the description of 'one[...]stood apart, alone' Lucy's as of yet, uninterpellated position as orphan is made explicit. Her orphanhood alienates her from the group of idealised children and ultimately deprives her of her remaining childhood. But, in direct contrast to Rose's indulgent upbringing, Fisk emphasises that Lucy, through her suffering, is enabled to fulfil her Romantic aesthetic and biblical role - the role of priest to the village. In a passage which is similar to Little Nell's tributes in the ancient village, Lucy is represented as the village Saviour:

118With this particular emphasis Rose can been seen as an offspring of Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* in particular and eighteenth century notions of femininity in general.

Grief, and early trial,
Had given a strength and firmness to her heart,
She had become of all the village children
The Leading spirit. To her, slighted friends
Brought their complaint[...]
And weeping childhood told its grief to her.
And truant boys to her confessed their fault,
And begged her pleading grace,[...]
Yea, and grown maidens scorned not to seek
The counsel and advice of one so young.
'For she was not a common child,' they said (17-18).

As saviour in a highly spiritualised pastoral setting, Lucy is not in fact uninterpellated but acts as a confessional figure of moral discipline. Lucy, in her power to absolve and in her singularity, attains the status of a saint. Fisk's description of Lucy's sense of her mission, couched in religious language, develops this identification with sainthood, and emphasises Lucy's strong self-effacing tendencies.

The orphan felt
While there were want and sorrow to relieve
She did not live in vain (76).

The parallel between Lucy, in even such rudimentary characterisation, and Little Dorrit is compelling. One role of the female orphan figure in both major and minor fiction, then, is that of Saviour which differentiates her from the male orphan figure who is primarily used as hero or to represent 'Otherness'. In the class politics this narrative constructs, the empowerment of the female orphan figure as Saviour translates into the bourgeois moral crusade to influence the childhood and domestic culture of the working classes and thereby to discipline them.

The 1850's

In the 1850's is perhaps the first orphan adventure narrative that is not a heroic imperial narrative but rather focuses on the notion of difference to be found within Victorian society: Mootoo's (pseudonym), *The Orphan; A Romance* (1850) centres on the orphan who does not leave the country but rather lives a life on the margins of Victorian society. As a child, Squire Hawthorn's son is sold to gypsies by the Squire's brother, Caleb (another degenerate aristocratic figure willing to destroy the bonds of family for illicit gain), in order that Caleb may claim the family inheritance. This narrative, about the orphan being raised by a group of gypsies,

plays on the notions of gypsies as 'Other' and heathens within Victorian society. As such, these 'savages' are demonised as a corrupting threat to the 'civilised' members of society which this tale translates into a willingness to steal their children. However, the root of the threat of the gypsies lies in the fact that their often racialised difference and their existence within the heart of Victorian England pose uncomfortable problems to the bourgeois notion of society as family. Working in conjunction with the narrative which attempts to mythologise the bourgeois ideology of the family, the orphan child displays essential qualities of purity and morality in managing to retain all characteristics of 'civilisation' even while raised by gypsies. At this time gypsies were represented as racially subhuman in a discourse which prefigures what will be articulated by social Darwinist discourse later in the century. As colonisation of, or assimilation and hence neutralisation of, the 'Other' is necessary both to demonstrate the power and authority of the bourgeois myth and to successfully resolve the story, it is through the gypsy Reginald's confession that the orphan is restored to his rightful inheritance - which the possession of civilised traits allows him to assume.

A good 1850's example of the intersection of historical, ideological, and religious discourses is the Reverend George Fisk's *An Orphan Tale, told in rhyme* (1852) which was published for the benefit of The School of Industry for Female Orphans. The affiliation of this school, founded in 1789 for orphan children, with the Anglican Church illustrates clearly how religion works within the ideological apparatuses. The beneficiary of the tale, The School of Industry for Female Orphans was an actual cultural ideological apparatus working to interpellate female orphans into productive servants of the bourgeois. Children were accepted at the age of seven and allowed to remain until they were fifteen years of age at which time they were then placed with a family. The orphan was subsequently rewarded if she stayed with the family, one sovereign for the first year and two sovereigns for an additional two years - if she received a good report.

Fisk's Preface, a quotation from Hosea, xiv, 3, 'In Thee the Fatherless Findeth Mercy' establishes a religious mediator for the ideology of the family. Fisk uses the orphan's strong Romantic spiritual inheritance to establish the spiritual genealogy of the central orphan Jane, who is 'a placid child, with sunny brow' (46).

Where art thou straying -
Soul of my blessed one -
Dreamily playing,
Art thou before the throne?
Is thy God with thee now,
Shining with sunny glow,
Down on thy infant brow,
Deep in thine heart? (22).

The Romantic spiritual inheritance is used in conjunction with a pastoralism to deliberately retreat from the urban reality of the orphan subjects of The School of Industry. Jane describes to her classmates an idealised pastoral version of childhood culturally associated with rural life:

She told them many a pleasant tale
Of country sights - of hill and dale,
And bright green pastures - where, with flowers,
She used to pass such happy hours -
Of the old mill-stream, and pretty fish (46).[119]

What is of interest in *An Orphan Tale, told in rhyme*, however, not unlike the final orphan's confession in 'The Orphan Boy'(*cf.* footnote 119), is Jane's rudimentary reconstruction of her earlier experience in an autobiographical fragment. The fictional autobiography will become the predominant genre for the fictional orphan figure in high art and becomes the basis of the orphan penal narrative. Jane is not only thoroughly interpellated but is, on a simplistic level, producing a penal narrative to perpetuate a form of self-discipline and to act as orphan agent. On the level of narrative, Jane is one of the fictionally produced orphans who acts as narrative agent. In Jane's narrative the location of the discipline as occurring in a pastoral setting contributes to the larger mythologising of bourgeois ideology by representing it as transparent, natural and essential. What is also very interesting to note is that Jane went forth 'to do and endure[...]the path of servitude she trod' (51), content with 'the humble lot/By God assigned' (49), because the language of Jane's embracing of her duty and servitude is suggestive of that used to describe Little Dorrit, the self-effacing heroine who sets forth with

[119]This idealisation of rural life is further developed in Mrs Sherwood's (formerly Mary Martha Butt) 'The Orphan Boy' (1860) contained in *The History of Little Henry and His Bearer, and Other Stories* - a moral tale about the orphan James's downfall after moving from his partially idealised country community of suffering, but righteous, poor folk to the corrupt city. 'The Orphan Boy' does not seek to hide the underlying motivation to enlist children as the agents of the Christian mission within society - particularly cities: 'My little children, I would have you learn from this story[...]it is in your power to teach the word of God to those who know it not' (77).

Arthur at the end of *Little Dorrit* - the novel which Dickens commenced three years later.

The 1860's

The popular literature of the 1860's continues, and develops, the use of the orphan as agent for bourgeois ideology. This literature, through its even more insistent narrating of the orphan as a trope which cuts across the discourses of religion, culture and art, reifies the orphan as not only a textual attitude but hypostatises a cultural moment. Like *An Orphan Tale, Susan Carter, the Orphan Girl* (1861), published by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge is set in The Female Orphan Asylum. This tale promotes the Asylum as a bourgeois ideological state apparatus through its direct linkage of the institution with the family. All the female orphans are considered by Susan Carter as 'her sisters, for they all loved each other' (12). The fact that all the orphans are dressed in distinctive dress (similar to uniforms) underlines the fact that once institutionalised the orphans are often additionally marginalised and treated as prisoners.[120]

As the central orphan figure, Susan is another figure, like Little Dorrit who always 'strove to do her duty both in word and deed' (74). But Susan, is not only doing her duty but is acting as an agent of the ISA. 'Great good she did with her words, for many young and thoughtless mothers she was the means of reforming and making sensible and religious women; indeed, she was quite a blessing to the village' (74). In this quotation then is found a mixture of all the roles of the orphan figure - redeemer, spiritually empowered ('blessing'), and reformer, or agent of the disciplining morality, mediating bourgeois ideology.

The anonymous author also directly identifies the motivating purpose of the narrative as being the reform of the readership when she hopes 'that this little narrative may, by God's blessing, help to make more Susans amongst our scholars, our servants, and our villagers' (75). As such, the narrative is increasingly

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[120]This recalls Pugin's concept of the ancient poor house, reprinted in the Frontispiece, as having a parental role. Although Pugin entitles these poor houses, what he actually portrays is without doubt, the design of the Panopticon and the design of what can also be read as an older prison. Pugin's linkage between prison and poor house is not only revealing in the light of the discursive associations discussed previously, but also because of the differences in structures. The closed structure of the Panopticon signifies not only isolation but a cold, sterility. In contrast, the open structure of the ancient poor house, with the wings of the building reaching out as arms, appears to embrace its poor in a parental gesture.

functioning as an ISA which seeks not only to interpellate the reader but to influence the culture of the poor as to their place and mode of life. Thus, the narrative not only mediates bourgeois ideology but works to patronise the poor. 'I feel more and more convinced of the incalculable blessing which a sound religious education is to the poor' (86). The Preface further develops this patronising motivation in declaring that:

> The Author's only view in publishing it is to show, from the evidence of real life, the blessings of a religious education, even in the lowest station: that it alone can make good servants[...]by its means, the humblest persons are enabled, by the influence they exercise on those around them, to do as much good in their proper sphere of action as those who have the greatest worldly gifts at their disposal (Preface).

As a mode of instructing the poor on issues of daily life the work contains chapters elaborating bourgeois ethics and capitalist values, such as 'The Savings Bank', 'Hints On Shopping', and 'Finery In Dress'. Significantly, Susan prospers after her wedding because of her 'reliance on the bible as an unerring guide in every situation' - bourgeois prosperity is therefore not only spiritually authenticated but rewarded.

Ironically, many of these narratives portray the familial structure as both a salvation and a threat for the orphan. Only through integration into a family can the orphan receive the necessary instruction for a virtuous religious life: yet simultaneously, the orphan is often maltreated and abused in families as the outsider, in a way similar to that documented in the next pamphlet for discussion, *The Workhouse Orphan*, where most orphan girls were abused by members of families in whose service they were placed.

The pamphlet *The Workhouse Orphan*, published in 1861 by the anonymous author of *A Plea For the Helpless*, claims factual status as an historical document outlining the actual plight of the workhouse orphan by examining several individual cases, while providing another example of the trope of orphanhood intersecting historical, ideological and fictional discourses. *The Workhouse Orphan*'s ultimate purpose is to help facilitate efforts, both individual and institutional, to benefit the workhouse orphan. To this end, it concludes by advertising a notice for 'The Brockham Home and Industrial Training School' whose object is to take girls aged 12-16 years of age out of the workhouse both to train them as domestic servants and to provide a Home to which they can return if necessary, providing that they have

not committed any 'misconduct of a serious kind'. The author outlines the common plight of these workhouse orphans, who are usually female - namely that they are totally alone, uncared for, untrained and more importantly, through lack of instruction, they are unable to translate their natural innocence into a virtuous lifestyle. Many of these women are abused while in their first job and subsequently run away. This tendency to abuse orphan employees is succinctly expressed in the words of one employer of a young girl, sent out from the Central London district schools, 'They are only pauper girls who will gladly put up with any rough treatment' (7) which adequately demonstrates how the bourgeois family was, in practice, actually producing orphans. The pamphlet numbers the Workhouse orphans at 27,523 (presumably at the time of publication). Of these orphans, an overwhelming majority end up living on the street.

The testimony given by E.C. Tufnell, Esq. before a Committee of Inquiry on Education in 1860 that in one London parish 'all the eighty girls brought up in the Workhouse were on the streets' (7), is evidence that orphans were being produced, and criminalised, on a cultural institutional level by the ISAs as well as on an widespread individual level of the family. If the workhouse orphans were not abused in family positions or on the streets, then the author goes on to illustrate how they were abused and ill treated in factories which often led to ill health, deformation and crippling. As argued previously in the 'Introduction', those workhouse orphans who were on the streets were almost certain to become criminals as, once on the streets, the writer finds that 'they were all lost characters; old in vice, though still young in years' (10). Indeed, the combination of the workhouse experience and life on the streets serves to harden these orphans making them resistant to other institutional endeavours to reform their characters and hence causes a cultural anxiety around these orphans in the 1860's which is quite different from that displayed in the literature of the 1830's and 1840's in that the bourgeois ideology is that much more developed in the 1860's and hence the failure to assimilate fully these figures poses uncomfortable problems. The author quotes a Lady Superintendent of a large Penitentiary as stating, 'Only eight of those inmates who have been with us are *known* to have been brought up in a Workhouse, but of those eight only one has turned out well; and our experience has led us to the conclusion that the absence of loving influences at Workhouses generally tends to deaden all feeling, and to make the work of reformation well nigh an impossibility' (10).

The destiny of most workhouse orphans to become criminals as a direct result of the abuse and lack of care they received shows that in actual fact, Victorian society was actively producing and criminalising these orphans. Once criminalised, if they did not perish on the streets these orphans, outside the scope of the ISAs, became targets for reformation by the penitentiaries and the prisons, a process not unlike that which Foucault documents. The aim of this pamphlet then, is not only to raise awareness about the plight of the workhouse orphan but also to indict the failure of the Workhouse in its duty to these orphans. Part of the reason that the Workhouse produces those resistant to reformation, aside from the lack of a loving environment, according to the argument the pamphlet puts forth, is that the deprivation experienced at the Workhouse induces 'a torpor of both the mental and physical system' in which 'the mind becomes an utter blank. The *memory, never* exercised, ceases to exist. The very recollection of past happiness is taken away. Memory and hope, two of God's best gifts to man, and as precious to the poor as to the rich, are unknown to the Workhouse Orphan' (13). By refusing to encourage the development of memory and hope, the Workhouse deprives each orphan of any sense of identity. Indeed, the Workhouses, in failing to instruct these orphans in the rudiments of religious education, fail to interpellate them into the larger spiritual family and thereby serve to orphan them twice over. 'Can it be right, then, to consider them as outcasts and treat them as if they were not belonging to that one great family of which Christ is the head?[...We must] tell them that, though Forsaken by earthly parents, they have a Father in heaven' (15). The author, in embracing the idea of one family of God, does seek to counteract the impositions of the Darwinian hierarchy on humans within Victorian culture. Yet the patronising tone of the author implies that these orphans are helpless and could never achieve full 'civilisation' and belief without instruction. As such it becomes quite clear that the ISAs are producing the savage, orientalised 'Other' within the heart of Victorian society.

This pamphlet also offers an insight into Victorian middle class guilt about its failure to alleviate the suffering of the poor which is more pronounced in the 1860's than in the early popular literature and pamphlets discussed. By choosing an orphan child, the author has focused on a figure of special pathos: 'Is there any child more weak and helpless than a Workhouse Orphan?' (15). The author uses this pathos in order to intensify the guilt feelings already held by certain sections of society about their failure. E.C. Tufnell's statement to the same committee that 'according as we manage the orphan destitute class, we bring a blessing or a curse on the country' (19) reveals his sense of society's profound failure to do their

Christian duty to these orphans and fulfil the obligations of patronage. The author of the pamphlet not only shares these views but challenges the bourgeois to reaffirm their moral and religious authority through disciplinary action. 'If we train Pauper children as we should[...]the cry of the Orphan and oppressed will no longer rise up, in a Christian country, against those who with Christian privileges have forgotten the blessing promised to those who take care of 'the widow and fatherless within their gates" (25).

Indeed, the author's case histories establish this guilt by illustrating that orphans are not necessarily evil or corrupt by nature but rather are produced. As a justification for the penal discourse directed towards orphans the narrative represents a dying Orphan whose last words pathetically plead his case of being undisciplined and therefore the blame for his actions lies with the social family that did not fulfil their moral, disciplining function: 'I have been very wicked, but no one ever taught me better, no one ever cared for me' (27). Society's failure lies in not acting as a Christian family to its orphans by taking on the responsibility of their Christian instruction and disciplining. As justification for this responsibility, the author quotes from page 271 of Alexander Thomson's *Punishment and Prevention* (1856):

> God has established one great institution for training children - the family - with all its duties, its privileges, its endearments. *If we are to do* these children good, we must follow the plan so clearly indicated by our Heavenly Father, and endeavour to provide for them a system of training which shall, as nearly as possible, supply what they have lost - the blessing of a Christian home (11-12).

Thomson's quote is interesting for two reasons. Firstly, his explicit identification of the family is as an Ideological State Apparatus. Secondly, Thomson makes explicit the notion that Victorian society, and thus its representative institutions, functions in a parental role to its members - particularly its marginalised members - and ought to take this role seriously (as seen in Dickens's quotation noted earlier). Thus, the Workhouse needs both to act as a home and to play a moral, parental role in the lives of its orphan inmates if it is to be effective in its instruction of its inmates in a virtuous lifestyle. This view is supported by Mrs. Sheppard, author of *Sunshine in the Workhouse*, who states that 'Workhouse education, as it now exists is valueless, and will be so till a more parental element is infused into the system and moral lessons are taught[...]by watchful, loving care of their young souls' (18-19). The term

'watchful' especially in the Foucauldian conceptual framework of this thesis is resonant with implications. The idea of moral instruction, or disciplining into a religious belief, under watchful care points to the parental institutional structure functioning in the same surveillance role as found in the concept of the Panopticon. This notion of watchfulness is developed beyond its roots in Puritan educational systems to a distinctly Foucauldian system of thought in advocating that the responsibility of the Workhouse is really to instruct the orphan into a knowledge of the world as Panopticon:

> The Workhouse Orphan has no friend to take him by the hand and remind him that there is an All-Seeing Eye ever upon him, a tender and loving Father above, who is grieved when his children disobey His commandments, and who will help him do better if he asks Him. He is at once condemned as a wicked boy, he becomes hardened to all good feelings, and is soon the willing companion of regular thieves, reckless in evil, feeling that he is an outcast in the world (18).

Here, the author has depicted the world as a type of large Panopticon, with humans constantly aware that they are under the unceasing surveillance of the 'All-Seeing Eye'. The author warns that the Workhouse's failure to undertake the responsibility of the family in instructing the orphan into an awareness of this surveillance and thus, eventually result in repentance, will lead to the orphan becoming an 'outcast'. Thirdly, the mode of narrating the orphan as undisciplined and the role of the family as disciplinary establishes this as a penal narrative.

This pamphlet is extremely relevant for the larger argument I am proposing in its depiction of a general tendency in mid-Victorian attitudes regarding the function of society and its institutions towards orphans. In addition, *The Workhouse Orphan* undertakes to address the question of the unknown parentage issue pertaining to orphans - a factor that is continually used against the orphan to reinforce his/her 'Otherness':

> It is a general but mistaken idea, that *all* Workhouse children are taken from the mere dregs of society, from the very lowest class - mostly children of shame, thirty-two girls have been taken out of different Workhouses and placed in an Orphan Home. Of these thirty-two, only two have an unknown parentage; the remaining thirty are the legitimate children of respectable parents, who had maintained them by industry and labour during their lives (14).

But what actually happens is that the narrative distinguishes between Workhouse children, who are represented as essentially good in nature and knowable because their parents can be identified, and Workhouse orphans, whose parents cannot be traced and therefore his/her genealogy known. This unknown genealogy, once empowering in Romantic terms, is a precondition which enables the cultural demonisation of the orphan.

In addition to pamphlets, the popular literature of the 1860's addresses the same concerns expressed in the central pamphlet, *The Workhouse Orphan.* One example of this is Miss E. Matthew's *The Orphan Boy; or, how little John was reclaimed in verse* (1863) which, as a blatant plagiarism of Dickens's *Oliver Twist,* illustrates the trope of orphanhood cutting across high and low art, informing both. Like *The Workhouse Orphan, The Orphan Boy*'s main purpose is to interpellate the reader into moral action by raising the awareness that orphans and other children are being progressively criminalised through neglect. The plot is easily recognisable - John's mother Mary dies and with her dies the idealised working class home. John's father, also named John, remarries a widow. The widow is a stereotypical cruel stepmother figure who ill treats and even beats John. John's father falls into drunkenness and eventually dies - this death is portrayed as a fitting punishment for failing to protect his son and falling victim to the vice of drunkenness. In this second home the working class father is demonised as corrupt, abusive and whose vice and lifestyle destroys the family unit. Through neglect and desperation, Little John falls in with thieves who are under the control of Jolly Bob, the Fagin character.

You can't expect that 'Jolly Bob'
Will keep us both in food,
Unless we take him something home,
As thieves in honour should.

He's taught us all the tricks we know;
You're quite as quick as me;
And why you fear to make a snap,
I really cannot see (9).

The narrative works to demonise street children as a criminal threat precisely because they are outside the influence of the bourgeois family and incorporated in a surrogate criminal family. Both of these communities reveal the destruction of the family and help to establish the need of a moral authority and family - roles to be played by the bourgeois readership. As an idealised child the original product of an idealised family, Little John displays the same inherent revulsion to crime as Oliver Twist does, but in Little John's case this is overcome. Miss Matthew's is obviously determined to illustrate, in a more realistic fashion than Dickens, that this environment is ultimately corrupting, producing criminalised orphans. Worthy Little John's ability to retain his innocence in this environment for almost five years identifies him as a worthy subject for recuperation into the social family. Eventually, Little John is detected stealing a pocketbook and a chase scene, which is easily recognisable from *Oliver Twist*, ensues:

But hark! What sound is that he hears
Borne faintly on the mind?
'Stop thief' - John rushes madly on,
While steps are heard behind.

With cries and yells the crowd pursue,
They nearer, nearer come;
He rushes now with flying speed
To reach his distant home.

Tis vain, the thief is caught at last,
A policeman holds him tight,
And takes him to the Station-house,
To linger for the night (12).

Unlike Oliver, Little John spends one month in jail - as an indication that he has been fully criminalised. This use of the prison marks the invocation of the repressive State Apparatuses after the ISAs have proved inadequate. The time in prison acts as a process of internal reformation exemplified by his rediscovered

'honest impulses'. On his release, Little John anguishes about what to do; he is revolted by his criminal life. Here, Miss Matthew's, rather obviously, addresses the readership about the plight of the orphan. In the figure of Little John, Miss Matthew's insists on the idealised nature of the orphan who is criminalised by neglect. John's turning to crime out of necessity then is a microcosm of the general plight of the orphan.

> Poor children that had never known
> A parent of a friend;
> He reach'd the gates, then paus'd to think.
>
> 'If I go back to Bob,' he said,
> 'He'll make me steal and lie;
> And if I roam about the streets,
> I shall with hunger die.'
>
> It may be so, but let me ask,
> Where shall the outcast go?
> The thief, the wanderer, whom the world
> In scorn will never know? (13).

This idealisation of the orphan develops progressively through the 1860's in part as the larger attempts to mythologise bourgeois ideology. Like Oliver, Little John's innocent nature is reflected in his face and catches the attention of a passing benevolent gentleman who notices Little John's 'honest face' (15) and the signs of an inward struggle. This gentleman subsequently decides to befriend Little John. John grows up a pious Christian father and agent of the bourgeois ideology who uses the story of his life in his teaching of his children.

By the end of the 1860's the language of the narrative becomes more overtly disciplinary in nature as exemplified in *The Little Orphan; or, Annie Thornley* (1869). Annie's fault lies in her individualism which identifies her as obviously uninterpellated. Annie therefore poses even more of a threat to the family ideology. Even at a young age, Annie has a 'wayward' and 'passionate' temper (34) and a 'strong and unyielding will' (36) - characteristics which recall Jane Eyre. The author laments the fact that 'Annie missed for some time the discipline and right training which she ought to have received' (39) and thus, Annie has not 'learnt the lesson of self-control' (40). But gradually Annie learns, (in an echo of both David Copperfield and Tattycoram), through Sunday School teaching as religion again mediates bourgeois ideology, to discipline her 'passionate temper' (53). It is possible to trace, not only the discipline to which Annie is subjected in the form of religious teaching, but the actual process of internalisation of this discipline, albeit on a basic level, in

this narrative. Annie begins to reproduce this discipline in the form of self-discipline:

> [Annie] had not yet conquered her faults, but they were less frequently seen[...]and when[...]they mastered her, the sin, as she knew it was, led her to heart-felt repentance and confession of her errors to God (93).

The author's characterisation of Annie's 'spiritual nature' as having taken on 'more of the hues of heaven as the months roll on' (94), is directly contrary to the Romantic philosophy in alluding to the fact that spirituality is not inherent but rather the product of a religious education - in other words, a social construct. In this admission can be found the bourgeois producing their own redeemer - a scapegoat who must be destroyed (neutralised and assimilated) in order to be redemptive. This view is a legacy of the notion of original sin - a state out of which one must be educated. The lack of such education results in the production of little heathens - little savages - which then must be reclaimed by society and redeemed. But if this education is undertaken, then society is able to produce its own redeemers.

The author argues for the unique pathos and vulnerability of orphans who have no family, no identity and no social place:

> Among the many sad things which are experienced in this world of varied sorrows, there are perhaps few sadder than that of having no home[...]that is, they have no place in which they feel they have a right to dwell as the abode of their parents, and therefore their own. They form members of other families, and can consequently be cast forth upon the world homeless and desolate, at the will of another (138).

In the conclusion, the author takes the opportunity to identify and interpellate her audience. 'And now, in conclusion, let us say a few words of encouragement to those who, like Annie, have lost their parents, and are more or less friendless in a cold world. True, the world may often appear to us in this light but there is one above who is the supreme ruler' (156). Indeed, the author explicitly identifies both the purpose of her narrative and her larger role as author as being to preach the word of God and more importantly to function as a cultural ideological apparatus. 'If any poor orphans should be led to stay themselves upon the orphan's God

through reading this little book[...]the object and prayer of its writer will be fulfilled' (156-57).

Mrs. H.K. Potwin's *The Orphans' Triumphs; or the Story of Lily and Harry Grant* (1869) written in the same year as *The Little Orphan*, offers a conflicting representation of the orphan to that of *The Little Orphan* in representing the central orphan figure, Lily Grant, as angelic. This representation is reminiscent of earlier representation of orphan figures, particularly in Dickens's (*cf.* Rose Maylie and Little Nell), continuing the general trend to retreat from the pressing urban concerns into the pastoral and the spiritualised tale. The naming of the orphan as Lily emphasises the notion of her inherent purity by identifying her with the symbol, the lily, traditionally associated with purity. Lily possesses an essential angelic nature in order for her to fulfil her role as redemptive agent. In one rather overdone passage, Lily Grant with her long golden hair, dressed in white, is on her knees reciting a poem about a child becoming an angel. Lily acts in a manner similar to that of Little Nell, always ministering to others and able to touch the heart of the most hardened reprobate, George Winship, before his death. In fact, Mrs. Winship, feeling that Lily has special spiritual powers, orders her to pray for her son George to be spared. So even late into the century, in popular fiction the orphan figure can still be read as the angelic redeemer - a product of its Romantic aesthetic genealogy. Mrs. Potwin reinforces this reading in her final image of Lily Grant which focuses on her purity and her spiritual power.

> Lily passed her childhood in Mr Holmes' family, cherished and beloved by all; exerting a silent but powerful influence, constantly and effectually; as the sun's rays draw the moisture and dew from the earth and concentrate them into the brilliant colors of the bow of promise, so her pure life and beautiful example lifted the thoughts and desires of her associates heavenward, and assisted them in perfecting the Christian character (294).

The orphan then, by her example, assists in the religious instruction of the readership as religion works to authorise bourgeois claims to purity. The narrating of the orphan as angelic redeemer is a more obvious cultural production of redeemer than is found in other literature of this time period, revealing perhaps not a cultural desire for redemption but bourgeois ideology establishing itself as redemptive.

The 1870's and 1880's

This popular orphan literature of the 1870's and 1880's develops further: the orphan as demonised 'Other'; the pressing need for a Christian civilising mission within the heart of Victorian England; and the bourgeois aspirations to mythologise their ideology. One of the late orphan adventure tales, the 'Trials in the Life of an Orphan Sailor Boy' found in Volume II of *Five Sea Novels* (1871), is interesting for its demonisation of the orphan figure. In the orphan adventure narratives written earlier in the century, the orphan was depicted as either pathetic or civilised. In this tale, the early traces of what will become the degeneracy discourse later in the century are apparent in the demonisation of the orphan figure and the authority figure, the captain. As in most adventure tales, the ship can be read as a microcosm of society. The orphan Lute, a ship-hand, is continually abused by his drunken captain, a symbol of degenerate authority. Lute is demonised as the uninterpellated 'Other' found within Victorian society. Lute's unknown genealogy is linked to the sea (the sea was 'at once father and mother and sister and brother to him' {110}). The captain describes Lute as threatening; one who possesses a temper akin to a 'dark passion' (which recalls Tattycoram's temper) and possesses a nature likened to that of 'young Satan' (109). In a demonstration of the changing cultural attitudes in the 1870's as opposed to the 1830's the repressive SA methods are not as effective as the more subtle ISA methods: the corporal punishment Lute suffers actually helps to reinforce this devilish nature as his resentment of the captain hardens into hatred. In fact Lute sees himself both in the position of 'prisoner' and of 'slave' to the 'tyrant' captain (113). However, Lute's moral degeneration is halted by meeting the Captain's young child whose idealised innocence awakens in Lute a 'holy love' (115). After rescuing this child repeatedly over the course of the narrative, they marry and thus Lute, as one neutralised and assimilated, is reintegrated back into the society.

In Charles Bruce's *The Story of a Moss Rose: Or, Ruth and the Orphan Family* (1871) the mythologising of the bourgeois family continues. In this tale the bourgeois child Ruth Wakefield is represented as the spiritually redemptive 'ministering child' (58) who cares for the spiritual welfare of the impoverished orphans Annie and her two brothers. This ministering figure works to validate the bourgeois spiritual authority as a product of their essential spirituality. Annie is slowly dying from a crippling back injury. Ruth, on her way to her music lesson one day comes across Annie staring out of her window. Annie admires the Moss rose that Ruth is carrying and they start a conversation. Ruth returns daily to read to

Annie and gradually these sessions expand into lessons for the entire impoverished neighbourhood, modelled on the notion of Sunday School. Although the tale is firmly set in an urban setting the ethos around the Sunday School is pastoral. In this use of pastoral the tale works more on the level of myth than fiction. Ruth's father employs one of Annie's brothers, George, thus enabling him to establish himself. Eventually Annie dies.

Bruce, as with most popular orphan fiction writers, used the plight of children, particularly orphan children, to judge his own society. But the strong pathos evoked in the description of the suffering orphans works effectively to camouflage that it is the capitalist foundation of the bourgeois ideology that is in fact producing these orphans and their misery.

> The souls [of orphan children and the poor...]are like so many flowers, all their beauty hid and their fragrance lost by poverty, ignorance, and sin, but needing only to feel the gentle influences of human love and pity, and to sun themselves in the beams of the great Sun of Righteousness, to lose it all, and to grow into beautiful flowers for the heavenly Kingdom (46-7).

This tale, although written in 1871, appropriates the Romantic philosophy of childhood for its ideological purposes in order to validate the mythologising of the bourgeois ideal as essential, natural and transparent. Charles Bruce opens the tale with the avowal of the idealised nature of children and the need for proper instruction in areas of moral discipline. 'The impulsive unselfishness of children is very beautiful; as the years progress, intercourse with the world aids in its destruction: surely we are nearer heaven in our earlier years than during any other period of our after life' (6). Indeed, Bruce puts forward the doctrine that memory of the spiritual nature of childhood is a vehicle for the reformation of the corrupt adult - in an echo of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*. 'I think angels love to visit the dark places of the earth; they visit the prisoner in his cell, and he thinks of those days, so long ago now, before his soul was stained with sin, when as a little child he said his prayers at his mother's knee' (8-9). In the figure of the suffering orphan Annie's visionary abilities can be found traces of both Dickens's Little Dick and Blake's visionary children. '[Annie] saw visions and caught glimpses of that glory' (125). Indeed, Bruce tries to camouflage the pathos of Annie's death, brought about by a capitalist society, by hinting at a reward in eternal life for her passive heroism: 'Heroic souls are sometimes enclosed in very weak and fragile bodies; and when to

the natural heroism and strength is added that of a Divine nature, then the soul indeed becomes strong' (125). Such a camouflage robs Annie of her specificity and ignores the progressive victimisation wrought by the bourgeois ideology.

Lizzie Glover's *Victor, The Little Orphan; Or, the Necessity of Self-Help* (1876) is quite obviously about the orphan Victor's self-helping endeavours. In this narrative, emigration is seen as an act of self-help. At this historical time self-help is not only mediating bourgeois ideology, but has become commodified as an export to aid colonial endeavours. In addition, the figure of the bourgeoisie as pioneer extends the cultural frontiers of bourgeois ideology. Predictably, Victor, a good Christian becomes a modestly successful businessman in America. The tone of the tale is allegorical; his life is marked by many misfortunes - including famine, flood, and death - all of which Victor confronts successfully. Ultimately, Victor becomes a Sunday school teacher, a successful Sunday preacher, and an ideological agent, as a direct result of his own perseverance and excessive self-denial. 'He was a man who had risen from a street-crier in London,- how was it he could draw so many to listen to him? It was his own perseverance. He had watched society, - he had wasted no time in going to places of amusement, but had employed every spare minute in studying, either for lectures or discussions' (42).

In Glover's Preface she identifies her authorial role as primarily ministerial in a move which interpellates both reader and author as ISA agents. 'When is the storyteller better employed than in striving to assist the reader haply to discern more clearly life's every-day duties, and fight the more nobly and trust fully the battle in which all may be victors, through Him that loveth us'. Glover's narrative then acts as a vehicle for her religious and ideological endeavours.

Violet Russell; Or, the Orphan's Troubles (1880) is interesting because of its similarity to the penal narratives of *Jane Eyre* and *David Copperfield.* Violet Russell is orphaned and befriended by the Gordons, a married couple, who return her to her uncle Captain Russell. Once in Captain Russell's house, Violet is isolated from his children because he feels she will possibly be a bad influence. Like Jane, Violet has a very spirited character and subsequently fights the Captain's children in order to defend herself from their bullying. Henry Russell, echoing what John Reed tells Jane Eyre, informs Violet that she is 'only here for charity' (52). As punishment for her self-assertion, Violet is sent into solitary confinement (an echo of Jane and David's respective solitary confinements) in a little room for two hours and given only 'bread and water during the rest of the day' (52). Rather than subduing Violet's rebellious

nature, this punishment heightens her sense of awareness of her unjust treatment. Violet writes a long letter, which acts as a narrative of her misery, to the Gordons. Rather than allow her uncle to see the narrative, Violet destroys it. Violet is whipped and shut up again for punishment. The next day she is sent away to a school, reminiscent of Creakles's, which is known for its success in disciplining 'unmanageable children' (61) into 'dear, obedient pupils' (62). During the course of her stay, Violet, who is represented as essentially moralistic, is unjustly accused of theft. Like David, Violet chooses to run away.

> The consciousness of her innocence, and the feeling of injury under which she laboured, so preyed upon her, that she determined to do anything rather than remain amongst those who had insulted and humiliated her. She would run away (91).

Violet eventually finds the Gordons who, after listening to her story, choose to adopt her - in much the same way that David's Aunt Betsey adopts David. Ironically, it is in the loving home of the Gordon's (*i.e.*, in the family unit) that Violet's disciplining is completed. Violet 'soon saw how wrong it was to be disobedient and wilful and tried to correct her faults' (110).

The author, in a way similar to the previous narrative, clearly identifies her target audience as primarily children, and the overall purpose of the narrative is to function as an ISA and to form part of their religious education. 'Little reader! Shun[...]evil[...]and you will have your reward. Be truthful, be obedient, be honest, and you will find that it is not only the happiest, but the best policy in the end, both for this world and the next! (78-79).

The popular orphan literature of the 1880's increasingly subscribes to the mythologising of the family as a universal norm. Bowen's *Cared For; Or the Orphan Wanderers* (1881) is a good example in its use of the preface (directed towards her childhood readership) to reinforce the family ideology: 'Children into whose hands this little book may fall, will probably be, for the most part, such as are in possession of happy homes and affectionate parents or relatives' (5). The narrative is a reverse adventure narrative focusing on the wanderings of the two orphans, Philip and Susie Arnold, who are orphaned when their mother dies during their return to England from Australia. In a reversal of the earlier orphan adventure narratives of the early 1830's and 1840's the journey, now from the colonies to Victorian England, is characterised by the difficulties of the journey back and the threatening nature of

Victorian England to her subjects. After the death of their mother the only place for the orphans in Victorian society is the Workhouse. Rather than go to a Workhouse, the two children set out to find their English family, in the form of their cousin of whom their mother frequently spoke. During their travels their 'Otherness' in Victorian England is signified by their prolonged stay in a gypsy camp. Ultimately the narrative distinguishes between the absolute 'Other', the gypsies, and the marginalised members of Victorian society based on a definition of Christianity and heathens. The gypsies are 'Other' because of their lack of Christian belief while the two children are Christian. Eventually, the children are befriended by 'the true Squire Bountiful' (93), Baronet Sir Henry. This characterisation of the benevolent squire recreates the aristocratic ideal of the squire as fulfilling the paternal role in society. Ultimately, the orphans receive the legacy of the cousin (who is now dead) and the story ends with the two orphans saying 'The Lord's Prayer' - an image undoubtedly designed to reinforce the larger spiritual family and the middle class claims to religious authority.

Kathleen Mary Smith's *Orphan Lottie; Or, Honesty Brings its own Reward* (1881) is about the orphan Lottie's struggles to maintain herself after her mother dies impoverished, due to a fraud perpetrated by the greedy farmer Morris. It is significant that Lottie has already had a good Christian upbringing which serves to differentiate her from the orientalised 'little street arabs' (16). Again this Christian training serves to affirm her moral superiority and confirms, rather unrealistically, that she is in no real danger of corruption. Lottie's identity as redeemer, like Oliver's, is eventually deduced from her 'very sweet expression' (117). Lottie manages to support herself by refusing charity and becoming self-employed as a basket-maker. In this tale self-help not only mediates bourgeois ideology but attains the status as myth with its redemptive power as Lottie, rather unbelievably with her modest income, manages to help support an old man who befriended her and to contribute to charity to help alleviate the suffering of other orphans. On his sick bed farmer Morris confesses the fraud and restores Lottie's money to her. The moral of the story is that because Lottie was 'carefully brought up' (189) she was self-sufficient in times of crisis and did not have to rely on charity - or in other words, a religious education, mediating bourgeois ideology, empowered Lottie to help herself.

1.3 Conclusion

Throughout the fifty years of the Victorian era considered in this chapter, popular literature contributed to the narration of the orphan as trope in whom is located the difference found primarily within Victorian England and its empire. The orphan, who signifies 'Otherness' increasingly becomes the focus of disciplinary endeavours which seek to assimilate and thus to neutralise this difference. Constructed around the figure of the orphan is a penal narrative which not only targets the orphan but also implicates the authors and readers in its disciplinary endeavours. Central to the orphan penal narrative is the construction of the family and the insistence on the familial configuration of society. The family acts not only as the point of identification of a person but also as the primary unit of moral and social discipline. In the cultural production of these orphans it is not easy to identify any overt criticism of the social conditions that were producing these figures.[121] The implicit endeavour of these works is to reinforce the hegemony of the family but in doing so, these narratives deliberately choose to ignore the historical reality that increasing industrialisation and rising capitalism were actively destroying the family unit. These narratives then offer an ideal of family life which is in historical actuality becoming less common. By retreating from the reality, or pursuing the 'Southern Metaphor', many of these narratives exhibit characteristics of a fairy tale - often set in pastoral surroundings and with simplistic characterisations.

However, it is possible to locate repeated attempts to convince the readers at large that society is failing in its Christian duty to its poor, disadvantaged members in the often-used argument that the manner in which their society deals with these groups will determine whether the society is blessed or cursed. These works address society's failure towards the orphan population in this particular case, and encourage endeavours to reintegrate this marginalised group into society. In the

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[121]However, later in the century the middle classes become aware of the misery and alienation that capitalism has produced. In an 1883 address to London working men, Arnold Toynbee expresses this guilt.

> We - the middle classes, I mean, not merely the very rich - we have neglected you; instead of justice we have offered you charity, and instead of sympathy we have offered you hard and unreal advice[...]you have to forgive us, for we have wronged you; we have sinned against you grievously[...]we will serve you, we will devote our lives to your service.

This combined fear and guilt contributes to a larger sense that society is failing in its Christian duty to its poor.

moral tales and tracts which derive their model from Hannah More and the Cheap Repository Tracts, the orphan is the target of social missionary endeavours. If the orphans are the focus of the narrative it is to use them as a means to criticise society for abdicating its responsibility to its poor. Society is then encouraged to accept the responsibility for the moral education of the orphan in place of the family structure. In order to encourage this responsibility the tracts attempt to refute the notion of orphans as either criminals or savages by insisting on their innocent nature which is then corrupted by deprivation. If the orphans are the targets of the missionary endeavour, then the tracts attempt to offer a source of comprehensive religious education for the orphan in place of the family. In either role, the author of the tract assumes the mantle of the priest of the tribe instructing either society as a whole, or certain members. It is difficult to determine how popular these pamphlets were with an orphan readership, but they were enthusiastically supported by members of the middle and upper classes, primarily because they implicitly support a hierarchical social structure and encourage the orphan to accept his/her place (usually in the lower classes) in society dutifully.

In the self-help narratives the orphan is not the passive receptor of society's charity but rather is active on his/her own behalf. These orphans, once given the benefit of a Christian education, become productive members of society and have the added role either of redeemer or perpetuators of this Christian 'truth'. Significantly however, not one orphan is depicted leaving his/her own class. Hence, the notion of self-help for the orphan is used to reaffirm class place; the orphan is free to develop within his/her own class but not to aspire above that class. By depicting productive orphan members, these self-help narratives reinforce the bourgeoisie's claims to moral and social authority.

In conclusion, the fiction surveyed in this chapter addresses the major nineteenth century cultural phenomenon of the orphan. The unfamiliar nature of most of this fiction dictated that this chapter be largely descriptive. However, in spite of this, this chapter lays important groundwork in identifying in these texts the defining characteristics of this orphan fiction subgenre. The bulk of the literature analysed endeavours to reform the orphan through disciplinary techniques that Foucault documents, namely surveillance and solitary confinement. The following chapters will further develop the subgenre's characteristics, identified in this chapter, in detailed analyses of specific works of 'high' fiction.

Chapter 2 - Angels and Devils

What have paupers to do with soul or spirit? It's quite enough that we let'em have live bodies.[122]

This chapter will explore two novels, *The Adventures of Oliver Twist; Or, The Parish Boy's Progress* (*Oliver Twist*), and *The Old Curiosity Shop*. These novels can be categorised as early Victorian novels because of their aesthetic genealogy which manifests itself in the Romantic qualities of the narrative which exists alongside the developing social, and ultimately penal, narrative - a tension similar to that Steven Connor identifies as the intrusion of the public narrative onto the private narrative.[123] This tension can also be seen, in the terms of the opening quotation, as a tension between soul (an aesthetic inheritance which represents power) and body (which represents constraint). While the early orphan figures exist in the era between the movement of disciplinary endeavours from corporeal punishment, the site of which is the body, to the penal narrative and hence internal reform, the site of which is the soul, there is a continuous tension between the institutional constraints their bodies experience and the inherent freedom of their Romantic souls: '*Oliver Twist* like other nineteenth-century novels attempts to reconcile the two principles of development and progression on the one hand and the desire for fixed origin on the other'.[124]

This chapter will consider *Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop* in order to develop further certain defining characteristics of the subgenre identified in the previous chapter. The Romantic aesthetic shaping these narratives, and subsequently the portrayal of these orphan redeemer figures, is made explicit by the perception of the child. Continually in these novels the child is portrayed as both innocent and in possession of true spiritual knowledge. The definition of truth used in these novels is still essentialist and divine in origin - although the methods by which truth is constituted will soon be a source of struggle for power, resulting in the construction of a penal narrative. Inherent spirituality, which composes a private identity, comes increasingly in contact with the larger social narrative, which becomes known as a public identity. 'This uncertain fit between the figure of the

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[122]Charles Dickens, *The Adventures of Oliver Twist; Or, The Parish Boy's Progress* (*Oliver Twist*), ed. Kathleen Tillotson (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1966), 41. All subsequent quotations will be from this edition and will be noted in the text in parentheses, denoted by *OT*.

[123]Steven Connor, "They're All in One Story': Public and Private Narratives in *Oliver Twist*.' *The Dickensian* 85 (Spring 1989): 4.

[124]*Ibid.*, 12.

child and the official social world provides an opportunity to explore the equally problematic relationship between public and private forms of narrative'.[125]

Simultaneously, in an intersection between the Romantic and Christian narratives, Dickens chooses to invest the most abject of all child figures, the orphan, with an inherent spirituality. On one hand this serves to underline the power of the Divine and subsequently of Christian belief, in that even the most abject of figures has the ability to possess Christian knowledge. But, more interesting perhaps, is the notion that it is precisely because of this abjectness that the orphan figure is the vehicle for the redeemer: an agent that bourgeois discourse will appropriate in constructing itself as redemptive. For the New Testament doctrine of 'the meek shall inherit the earth' identifies this abjectness as the necessary precondition for true spiritual knowledge and power. Both texts to be considered in this chapter will attempt to re-integrate the marginalised orphan figure into the larger familial structure (both literal and spiritual), while simultaneously emphasising its 'Otherness' and its spiritual power.

Ultimately then, this chapter will identify both the inner characteristics that these orphans possess, Romantic in origin, which serve to empower them spiritually, while attempting to analyse to what extent the social (public) intrudes on this inner identity. These orphan figures occupy a landscape that is largely allegorical (signified by explicit reference to Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* - arguably the best known allegorical work), and commune with a Nature which is largely spiritual. The orphan figures that this chapter considers, with the exception of Fagin and Dick Swiveller, exist not only as special individuals but as angels whose angelic nature is prominent in their features. Their Romantic aesthetic lineage, in the cases of Oliver, Rose, and Little Nell is easily discernible in that their spirituality derives from the fact that they are children (although Oliver is problematic because in Oliver Dickens is working to combine a Romantic and social (institutional) lineage). It is their orphan status that contributes to their redemptive power. It is significant then that the orphans in this chapter appear not to grow - rather they stay, either actually or symbolically, as children because ultimately they do not exist as developed characters but as signifiers of an angelic power.

The orphans in this chapter also experience an intense isolation - which in early Victorian literature is related to their spiritual function, but which in later Victorian literature identifies them as being marginalised as scapegoat and hence,

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[125] *Ibid.*, 6.

vulnerable to appropriation by the penal narrative. The later orphan figure will share this margin with the criminal and it is perhaps no coincidence that it is possible to trace a definite scapegoating of the orphan even in this early literature in which the isolation that the orphan figures experience is identified with a notion of criminality arising out of material want. The orphan/criminal link in the early literature seems to be a result both of necessity and of occupying the same margins, while in the later literature this linkage will be accepted implicitly. Hence, in the redemptive power of the early Victorian orphan can be identified the workings of ideology in which the orphan attempts a social redemption - aiming to achieve ultimate reintegration into the larger family of the community - not only for the orphans themselves but also for the other characters that they redeem. These early orphan characters, who can only tell their story in the form of a short tale, ultimately function as ideological signifiers - at the expense of character development. The fact that these figures do not have the same power of narrative that the later orphan figures possess testifies to the fact that they exist outside, uninterpellated by the structures involved in the developing power relations. As such, the power of narration can be seen to result from an interpellation by ideology into a larger penal narrative, but paradoxically this same narrative allows the orphan to articulate their resistance to the developing penal narrative - as can be read in Jane Eyre's narrative.

2.1 Oliver Twist and Rose Maylie: The Principle of Good and the Angel of the Hearth

Published in 1838, *Oliver Twist*'s two principal orphan figures, Oliver and Rose, represent the social and spiritual focuses of the novel: the representatives of the ideologies of the family and religion. Oliver, described by Dickens in his 1841 Preface as the 'principle of Good' is in continual confrontation with adversity, corruption and ill treatment, arising out of his contact with various social institutions. *Oliver Twist* is a loosely structured allegory, or moral tale, which is reinforced by the subtitle *The Parish Boy's Progress.* Dickens chooses a child, specifically an orphan, for both the principal character in this moral tale and as the embodiment of the 'principle of Good'. Obviously the aforementioned Romantic aesthetic inheritance of childhood as embodying a state of innocence and special spirituality is a strong legacy which Dickens utilises in conjunction with New Testament teaching. The ideology is made explicit in *A Christmas Carol,* when Dickens states 'It is good to be children and never better than at Christmas when its mighty Founder was a child

himself'[126] - in which the ideology of the family can be seen to intersect with religious ideology, in the form of the spiritual family. Here Dickens insistently reminds us that the focus of the most important celebrations in Christianity, Christmas, is the celebration of the holy child.[127] The orphan, then, akin to Christ in lacking an earthly genealogy, possesses an even greater spiritual aura. In addition to the enhanced spiritual status, the figure of the orphan, in the family ideology, is also a figure of special pathos. Hence, the trials undergone by Oliver arising primarily from his lack of family, and hence lack of interpellation, are especially potent for the Victorian reader. Such abjectness of character both makes the orphan figure an effective ideological agent: Dickens's use of narrative, even in his early work, is concerned with 'social activity and effectiveness'[128].

In *Oliver Twist* Dickens claims in the 1841 Preface that he was working against the trend of a number of popular literary genres, particularly the Newgate novels, in order to 'dim the false glitter surrounding something which really did exist, by shewing it in its unattractive and repulsive truth' (1841 Preface, p.lxiv). In setting out to 'draw a knot of such associates[...]as really do exist; to paint them in all their deformity, in all their wretchedness, in all the squalid poverty of their lives' (1841 Preface, p.lxii), Dickens claims to have embarked on a task of moral instruction to address social and literary shortcomings, and attributes his authority to do so to his literary genealogy:

> If I look for examples, and for precedents, I find them in the noblest range of English literature. Fielding, De Foe, Goldsmith, Smollett, Richardson, Mackenzie - all these for wise purposes, and especially the two first, brought upon the scene the very scum and refuse of the land. Hogarth, the moralist, and censor of his age - in whose great works the times in which he lived, and the characters of every time, will never cease to be reflected (1841 Preface, p.lxiv).

The author, then, is functioning as an ideological agent. In the artist Dickens's case this role intersects with the aesthetic Romantic inheritance of the role of the priest of the tribe. It is significant to note this role of the author as minister, and ideological agent, being accepted by early Victorian authors, because it is the same role that will

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[126]Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol: The Original Manuscript* (New York: Dover Publications, 1967), 96-98.

[127]This notion will come full circle in the figure of Pip in *Great Expectations*, whom we meet on Christmas Eve, and who is anything but celebrated. Indeed, the focus of the narrative is on Pip's being brought up 'by hand' instead of being celebrated.

[128]Steven Connor, 'Public and Private Narratives in *Oliver Twist*,' 3.

be assumed, initially at least, by the literary orphan figure when s/he has the role of author in the genre of fictional autobiography.

From the moment of Oliver's birth when there is 'nobody by' (*OT*, 1), Oliver experiences alienation and loneliness - experiences that define the orphan as outsider and scapegoat. Because of his lack of family, Oliver's is identified by the workhouse - the institution which can be read as having produced him, 'He was badged and ticketed, and fell into his place at once - a parish child - the orphan of a workhouse - the humble half-starved drudge - to be cuffed and buffeted through the world - despised by all, and pitied by none' (*OT*, 3). The workhouse scenes serve to underline Oliver's enforced isolation, epitomised by his imprisonment - the language of which is akin to that of the solitary confinement of a prisoner. 'For a week after the commission of the impious and profane offence of asking for more, Oliver remained a close prisoner in the dark and solitary room to which he had been consigned' (*OT*, 12). Oliver possesses a heightened awareness of his loneliness which causes him to view his existence as akin to solitary confinement. 'A sense of his loneliness in the great wide world, sank into the child's heart' (*OT*, 8). Here the workings of the ideology of the family can be identified: the lack of family status of the orphan is represented as not being a position of liberation but of loss. The orphan is seen as an outsider deeply troubled by his status of outsider and his resulting lack of sense of community. The social institutions which were supposed to be functioning as ideological apparatuses appear as inadequate in comparison to the family - producing orphans rather than acting as parental substitutes. However, in this the ideology of the family can be read, through its apparatuses as producing orphans in an endeavour to perpetuate itself. Also, it is through these social institutions that the penal narrative is developed and inscribed on the orphan. This loneliness and lack of belonging is increased at Sowerberry's, until it eventually becomes associated with a state of living death: first developed in the parallel between Oliver's new bed and a grave. 'The atmosphere seemed tainted with the smell of coffins. The recess beneath the counter in which his flock mattress was thrust, looked like a grave' (*OT*, 26). Finally, Oliver fervently wishes for his own death, as a relief from the misery and profound loneliness of his life:

> Nor were these the only dismal feelings which depressed Oliver. He was alone in a strange place...The boy had no friends to care for, or to care for him. The regret of no recent separation was fresh in his mind; the absence of no loved and well-remembered face sunk heavily into his heart[...]he wished, as he crept into his narrow bed that was his coffin[...]that he could be laid in a calm lasting sleep in the churchyard ground: with the tall grass waving gently above his head: and the sound of the old deep bell to soothe him in his sleep (*OT*, 26).

However, Oliver does not get his wish for death granted as he lays in his coffin, he becomes a figure of living death in the form of the child mute. Sowerberry recognises the immediate pathetic appeal of Oliver's countenance in reminding the mourners of the child they had lost. 'Many were the mournful processions which little Oliver headed, in a hat-band reaching down to his knees: to the indescribable admiration and emotion of all the mothers in the town' (*OT*, 35). Subsequently, Fagin, Mr. Brownlow and the housekeeper are all struck by the innocence Oliver's countenance reflects. It is indirectly through Oliver's countenance that the secret of his parentage is made known. Although denied the power of narrative, Oliver's familial identity will continue to insist upon its own recognition through his distinctive features, eventually resulting in his reintegration into the family. This essential family identity allows Oliver to resist the other narratives offered to him, which seek to give him another identity (that of parish child, child mute, criminal), by successively fleeing each repressive institution or social situation (excluding Mr Brownlow's) - as he does initially in the case of the Sowerberry's when 'his spirit was roused at last' (*OT*, 37).

Oliver's dream of a peaceful retreat to a churchyard in the countryside is significant in two ways. First, Oliver's dream reveals his inherent Romanticism - yearning for pastoral scenes not seen, yet intuitively known to exist. In addition, Oliver's instinctive focus on a churchyard adds a distinctly spiritual element to the pastoral scene. This vision not only foreshadows elements of his own happy ending, in a pastoral setting beside a church, but also marks Dickens's first tentative exploration of the issue of the death of a child which will be the focus of *The Old Curiosity Shop*. Indeed, Oliver's vision of the churchyard anticipates Nell's own moment in the churchyard.

It is Oliver's countenance which is positively angelic in appearance, that first suggests his inherent spirituality which is then developed by the surrounding

religious symbolism. At the commencement of his journey Oliver receives his first blessing. Significantly, this blessing comes from Little Dick - another orphan who possesses an intensely charged spiritual nature. Little Dick, so close to death himself, displays a religious visionary ability akin to children in Blake's poems, *e.g.*, 'Chimney Sweep' in *Songs of Innocence.* In anticipating his death and glimpsing angels in Heaven, the figure of Little Dick is the forerunner to the schoolboy in *The Old Curiosity Shop.*

> [We shall meet] after I am dead, but not before. I know the doctor must be right, Oliver, because I dream so much of Heaven and Angels; and kind faces that I never see when I am awake[...]God bless you!
>
> The blessing was from a young child's lips, but it was the first that Oliver had ever heard invoked upon his head (*OT*, 43).

Besides revealing his holy power through his ability to bless Oliver, Little Dick displays the self-effacing nature which is characteristic of most of the spiritually charged orphan figures in Victorian literature - with the possible exception of Jane Eyre.

> Leave my love to poor Oliver Twist; and to let him know how often I have sat by myself and cried to think of his wandering about in the dark nights with nobody to help him[...tell him] I was glad to die when I was very young; for, perhaps, if I had lived to be a man, and had grown old, my little sister, who is in Heaven, might forget me, or be unlike me; and it would be so much happier if we were both children there together (*OT*, 109).

Indeed, in his eagerness to enter Heaven as a child, Little Dick acts as the point of intersection for the orphan's aesthetic and Biblical genealogies. The aesthetic Romantic inheritance can be read in Little Dick's eagerness to embrace Heaven before his special memory of childhood is lost. The Biblical aspect is from the writings of St. Matthew, which identify the childhood state as the necessary precondition for eternal redemption. 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven'. Little Dick's insistence on telling his story - 'I should like[...]if somebody that can write, would put a few words down for me on a piece of paper: and fold it up and seal it: and keep it for me, after I am lain in the ground' (*OT*, 109) - not only adds his narrative to the many conflicting narratives that make up *Oliver Twist*, but is also an assertion of his own essential inner identity in the face of the institutional narrative forced on him.

Oliver's angelic appearance is also an indicator of his own inner spirituality and subsequent power. His features point to his own incorruptible nature - which is quickly recognised throughout the novel. Oliver's uniqueness makes him 'not like other boys in the same circumstances' (*OT*, 170). In addition to having angelic features, Oliver's countenance is the epitome of truth. 'It was impossible to doubt him; there was truth in every one of its thin and sharpened lineaments' (*OT*, 72). The truth referred to here is an essential truth which is divine in origin.

Throughout his trials, Oliver does manage to retain his innocence and his inherent faith by refusing to participate either in the official institutional narrative forced on him, or in the criminal narrative that Monks so desperately wants to thrust upon him. In his desperation, Oliver turns to his 'Father' for protection. 'He prayed to Heaven to spare him from such deeds; and rather to will that he should die at once, than be reserved for crimes, so fearful and appalling[...]he stood alone in the midst of wickedness and guilt' (*OT*, 130). It is very significant to note that Dickens's portrayal of criminality is a portrait of destitution - both physical and moral - neglect, corruption, and misery:

> Countenances, expressive of almost every vice in almost every grade[...]cunning, ferocity, and drunkenness in all its stages, were there, in their strongest aspects; and women[...]with every mark and stamp of their sex utterly beaten out, and presenting but one loathsome blank of profligacy and crime: some mere girls, others but young women, and none past the prime of life: formed the darkest and saddest portion of this dreary picture (*OT*, 164).

The fact that Oliver shares this destitution, misery and alienation makes him a criminal by association. Fagin tries to make him an actual criminal by '[letting] him feel that he is one of us[...and filling] his head with the idea that he has been a thief' (*OT*, 126). But in this case, as in all others, Oliver resists the inner process of criminalization, the descent into vice, because of his inherently pure nature - a nature which resists this process of moral corruption. Hence, Oliver's countenance still pays tribute to his innocent nature and he remains the 'principle of Good'. So while Dickens does acknowledge that his society, through neglect, is a factor in the criminalisation of certain sectors of the population - a notion which is indirectly related to Foucault's notion of the soul as being a social construct - Dickens still empowers Oliver, through a Romantic aesthetic construction of innocence, to resist becoming 'A thief, a liar, a devil: all that's bad, from this night forth' (*OT*, 104) and

hence, to resist the penal narrative. *Oliver Twist* is a hybrid or transitional novel in this respect. Oliver retains, throughout his trials, a nobility of purpose which, indirectly, will lead to his own salvation from evil. 'The boy had firmly resolved that, whether he died in the attempt or not, he would make one effort to dart up stairs from the hall, and alarm the family' (*OT*, 145). Finally, it is Oliver's heroic attempt to overcome his own loneliness, even on the verge of death, that leads to his reintegration into a family and hence, ideology. 'It would be better he thought, to die near human beings, than in the lonely, open fields' (*OT*, 183). Crucially, Oliver's insistence on integration and maintaining his own integrity indirectly empowers him, albeit briefly, to remove the constraint of Dickens as 'biographer' and to tell his own narrative - a forerunner to the later autobiographical power of the orphan. So, on one hand, part of Oliver's role is to reflect the state of various social institutions, as David Miller argues: 'Oliver moves from one institution to another with extraordinary ease - from workhouse, to family, to "flash-house", back to the family and so on; in doing so he becomes an empty signifier who merely demonstrates the proliferation of such institutions'[129]. But on the other hand, Oliver ultimately is not just an 'empty signifier', as his identity is not only a social construct, but still retains some of the essential spirituality of his Romantic aesthetic lineage. Thus, Oliver's continual movement between institutions serves not only to reflect these institutions, but also to demonstrate that Oliver's individual freedom arises from the fact that he does not stay in any one institution for any length of time; rather, Oliver is always 'freed' either directly or indirectly by his own efforts and his refusal to be corrupted.

Another interesting scapegoated figure is Fagin. As a Jew Fagin is seen to embody the absolute outsider - present within Victorian society - who poses a threat to the community because of his difference. Fagin is demonised because of his Jewish difference - Sikes identifies Fagin as 'the devil' (*OT*, 121) - by a discourse which often tends to racialise the representation of Jewishness. As a demonised scapegoat Fagin is seen to represent an active threat: Fagin is represented as desiring to corrupt Oliver. 'The wily old Jew had the boy in his toils; and, having prepared his mind, by solitude and gloom, to prefer any society to the companionship of his own sad thoughts in such a dreary place, was now slowly instilling into his soul the poison which he hoped would blacken it, and change its hue for ever' (*OT*, 120). However, it is interesting to note that this demonisation borrows from the discourse of orphanhood - Contrary to being thought fresh from

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[129]David Miller, *The Novel and the Police*, as paraphrased by Simon During, *Foucault and Literature: Towards a Genealogy of Writing* (London: Routledge, 1992), 160.

God, Fagin is thought to be a devil because of the inability to trace his parents - in a way which illustrates the colonial nature of this discourse.

> Reminds me of being nabbed by the devil[...]There never was another man with such a face as yours, unless it was your father, and I suppose he is singeing his grizzled red beard by this time, unless you came straight from the old un without any father at all betwixt you (*OT*, 302).

Fagin partially functions as a Girardian scapegoat: the community is united in his destruction (which occurs in the name of society through the Law); yet Fagin, as devil, is not awarded the scapegoat's redemptive power. Instead the narrative diverts this redemptive power to another orphan, Oliver who is by now reinterpellated into the family.

Returning to the literal orphans, the sudden change in language and images, after Oliver is in the custody of the Maylies, heralds the shift of the novel's setting from London, which is allegorically charged as the city of destruction to the pastoral countryside, the scene of Oliver's final happiness. It also heralds the novel's shift from public to private narrative. The shift to settings infused with both Romantic and allegorical significance, forms a backdrop to the arrival of the other orphan in the novel, Rose Maylie. In many ways, the character of Rose Maylie serves as a foil to Oliver. Rose is an orphan, with the same inherent innocence and virtue as Oliver, but her experience has been one of integration into a loving family as opposed to isolation and institutionalisation. Therefore, Rose is not as alienated and vulnerable as Oliver . 'I have never felt the want of parents in your goodness and affection, but that I might have done so, and might have been equally helpless and unprotected' (*OT*, 192).

As far as my argument in this chapter is concerned, Rose's importance lies in her embodiment of certain qualities which will be possessed by most other literary orphan figures in the century. Rose manifests, even more clearly than Oliver, the Romantic theory of the child, and in particular the orphan, as being fresh from God. Rose's portrayal, from the introduction of her character, emphasises her quality of 'Otherness', and her kinship with angels, which link her to Little Nell:

> The younger lady was in the lovely bloom and spring-time of womanhood; at that age, when if ever angels be for God's good purposes enthroned in mortal forms, they may be, without impiety, supposed to abide in such as hers. Cast in so slight and exquisite a mould; so mild and gentle; so pure and beautiful; that earth seemed not her element, nor its rough creatures her fit companions. The very intelligence that shone in her deep blue eyes, and was stamped upon her noble head, seemed scarcely of her age or of the world[....she] threw into one beaming look, such a gush of affection and artless loveliness, that blessed spirits might have smiled to look upon her (*OT*, 187-88).

The fact that the 'cheerful, happy smile[...was] made for Home; for fireside peace and happiness' (*OT*, 188) points to the dual nature of such an angel. The angel is both heavenly and earthly - reflecting one widely accepted Victorian belief in the role of the virtuous woman as the angel of the hearth. This role of angel also corresponds to what Nina Auerbach sees as the role of women in Victorian fiction as 'emotional and spiritual catalysts'[130] - a role which derives from the female orphan's Romantic heritage. 'Wordsworth's little girls tend to be angelic, corrective figures who exist largely to soothe the turbulence of the male protagonists'.[131]

The language which likens Rose to 'an angel[...]a creature as fair and innocent of guile as one of God's own angels' (*OT*, 232), identifies Rose as a redeemer - a role she shares with other female orphan figures, namely Little Nell, Jane Eyre, Little Dorrit, and Eppie. The sharing of this role as redeemer reveals one particular genealogy among certain female orphans of the century. As mentioned, part of Rose's highly virtuous and spiritually charged nature is due to her being a woman. Rose tries to function as a redeemer to Nancy. 'Do hear my words, and let me save you yet, for better things' (*OT*, 273). Rose gives Nancy the first blessing of her life. 'Dear sweet angel lady, you **are** the first that ever blessed me with such words as these, and if I had heard them years ago, they might have turned me from a life of sin and sorrow; but it is too late' (*OT*, 273). Nancy takes Rose's white handkerchief in remembrance of purity and blessing, and grasps it at her death.

In addition to functioning as a redeemer, Rose possesses the self-effacing nature that can be traced through Little Dick, Little Nell to Little Dorrit. 'Intensity of

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[130]Nina Auerbach, 'Alice and Wonderland: A Curious Child,' *Romantic Imprisonment: Women and Other Glorified Outcasts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), 146.
[131]*Ibid.*, 146.

her noble mind, and[...]sacrifice of self which, in all matters, great or trifling, has always been her characteristic' (*OT*, 224). Simultaneously, Rose displays hints of Jane Eyre's self-assertion, in firmly refusing Harry Maylie's offer which she feels may potentially compromise him. 'I owe it to myself, that I, a friendless, portionless girl, with a blight upon my name, should not give your friends reason to suspect that I had sordidly yielded to your first passion, and fastened myself, a clog, on all your hopes and projects' (*OT*, 233-34). In asserting herself, Rose remains true to her convictions not to sully anyone else's name or genealogy. 'There is a stain upon my name, which the world visits on innocent heads. I carry it into no blood but my own; and the reproach shall rest on me' (*OT*, 234). Indeed it is Rose's assertion of her principles that prompts Harry Maylie to re-evaluate his 'lifestyle'. Ultimately, Harry chooses to embrace religious belief and a pastoral lifestyle with Rose as his wife. Harry's actions parallel Rochester's actions in *Jane Eyre*. As the novel closes, the description of Rose's life in harmony with nature and her spiritual belief completes the image of her as an angel. She becomes a source of radiating light. 'Rose Maylie in all the bloom and grace of early womanhood, shedding on her secluded path in life, such soft and gentle light, as fell on all who trod it with her, and shone into their hearts' (*OT*, 367).

When Oliver comes in contact with both Nature and Rose Maylie, his spiritual aura strengthens. Oliver gains the ability to bless which reveals his spiritual link with Heaven. 'The blessings which the orphan child called down upon them, sunk into their souls, diffusing peace and happiness' (*OT*, 205). Indeed, Oliver attempts to redeem Fagin. 'Let me say one prayer. Say only one, upon your knees, with me' (*OT*, 364). Unable to redeem Fagin, Oliver makes an entreaty to God on Fagin's behalf. 'Oh! God forgive this wretched man!' (*OT*, 364). Oliver's recuperation in Nature re-integrated into a loving family, evokes Dickens's clearest usage of Wordsworth's philosophy.

> Who can describe the pleasure and delight: the peace of mind and soft tranquillity: the sickly boy felt in the balmy air, and among the green hills and rich woods, of an inland village! Who can tell how scenes of peace and quietude sink into the minds of pain-worn dwellers in close and noisy places, and carry their own freshness, deep into their jaded hearts! (*OT*, 210).

Contact with Nature heals not only Oliver, but on a more general level heals the grievous wound of worldly experience by recalling the state of birth as the time when the spiritual aura and memory of God are the strongest.

> With the hand of death upon them, [city dwellers] have been know to yearn at last for one short glimpse of Nature's face; and carried, far from the scenes of their old pains and pleasures, have seemed to pass at once into a new state of being; and[...]had such memories wakened up within them by the mere sight of sky, and hill, and plain, and glistening water, that a foretaste of heaven itself has soothed their quick decline[...]The memories which peaceful country scenes call up, are not of this world, nor its thoughts and hopes[...]there lingers, in the least reflective mind, a vague and half-formed consciousness of having held such feelings long before, in some remote and distant time; which calls up solemn thoughts of distant times to come, and bends down pride and worldliness beneath it (*OT*, 210).

Nature then functions as a spiritual balm, and Oliver's contact with Nature strengthens both his spiritual aura and powers. It is no coincidence that the most powerful description of Rose is one which refers to her Natural genealogy. 'The outpouring of her fresh young heart, claimed kindred with the loveliest things in nature' (*OT*, 232).

Ultimately, Oliver in integrated into both a family and the larger community. Mr. Brownlow becomes his father.

> Mr. Brownlow adopted Oliver as his own son[...]he gratified the only remaining wish of Oliver's warm and earnest heart, and thus linked together a little society, whose condition approached as nearly to one of perfect happiness as can ever be known in this changing world' (*OT*, 365).

The two orphans become brother and sister, a family of orphans united, fittingly, in the church. 'The two orphans, tried by adversity, remembered its lessons in mercy to others, and mutual love, and fervent thanks to Him who had protected and preserved them' (*OT*, 368). Most important of all however, is the fact that Oliver does not grow or develop further in this novel. This inability to grow is a consequence of functioning as the protagonist in a moral or allegorical framework where the individual character is subservient to the more important overall structure. This is the main fate of the early Victorian orphan. The emphasis is more on their role as spiritual redeemer than on the development of their individual personality. The view of the orphan as a spiritual child (the Romantic view) and the power arising from this spirituality is true as long as the orphan remains a child and does not grow. As soon as the movement from spiritual orphan to spiritual adult starts so

will it be possible to trace the increasing influence of the penal narrative as the orphan is disciplined to produce a certain type of adult. 'The principle of change and process threatens more and more to reel away from the containing influence of origin, as existence threatens to outstrip essence'[132]. Gradually, this disciplinary process will commence at an increasingly younger age until the Romantic notion of the essential soul of the child disappears .

2.2 Little Nell: The Orphan as Angelic Redeemer

> But I believe
> That Nature oftentimes, when she would frame
> A favor'd Being, from his earliest dawn
> Of infancy doth open out the clouds,
> As at the touch of lightening, seeking him
> With gentlest visitation (*The Prelude*, I, 362-67).

The pilgrimage undertaken out of desperation by the orphan - Little Nell Trent - and her grandfather is the main motif in *The Old Curiosity Shop*. The journey's importance is not only its ability to unify the plot by offering continuous, if somewhat random, movement through the English countryside following the fortunes of Little Nell and her grandfather to their final destination. More importantly, the pilgrimage is to a symbolic resting place. Nell's journey is to become an actual angel - Dickens is no longer content with symbolic angels like Rose. Thus, the pilgrimage is a process of metamorphosis into an angel and also a movement to timelessness and eternal life. In this metamorphosis culminates the perception of the orphan figure, which started merely possessing an inherent spirituality and finishes becoming a religious spirit. Thus, Little Nell's metamorphosis into an angel is the final progression from Oliver who merely looks like, and is referred to as, an angel.

The pilgrimage motif is clearly introduced by the description of Little Nell and her grandfather as 'the two pilgrims'[133]. The allegorical significance of this pilgrimage is first alluded to by the narrator when he first sees Nell in her living environment where 'she seemed to exist in a kind of allegory' (*OCS*, 13). Indeed,

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[132]Steven Connor, 'Public and Private Narratives in *Oliver Twist*,' 12.

[133]Charles Dickens, *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1951. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 114. All subsequent references to this text will be from this edition and will be indicated in the text in parentheses, denoted by *OCS*.

this grows out of Dickens's own comments, in the 1848 Preface to the cheap edition, that it was

> My fancy to surround the lonely figure of the child with grotesque and wild, but not impossible, companions, and to gather about her innocent face and pure intentions, associates as strange and uncongenial as the grim objects that are about her bed when her history is first foreshadowed.

The reference to innocence and purity reaffirm the Romantic aesthetic lineage of Little Nell - a lineage she shares with the other orphan figures in this chapter. In the narrator's echo of Dickens's preface, 'It would be a curious speculation[...]to imagine her in her future life, holding her solitary way among a crowd of wild grotesque companions; the only pure, fresh, youthful object in the throng. It would be curious' (*OCS*, 13), his description of Nell emphasises her isolation and describes her nature in Romantic essential terms - *i.e.*, 'pure', 'fresh', and 'youthful'. The repetition of the word 'curious' in regard to Nell and her situation, reveals that Nell herself is the 'curiosity' element of the shop and indeed of the title. Her situation, her companion, and indeed her own character are curious and, although the novel does not bear her name, like, *Little Dorrit*, Little Nell is still the focus of the novel.

> There had been an old copy of the Pilgrim's Progress, with strange plates upon a shelf at home, over which she had often pored whole evenings[...]As she looked back upon the place they had left, one part of it came strongly on her mind[...]this place is prettier and a great deal better than the real one, if that in the book is like it, I feel as if we were both Christian, and laid down on this grass all the cares and troubles we brought with us (*OCS*, 116-7).

With such a specific reference to *The Pilgrim's Progress*, following from his preface and the words of the narrator, Dickens has very clearly established that this novel will progressively unfold an allegory which will primarily involve Nell (the one who pored over the book) and will occur in a landscape ('this place is prettier') that is largely allegorical.

In the city, Nell is not only placed in grotesque surroundings, but, on an allegorical level, in a distinctly fallen world. Her grandfather's gambling addiction (and his subsequent obsession with money as a means of salvation) is evidence of his ultimate corruption by the material world. His corruption is reflected in his twisted logic (a direct echo of Satan in *Paradise Lost*), rationalising his further

indebtedness as being for Nell's sake. The grandfather not only forces Nell to cast off Kit (who functions as her protector), but through his actions brings Nell into direct involvement with Quilp - who, like Fagin, is the embodiment of evil.

On one level, Quilp is a true Vice figure whose literary parentage can be traced to the Morality plays, or in the figure of Shakespeare's Richard III. Quilp delights in doing evil, and his trademark is his maniacal chuckle. On another level, in referring to Quilp, Dickens often uses animal analogies as if he is subhuman - a forerunner to the notion of subspecies in social Darwinist theory. His teeth are 'discoloured fangs' (*OCS*, 22). He has a dog-like smile and manner (*OCS*, 40). He is likened to a 'monkey' (*OCS*, 72). He 'coils' like a snake on Nell's bed (*OCS*, 89) (something that has strong sexual and biblical overtones). Finally, he has 'salamander'-like qualities (*OCS*, 173). The other characters refuse to believe he is human (*OCS*, 362); Kit even calls him 'an ugly little monster' (*OCS*, 362). Quilp becomes a living nightmare to Little Nell who is 'haunted by a vision of his ugly face and stunted figure' (*OCS*, 217). Quilp's size strengthens the case that he is somehow subhuman - an aspect which, through an orientalist analogy, Dickens uses in order to reveal Quilp's inner character: he is referred to as 'the small lord of the creation" (*OCS*, 37). He is called a 'little savage' (*OCS*, 46) who sits 'like an African chief' (*OCS*, 104) and sets up the figurehead like an 'idol' (*OCS*, 460). By colonial implication then, Quilp is identified as a target for either reformation or punishment. Ultimately, Quilp suffers the latter: the Foucauldian analogy is more obvious here. Throughout the novel Quilp is almost the exclusive source of evil, as he embodies 'that Evil Power' (*OCS*, 361) and does a demon dance around the table (*OCS*, 165). In fact, Quilp is exclusively associated with the element fire - he seems to 'drink' fire (the burning liquid) (*OCS*, 463). The glow from his smoking makes him look as if he is on fire (*OCS*, 163), as the reader can often only perceive him by his 'red and inflamed eyes' (*OCS*, 377). The association of fire with the traditional notion of hell is powerful. Significantly, Quilp's punishment of death by drowning, in a fog, signifying both the element air and an allegorical lack of clarity, is appropriate as Quilp is associated with both fire and the devil. Humorously, this punishment has, in part, been brought about by the orphan Swiveller's effort - who through his excessive drinking is also associated with water. The final treatment of Quilp, that of exorcism, 'He was left to be buried with a stake through his heart in the centre of four lonely roads" (*OCS*, 549), not only completes the devil analogy but is eerie in its similarity to the opening description of *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* Foucault's opening narrative recounts a time in penal history when the focus was on the body rather than the soul as the target for punishment. Dickens's

continual focus on Quilp's physical characteristics places his treatment firmly within the corporal tradition.

The use of allegory gives a greater significance to Nell's immediate actions after her reference to *The Pilgrim's Progress*. The actions of washing herself and her grandfather take on a greater religious significance - that of baptising both her self and her grandfather to rid them of the corruption of the city: '[Nell] cast the water on him with her hands, and dried it with her simple dress' (*OCS*, 117). Dickens invests Little Nell with a tremendous religious power. This religious aura will be used in the process of transforming Little Nell into an angel.

Again in the figure of Little Nell, as in all the characters in this chapter, is the potent combination of being an orphan and a child - a combination which points to her aesthetic lineage as Romantic. In the opening chapters, Dickens reiterates through the narrator the traditional Romantic notion of the child. 'I love these little people; and it is not a slight thing when they, who are so fresh from God, love us' (*OCS*, 4). In other words, the child who comes 'trailing clouds of glory' embodies an inherently innocent state. Indeed, Nell embodies not only innocence, but also life in such grotesque surroundings. 'It was pleasant to observe[...]the breath of freshness and youth which seemed to rustle through the old dull house and hover around the child' (*OCS*, 26). The fact that Little Nell (as an orphan) is so 'fresh from God' establishes her heavenly genealogy, which is akin to Oliver and Rose. Little Nell's mother is described as not dead but rather living in eternity with God. 'He used to take me on his knee, and try to make me understand that she was not lying in her grave, but had flown to a beautiful country beyond the sky, where nothing died or ever grew old' (*OCS*, 49). This reference anticipates the village which is Nell's final earthly destination, and which exists as a heaven on earth. The village has transcended change and time, thus it is both sin-free and death-free. 'For even change was old in that old place' (*OCS*, 386).

So how, and perhaps more importantly why, does Dickens begin to metamorphose a child into a living angel? From the beginning of the novel, Dickens establishes Nell's otherworldliness - a Romantic aesthetic quality she shares with Oliver and which sets her apart from the crowds of humanity through which she and her grandfather journey. Her otherworldliness is recognised by both the grandfather, 'It [life] will never check hers [Nell's confidence and simplicity...]the springs are too deep' (*OCS*, 6), and the narrator 'So very young, so spiritual, so slight and fairy-like a creature' (*OCS*, 13). However, the narrator is also convinced of

Nell's fairy-like qualities - as if Nell is somehow already unreal in quality. Combined with her diminutive stature - hence, the 'little' in Little Nell - Nell is less a creature of substance than of spirituality and conviction. In addition, as an orphan figure, Nell experiences the same solitude and isolation as an outsider as Oliver experiences. The solitude, however, is seen as defining Nell's character. 'Thou [Nell] hast lived alone with me[...a] monotonous existence, knowing no companions of thy own age nor any childish pleasure[...a] solitude in which thou hast grown to be what thou art, and in which thou hast lived apart from nearly all thy kind but one old man' (*OCS*, 26-27). Little Nell has been denied the Romantic notion of a childhood, as a time to romp and play outdoors in Nature like the boys in the schoolmaster's school (*OCS*, 188).[134] Instead, Nell has spent her time in pensive loneliness and gloom, dwelling on, initially, her worries: 'The child sat, many and many a long evening, and often far into the night, alone and thoughtful' (*OCS*, 68-69). It is a combination of Nell's enforced solitary confinement and her pensive nature that allows Nell to commune with her inner spiritual self. In summary, in order for Dickens to transform Nell into an angel, he first establishes a number of conditions. Dickens emphasises Nell's inheritance, as a child, of the Romantic legacy. Second, Nell's orphan status is one which both gives her the double nature of the scapegoat: the special spiritual status in the form of a heavenly genealogy and the isolation as an outsider. Thirdly, Dickens, throughout the narrative emphasises Nell's otherworldliness, her spirituality, and her diminutive stature. Finally, the narrative is firmly identified as an allegory. It is very interesting to note that the isolation aspect of Dickens's preparation for the transformation of Nell into an angel is similar not only to the preparation of the sacrifice of the scapegoat but also to that necessary for the Foucauldiandisciplinary process and the process of spiritual conversion.

As Little Nell and her grandfather set out on their pilgrimage, it becomes increasingly evident that a role reversal has occurred, 'It is true in many respects I [grandfather] am the child, and she the grown person' (*OCS*, 10), and that Nell is actually leading the pilgrimage. 'We trudged away together: the little creature accommodating her pace to mine, and rather seeming to lead and take care of me than I to be protecting her' (*OCS*, 3). In fact, the illustration beside page 72 entitled 'Nell as comforter' clearly shows Nell in the role of the parent as well as comforter.

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[134]Dickens originally wrote 'The children of the poor have no childhood' (Manuscript, Victoria and Albert museum). This is a theme that recurs in the case of later orphans, *cf.*, Becky in *Vanity Fair*. In the final version, Dickens has the grandfather emphasize that the Romantic view of a blissful childhood is something universal which is rapidly disappearing in the changing urban social world. 'Besides, the children of the poor know but few pleasures. Even the cheap delights of childhood must be bought and paid for' (*OCS*, 6).

Paradoxically, the journey to 'freedom' implies their previous incarceration. In fact, throughout the journey, Nell and her grandfather, in fleeing his indebtedness, have to avoid other people for fear of being discovered. In addition, the 'two pilgrims' are often perceived suspiciously by the other characters as two criminals. Hence, they are linked, albeit indirectly, with criminality.

The start of the journey is the start of the development of Nell's spiritual powers. She has her first premonition, an ability which will develop as her spirituality deepens, when she has to leave her bird. 'She wept bitterly for the loss of this little creature - until the idea occurred to her - she did not know how, or why, it came into her head - that it might, by some means, fall into the hands of Kit' (*OCS*, 95). Indeed Kit does gain possession of the bird: his search for the means to buy birdseed leads him to meet Mr. Garland thus securing his future; and it is this very bird that Kit brings to find Nell. Nell's premonitions will take many forms - from spiritual visions to the firm resolution that leads her grandfather from ruin to safety. Thus, Nell throughout their pilgrimage remains her grandfather's little 'guide' (*OCS*, 116), who leads him away from temptation.

Gradually, as the journey progresses, Little Nell's grandfather becomes totally dependant on Nell - 'her helpless companion' (*OCS*, 124). The subsequent imagery starts to transform the grandfather into a lamb and Nell into the shepherdess. The role of shepherd appropriates the spiritual echoes of the biblical parables of the priest as shepherd and indeed of Christ as shepherd to his flock. This intensification of the religious imagery, increases Nell's spiritual status. Not only does Nell possess an aura of spirituality, but she also possesses an inherent and untaught religious faith, which helps to lead her grandfather back to his lost faith. 'The child had repeated her artless prayers once that morning, more earnestly perhaps than she had ever done in all her life, but as she felt all this they rose to her lips again. The old man took off his hat - he had no memory for the words - but he said amen' (*OCS*, 116). Thus, Nell's actions display several levels of meaning. Not only is she physically leading her grandfather, but Nell is acting as his spiritual leader as well - leading him back to a faith he has lost.

Nell, in leading her grandfather from temptation, instinctively gravitates to the countryside. The intersection between the allegory being developed and the predominant Romantic thought framing the narrative invests the landscape with a highly charged spiritual significance. A bird appears - recalling the bird Kit keeps to

remind him of Nell which eventually leads him to Nell. This bird has strong Romantic echoes (*e.g.*, the nightingale) and biblical echoes as a messenger.

> A bird[...]flying into the wood, and leading the way for us to follow[...]As they passed onward, parting the boughs that clustered in their way, the serenity which the child has first assumed, stole into her breast in earnest; the old man cast no longer fearful looks behind, but felt at ease and cheerful, for the further they passed into the deep green shade, the more they felt that the tranquil mind of God was there, and shed its peace on them(*OCS*, 181).

Nature then becomes a type of spiritual guide - a role developed more fully in *Jane Eyre*. Nature is not only the location of true peace, but also is the location of the mind of God. Pantheism is a Romantic legacy that Dickens draws on for his task of transforming Nell. Dickens also evokes his Romantic inheritance as artist: 'As an agent of the one great mind/Creates, creator and receiver both,/Working but in alliance with the work/Which it beholds' (*The Prelude*, II, 272-75) to develop further Nell's spiritual genealogy. Initially, Dickens draws a parallel between the sun's light and the Creator's mind. 'The light, creation's mind, was everywhere, and all things owned its power' (*OCS*, 114). Then Dickens reveals a kinship that Nell has with the sun, 'Another bright day shining in through the small casement and claiming fellowship with the kindred eyes of the child' (*OCS*, 128). Thus, Dickens develops Nell's own inherent spiritual nature and heavenly genealogy. Foreshadowing the relationship between Nature and Jane, Nature then becomes Nell's friend, family, comfort, and indeed, religious inspiration.

> The quiet hour of twilight, when sky, and earth, and air, and rippling water, and sound of distant bells, claimed kindred with the emotions of the solitary child, and inspired her with soothing thoughts, but not of a child's world or its easy joys - in one of those rambles which had now become her only pleasure or relief from care,[...]still the young creature lingered in the gloom; feeling a companionship in Nature so serene and still, when noise of tongues and glare of garish lights would have been solitude indeed (*OCS*, 311).

In this passage, Dickens draws a distinction between serenity and solitude - both defining experiences for Nell. Here, serenity is Nell's peace of mind in communion with Nature, whereas solitude is that which she experiences in the urban centres, surrounded by people and grotesque objects but cut off from Nature.

Throughout this journey Nell has become progressively less physical and progressively more allegorical. As Nell is becoming less of a physical entity, she is becoming more of a 'spirit' through the use of highly charged religious images and language. Significantly, their first resting place is in a churchyard among the tombstones. Nell's first actions in the church yard are discursively associated with that of a miracle. 'Nelly, kneeling down beside the box, was soon busily engaged in her task and accomplishing it to a miracle' (*OCS*, 124). Although the deed is small, the language is potent. The reader begins, through the parallels being drawn between Nell, a shepherdess, and ultimately miracle-worker, to hear echoes of another New Testament figure who travelled through the country accomplishing miracles and leading twelve disciples.

As Nell's spirituality develops she begins to have visions - mystical in nature and similar to the ones that Jane Eyre will have on her final journey - that serve to lead her steadily to the end of her pilgrimage.

> Here's the church[...]It was for such a spot the child had wearied in the dense, dark, miserable haunts of labour. Upon her bed of ashes, and amidst the squalid horrors through which they had forced their way, visions of such scenes - beautiful indeed, but not more beautiful than this sweet reality - had been always present to her mind (*OCS*, 347).

It is Nell's increasing spiritual conviction which gives her an inner power, in the form of a new-found strength of character, that enables her not only to come through the trials and tribulations of her journey but also to lead her grandfather safely to their final destination. Nell's inner conviction is also strengthened by her communion with Nature. Nature becomes a spiritual guide - in much the same way as Nature guides, even precipitates, Jane Eyre's journey. 'But, Nature often enshrines gallant and noble hearts in weak bosoms - oftenest, God bless her, in female breasts - and when the child, casting her tearful eyes upon the old man, remembered how weak he was, and how destitute and helpless he would be if she failed him, her heart swelled within her, and animated her with new strength and fortitude' (*OCS*, 180). The female orphan child becomes redemptive agent.

Combined with the new inner strength, and in keeping with her ever increasing spiritual stature, Nell begins to display a self-effacing belief, similar to the one advocated in the New Testament (the same belief that Helen Burns will advocate but Jane Eyre will reject). Regardless of her own self, Nell is committed to

bringing her grandfather through the journey. Nell's selflessness means that she will, and does, risk her life on his account. Gradually, Nell accepts the responsibility for her grandfather's spiritual well-being. As discussed earlier, the pilgrimage is not only physical, but rather is a vehicle through which Nell can achieve her grandfather's spiritual redemption. Nell's adoption of a corresponding discourse reflects her increasing awareness of her responsibility towards her grandfather - referring to him as 'her sacred charge' (*OCS*, 333). Indeed, Nell asks herself, 'What shall I do to save him?' (*OCS*, 316).

So, in fact, Nell is not only her grandfather's leader but has become his redeemer as well - a fact of which her grandfather gradually becomes aware. Initially, he recognises Nell as his spiritual leader, '[he bends] before the child as if she had been an angel messenger sent to lead him where she would, [and] made ready to follow her' (*OCS*, 318). This is one of the first explicit references to Nell as an angel. But gradually, Nell's role as redeemer becomes more dominant as her spiritual aura grows stronger.

> While he[...]seemed[...]to shrink and cower down, as if in the presence of some superior creature, the child herself was sensible of a new feeling within her, which elevated her nature, and inspired her with an energy and confidence she had never known. There was no divided responsibility now[...]she must think and act for both. 'I have saved him,' she thought (*OCS*, 320).

Nell displays an awareness, of her redemptive role, hitherto unseen in the other orphan figures of this chapter. Yet ultimately, although *The Old Curiosity Shop* focuses primarily on one individual, the reader still fails to find any psychological depth in Nell. Rather, the narrative's allegorical structure does not allow the reader to establish the extent of Nell's own self-awareness.

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Before considering Nell's full realisation as her grandfather's spiritual redeemer, I wish to consider other levels on which Dickens works to transform Nell into an angel. As mentioned earlier, Nell is the 'curiosity' element of the shop and the title. This analogy continues during her time with Mrs. Jarley. Nell, as the 'curiosity', quickly becomes the main attraction at the Waxworks. People flood to the display to see Nell:

> Nell was accommodated with a seat beside him, decorated with artificial flowers, and in this state and ceremony rode slowly through the town every morning, dispersing handbills from a basket, to the sound of drum and trumpet. The beauty of the child, coupled with her gentle and timid bearing, produced quite a sensation in the little country place[....]she was the chief attraction [of the show] (*OCS*, 216).

Significantly, surrounded by wax figures of humans, Nell is quickly becoming less of a physical entity and more of an idol to be worshipped. Indeed, in order to escape Quilp, the embodiment of evil, Nell has literally to become an idol to escape detection by hiding in an empty space meant to be occupied by a religious statue at the gate of the city.

This image of Nell, as an idol to be worshipped, is best exemplified in her relationship to Kit. For Kit, Nell ultimately functions as a source of inspiration. Initially, Kit worships her window and acts as her protector. In Nell's absence, Kit successfully defeats Quilp's minion to gain possession of her bird. But significantly, for the most part of the novel, Nell exists *in absentia* as an inspiration, and not in any other capacity for Kit. This is made clear when Kit states to Barbara that 'Miss Nell was very pretty, but she was a child after all' (*OCS*, 292). For Kit, Nell remains a child, whereas Kit, who does grow, needs a woman. This is in part a reflection of Forster's interference, while Dickens was writing the instalments, to insist on retaining Nell's purity through her death as a child (that is before she could grow out of this stage).

> I [Forster] was responsible for its tragic ending. He [Dickens] had not thought of killing her, when about half-way through, I asked him to consider whether it did not necessarily belong even to his own conception, after taking so mere a child through such a tragedy of sorrow, to lift her also out of the commonplace of ordinary happy endings, so that the gentle pure little figure and form should never change to the fancy. All that I meant he seized at once, and never turned aside from it again.[135]

However, Dickens's agreement on this issue also reflects the persuasiveness of the vestiges of power remaining from the Romantic discourse and the cult of the child.

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[135]Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*, 1: 123.

In constantly acting as an inspiration to Kit, Nell is mythologized in Kit's mind. While Kit is imprisoned, Nell's image exists as a light which saves him from despair. 'The child - the bright star of the simple fellow's life - she, who always came back upon him like a beautiful dream, - who had made the poorest part of his existence, the happiest and best' (*OCS*, 453). The connection between light and the Creator's mind has already been established, and this reference to a guiding star echoes the guiding star of the Nativity - foreshadowing the later Nativity scene in the novel. To Kit's new companions, Nell exists not only as a name but as an ideal of perfection - someone to worship and to die for, 'I [Kit] think I could die to do her service' (*OCS*, 520). In this allegory, Kit is quickly becoming a figure akin to Red Crosse Knight, pledging allegiance to his queen. Kit's worshipping of Nell helps to transform her from an ideal into an angel. 'I [Kit] have been used, you see,[...]to talk and think of her, almost as if she was an angel' (*OCS*, 520). It is in the image of what Nell is to Kit that we get a sense of Dickens working to mythologize Nell to the reader and thus glimpse, on an individual scale, Dickens's larger purpose in the novel.

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So Nell has undergone transformations from leader, to religious idol, and then finally to spiritual redeemer. It is at the final village that the process of transformation will be completed. In such a highly charged allegorical landscape the final destination has great significance. At the point of their arrival into the village (the timelessness of which was referred to earlier) the focus is immediately on the church - beside which Nell will live, and for which, significantly and fittingly, she will become the curator. The surroundings of the church have a strong mystical quality. 'It was a very aged, ghostly place; the church had been built many hundreds of years ago, and had once had a convent or monastery attached' (*OCS*, 348). Allegorically, the village represents Paradise - a place of serenity hitherto found in nature. 'It was another world, where sin and sorrow never came; a tranquil place of rest, where nothing evil entered' (*OCS*, 401). Contemplating her surroundings, the overwhelming impression that Nell receives is of timelessness - a place where even the idea of death seems old. 'The child looked around her, with that solemn feeling with which we contemplate the work of ages that have become but drops of water in the great ocean of eternity' (*OCS*, 386). Hence, the pilgrimage undertaken by Nell and her grandfather is a journey out of time, into eternity. Dickens needs a setting, removed from time and isolated from all temporal references, in which to complete the miracle of transforming Nell into an angel.

Building on his earlier allusions, the transformation process is nearly completed. Nell becomes drawn to the church and is increasingly pensive:

> A change had been gradually stealing over her, in the time of her loneliness and sorrow. With failing strength and heightening resolution, there had sprung up a purified and altered mind; there had grown in her bosom blessed thoughts and hopes (*OCS*, 388).

Nell's spiritual visions increase and become not only more powerful but more overtly suggestive.

> Again, too, dreams of the little scholar; of the roof opening, and a column of bright faces, rising far away into the sky, as she had seen in some old scriptural picture once, and looking down on her, asleep. It was a sweet and happy dream. The quiet spot, outside, seemed to remain the same, saving that there was music in the air, and a sound of angel's wings (*OCS*, 389).

The reference to the schoolboy is vital. In the earlier death of the schoolboy Dickens rehearsed Nell's final death scene and transformation - subsequently the parallels between the two are obvious. The schoolboy, like Nell, has touched an old man's heart. The boy dies with visions of angels and eternal life. The schoolmaster desperately chafes the cold, dead hand to warm it again - the same action repeated by Nell's grandfather. A child (Nell) is sent to compensate for the schoolmaster's loss, much the same way that the little village boy will try to compensate Nell's grandfather for his loss.

Dickens also uses the figure of the child - a direct echo from Wordsworth's 'We are Seven' - a poem Dickens greatly admired - in order to put forth the idea that death is only a prelude to eternal life. As in 'We are Seven' the presence of children, and their refusal to mourn death, maintains life by seeing death as a state akin to life which should be celebrated. 'Together round the grave we played,/My brother John and I' ('We Are Seven'). Thus, the in *The Old Curiosity Shop* the boy denies that his brother's burial place is a grave instead calling it a garden. Whereas the word grave signifies death, garden signifies the biblical paradise, or life.

With the completion of the journey comes the redemption of Nell's grandfather - in fact, the process of redemption appears to have been internalised as the grandfather's actions are moderated by his new inner awareness:

> From that time, the old man[...]awoke to a sense of what he owed her, and what those miseries had made her. Never, no, never once, in one unguarded moment from that time to the end, did any care for himself, any thought of his own comfort, any selfish consideration or regard distract his thoughts from the gentle object of his love[...]He who knows all, can only know what hopes, and fears, and thoughts of deep affection, were in that one disordered brain, and what a change had fallen on the poor old man (*OCS*, 409).

The mental transformation of the grandfather into a reformed child follows the teachings of the New Testament (one can only enter heaven as a child), and gives added potency to Nell's continuing childhood state. Indeed, now that Nell has fulfilled her role as redeemer to her grandfather, she can fulfil the larger role that Dickens had in mind, namely that of a redeemer to the reader. Dickens wanted his handling of Nell's death to be a consolation to bereaved parents.

In order to do this and before Nell can become an angel, Dickens develops one last powerful analogy. At home in the church in the village, Nell once again draws crowds. 'Parties, too, would come to see the church; and those who came, speaking to others of the child, sent more; so even at that season of the year they had visitors almost daily' (*OCS*, 410). But significantly, Nell attracts crowds as a religious 'curiosity' this time instead of an idol. On Sundays, people gather around Nell.

> There, as elsewhere, they had an interest in Nell. They would gather round her in the porch, before and after service; young would cluster at her skirts; and aged men and women forsake their gossips, to give her kindly greeting[...]Many who came from three of four miles distant, brought her little presents; the humblest and the rudest had good wishes to bestow (*OCS*, 411).

The fact that Nell draws such crowds again echoes the life of Christ in the New Testament and strengthens the analogy of the Priest as mirror image to Christ. Indeed, the moment that Nell spends in the garden (*OCS*, 405) before bowing to God's will and resigning herself to her death, reminds the reader of Christ's last night in the garden before his betrayal. The parallel between these crowds and Sunday worship is obvious. Nell becomes the figure others undergo a pilgrimage to see. Indeed, Kit, the single gentleman and the Garlands have to undergo a difficult pilgrimage to find Nell.

AT REST

The transformation of Nell is imminent. Once again, Nell's heavenly genealogy is made explicit.

> Remember how the same face and figure - often the fairest and slightest of them all - come upon you in different generations; and how you trace the same sweet girl through a long line of portraits - never growing old or changing - the Good Angel of the race - abiding by them in all reverses - redeeming all their sins (*OCS*, 524).

In this passage Dickens links an angel with an eternal sweet child who never grows old, thus making the child/redeemer/angel function explicit. As Kit and company approach the village in the dead of winter, a star appears to lead them.

> They saw, among some ruined buildings at a distance, one single solitary light[...]It shone from what appeared to be an old oriel window, and[...]sparkled like a star. Bright and glimmering as the stars above their heads, lonely and motionless as they, it seemed to claim some kindred with the eternal lamps of Heaven, and to burn in fellowship with them (*OCS*, 531).

It is clear that in order to work a miracle, Dickens has to appropriate another miracle - that of the Nativity, or the birth of Christ.[136] The humble setting of the village recalls that of the Nativity - with those seeking the Saviour being led by a star. But instead of a child they find, 'the timeworn room, the solitude, the wasted life, and gloom, were all in fellowship. Ashes, and dust, and ruin!' (*OCS*, 533). It is clear then that Dickens has inverted the Nativity scene - instead of celebrating the birth of a child, they are there to witness the birth of an angel. 'She was dead. No sleep so beautiful and calm, so free from trace of pain, so fair to look upon. She seemed a creature fresh from the hand of God, and waiting for the breath of life; not one who had lived and suffered death.' (*OCS*, 538). The illustration entitled 'At Rest' is of crucial importance for, in the illustration, the headboard to Nell's bed depicts the birth of Christ. And the reader is reminded 'So we shall know the angels in their majesty, after death' (*OCS*, 538-9) and asked, 'Who would call her back to life?' (*OCS*, 539). John Carey feels during these chapters, regarding Nell, Dickens's language becomes childlike as an indication that he is becoming besotted.[137] But I think

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[136]While this idea of the nativity initially grew out of the development of my own argument, I must acknowledge that the idea has been discussed in the 'Introduction' to the Penguin edition to *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

[137]John Carey, *The Violent Effigy: A Study of Dickens' Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), 140.

rather that his language starts to break down both under the tremendous burden that it is carrying - that of transforming a child into an angel - and also that of portraying the aura of childhood innocence.

The lists of the crowds that Nell's funeral draws are again paralleling the descriptions of crowds that Christ attracted in the New Testament.

> And now the bell[...]ring its remorseless toll, for her, so young, so beautiful, so good. Decrepit age, and vigorous life, and blooming youth, and helpless infancy, poured forth - on crutches, in the pride of strength and health, in the full blush of promise, in the mere dawn of life - to gather round her tomb. Old men were there, whose eyes were dim and senses failing - grandmothers, who might have died ten years ago, and still been old - the deaf, the blind, the lame, the palsied, the living dead in many shapes and forms, to see the closing of the early grave (*OCS*, 542).

This description actually inverts life and death - making the living the 'living dead' and Nell the truly living. In this inversion, Nell fulfils the paradoxical role of the scapegoat - an outsider who must be destroyed and whose destruction not only unifies the community but also invests her with a redemptive power. Why does Dickens make the analogy of Little Nell with Christ? First, because Nell acts as a Saviour to those around her. Secondly, because like Christ, Nell defeats death through resurrection. Immediately, after her burial, Dickens sets about to resurrect Nell in the form of an angel through the use of language and rumour. 'A whisper went about among the oldest, that she had seen and talked with angels; and when they called to mind how she had looked, and spoken, and her early death, some thought it might be so, indeed' (*OCS*, 543). Kit completes the resurrection of Nell, by telling her story to his children like a biblical parable and thus keeping her alive in memory and in deed.

> The little group would often gather round him...and beg him to tell again the story of good Miss Nell who died. This Kit would do,[...]he would teach them how she had gone to Heaven, as all good people did; and how, if they were good, like her, they might hope to be there too, one day, and to see her and know her as he had done when he was quite a boy (*OCS*, 554).

Thus, Nell becomes immortalised as a child and an angel, with her redemptive power extending beyond her life.

Kit's action in resurrecting Nell and keeping her alive through memory and deeds, parallels Dickens's larger theme - namely that memory and worship are not only a consolation, but process of resurrection which acts as a motivation for belief:

> There is[...]nothing innocent or good, that dies, and is forgotten. Let us hold to that faith, or none. An infant, a prattling child, dying in its cradle, will live again in the better thoughts of those who loved it, and will play its part, through them, in the redeeming actions of the world, though its body be burnt to ashes or drowned in the deepest sea. There is not an angel added to the Host of Heaven but does its blessed work on earth in those that loved it here. Forgotten! Oh, if the good deeds of human creatures could be traced to their source, how beautiful would even death appear; for how much charity, mercy, and purified affection, would be seen to have their growth in dusty graves! (*OCS*, 406).

Thus, we see that Nell does not only act as a spiritual redeemer to characters in the novel, but she is a vehicle, through whom Dickens can preach to the reader, enabling him, as artist, to act as the priest of the tribe. This role recalls his claim in *Oliver Twist* that his literary authority derives from his literary genealogy. The characters in the novel worship Nell in the same way the reader worships Nell. Dickens uses Nell 'as a highly emotional literary vehicle by which his audience could be made not simply to understand his views on man's role in a fallen world, but to feel them as well'.[138] Indeed, public response to Nell's death was overwhelming. 'Carlyle was overcome, Daniel O'Connell and Lord Jeffrey wept bitterly'.[139] Dickens then, uses the heightened emotional tension aroused over Nell's death to preach to the readers on the topic of the death of a child. Nell has a public therapeutic role. Indeed, he refers to this in one of his letters, that his purpose is to offer consolation to parents who have lost a child. Significantly, he chooses Nell's inherent spiritual aura as a child and an orphan to convey the spiritual theme of his message. As a scapegoat, out of her destruction arises redemption: the power of which is attribued to Little Nell. Indeed, the orphan then becomes the vehicle for putting forth the inherently religious nature of truth:

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[138]Robert Pattison, *The Child Figure in English Literature* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1978), 78-79.
[139]*Ibid.*, 76.

> Oh! it is hard to take to heart the lesson that such deaths will teach, but let no man reject it, for it is one that all must learn, and is a mighty, universal Truth. When Death strikes down the innocent and young for every fragile form from which he lets the panting spirit free, a hundred virtues rise, in shapes of mercy, charity, and love, to walk the world, and bless it. Of every tear that sorrowing mortals shed on such green graves, some good is born, some gentler nature comes. In the Destroyer's steps there spring up bright creations that defy his power, and his dark path becomes a way of light to Heaven (*OCS*, 544).

More specifically, Dickens's message is also that earthly society increasingly displays shades of the 'prison-house' (*Ode*, 66). Significantly, Kit ponders this while actually in prison:

> But ever with a vague dread of being recalled to prison; not that prison, but one which was in itself a dim idea - not of a place, but of a care and sorrow: of something oppressive and always present, and yet impossible to define. At last, the morning dawned, and there was the jail itself - cold, black, and dreary, and very real indeed (*OCS*, 454).

Indeed, there are even benefits in dying young, as Dickens reveals: you do not have to watch those you love die.

> What a bright and happy existence those who die young are borne, and how in death they lose the pain of seeing others die around them, bearing to the tomb some strong affection of their hearts (which makes the old die many times in one life)[...]Her dreams were of the little scholar: not coffined and covered up, but mingling with angels, and smiling happily (*OCS*, 194).

To die young, in other words to remain an eternal child, is to gain a reprieve from pain. But more significantly, Dickens illustrates how the miracle of resurrection, an ability many orphans display in one form or another, can be repeated again in our minds and deeds to keep the loved one alive.

THE SPIRIT'S FLIGHT

'Nell's Ascension'

CHAPTER 3 - 'Shades Of The Prison-house'

The previous chapter served to establish the Romantic aesthetic genealogy of the early Victorian literary orphan, tracing his/her inherent spiritual power and ultimate role as redeemer. However, the orphan figures discussed did not have the power of narrative, or even the power of character. They are imprisoned in childhood by their function as signifiers of angelic power. This chapter will examine *Jane Eyre*, *Vanity Fair*, and *The Personal History of David Copperfield* (*David Copperfield*) in order to show that these three novels are pivotal in the process of the construction of the orphan's identity as criminalised scapegoat. In *Jane Eyre* and in *David Copperfield*, there exists a strong tension between the aesthetic inheritance of an inherent self and the ideological discursive construction of a penal narrative which attempts to discipline these marginalised orphan figures. Jane, one of the most powerful orphan figures of this study, is empowered by her Romantic aesthetic inheritance and gender to attempt a resistance, from the margins, to the ideological efforts to interpellate through discipline. However, in David the power of the Romantic aesthetic inheritance - which is characterised by his abilities of observation - steadily diminishes as he is interpellated into the adult world of discipline - which is epitomised by surveillance. In *Vanity Fair*, Becky exists as a social construct, or rather her identity is constructed by her social aspirations. In Becky is present a tremendous power of personality and a mobility that is the product both of her orphan status and her amorality. This and the subsequent chapter will reveal the increasing power of the penal narrative to interpellate, through discipline, the orphan by tracing both the workings of the ISAs within this penal narrative and the discourse of the three narratives. The discourse of Jane's narrative reveals the power she derives from her inherent spirituality, her resistance to efforts to interpellate and thus to reform her, and her roles as redeemer and missionary. The discourse of the other orphans in these chapters is most revealing in that, given that the majority of it is supposed to be written by the orphans themselves, it reveals that increasingly the discourse of discipline is becoming the dominant discourse which shapes the way the orphans perceive themselves. Ultimately, the orphans will be shown to be actively reproducing this discourse and applying its terms to other orphans in an act of agency which works to interpellate the other orphans.

3.1 Jane Eyre: Romantic Inheritance as Resistance

Like Oliver, Jane's orphanhood means that she has no social status - she is the marginalised outsider which identifies her as scapegoat and in need of subjection. Like Oliver, Jane confronts several ISAs which endeavour to interpellate her, but unlike Oliver whose only recourse is to flee, Jane, in her resistance, actively engages with these institutions.

The Reed family reinforces Jane's marginalisation by emphasising Jane's position as orphan outsider. Jane is constantly 'humbled by the consciousness of my physical inferiority to Eliza, John, and Georgiana Reed'[140]. When Jane resists the Reeds' efforts to discipline her she is marginalised as a punishment:

> The said Eliza, John and Georgiana were now clustered round their mamma in the drawing room: she lay reclined on a sofa by the fireside, and with her darlings about her[...]looked perfectly happy. Me, she had dispensed from joining the group, saying [....] She really must exclude me from privileges intended only for contented, happy little children (*JE*, 39).

From the margins Jane can observe both the behaviour of her cousins in a happy bourgeois family state and compare this to her own orphanhood which is both literal and ideological in nature. Jane's orphanhood leaves her not only bereft of family but also of class. As a dependant, and later as a governess, Jane occupies a problematic class position. Her loss of her family means that she has lost her access to the bourgeoisie. Jane's response to her exclusion from the family is, continually throughout the novel, to act in resistance to this exclusion which seeks to determine Jane's behaviour and identity in order to interpellate her into the ideology of the family. Jane's choice of the language of the prison-house reveals both her perception that her struggle is to resist this subjection.

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[140]Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*, ed. Q.D. Leavis (1966. London: Penguin, 1985), 39. All further references to this text will be from this edition and will be indicated in parentheses in the text, denoted by *JE*.

> Ere I had finished this reply, my soul began to expand, to exult, with the strangest sense of freedom, of triumph, I ever felt. It seemed as if an invisible bond had burst, and that I had struggled out into unhoped-for liberty (*JE*, 69).

This autobiography can be read as both Jane's own construction of her identity as an act of resistance to this attempted subjection and a documentation of the development of the penal narrative as a form of discursive discipline.

This resistance is representative of a process in which Jane comes to self-knowledge. Repeatedly, Jane actively reinforces her physical isolation, by choosing, instead, to move into the world of the imagination. 'Having drawn the red moreen curtain nearly close, I was shrined in double retirement' (*JE*, 39). Books, or more generally art, then become both a refuge of and a vehicle for the imagination. Hence, Jane is able to experience imaginative freedom. 'Art', then, will ultimately provide the means through which Jane creates her identity. But initially this art acts to further her isolation. Bewick's *History of British Birds* that Jane chooses focuses on 'the solitary rocks and promontories' (*JE*, 40) inhabited by the sea fowls. All of the pictures Jane gravitates towards - 'the bleak shores of Lapland, Siberia, Spitzbergen, Nova Zembla, Iceland, Greenland' depict 'forlorn regions of dreary space' (*JE*, 40). At the most extreme, these images of isolation are closely associated with images of death and annihilation. Jane eagerly devours pictures of 'the broken boat stranded on a desolate coast', the 'wreck just sinking', and 'the quite solitary churchyard' (*JE*, 40). Jane prefers these images over Bessie's ballads, fairy tales and renditions of *Pamela*, and *Henry, Earl of Moreland*. In the company of these images of isolation and annihilation Jane declares: 'I was then happy: happy at least in my own way' (*JE*, 41). This will prove to be á stark contrast to the literary works that both Becky Sharpe and David Copperfield gravitate towards. David in particular chooses to imagine his own reintegration and therefore reads tales of the eighteenth century picaresque which portray a congenial society.

In addition to her self-imposed isolation, Jane's active resistance also leads to a more extreme form of marginalisation - imprisonment in the solitary confinement of the Red Room. 'I was conscious that a moment's mutiny had already rendered me liable to strange penalties, and like any other rebel slave, I resolved in my desperation, to go all lengths' (*JE*, 44). The discourse of power that Jane chooses emphasises both how active Jane's resistance is - she is a 'rebel' involved in a 'mutiny'; and also her perception of her oppressed status as a 'slave'. The

appropriation of the discourse of oppression, specifically enslavement, seeks to draw parallels between Jane's experience of the penal narrative which seeks to interpellate and the systematic erasure of individual identity that was undertaken by slave owners. Thus, Jane's discourse seeks to equate her resistance to Mrs. Reed with the resistance of slaves to the slave owner. This discourse also seeks to identify bourgeois ideology as a colonial power structure.

As argued in the 'Introduction', solitary confinement, with its religious roots, was intended not only to force the criminal into introspection, but also to increase the vulnerability of the prisoner to the suggestions of the disciplining body. Mrs. Reed, in openly acknowledging that the purpose of the Red Room imprisonment is to reform Jane, reinforces the parental role as ideological disciplinary agent. 'I [Mrs Reed] abhor artifice, particularly in children; it is my duty to show you that tricks will not answer; you will now stay here an hour longer, and it is only on the condition of perfect submission and stillness that I shall liberate you then' (*JE*, 49). Jane's imprisonment in the Red Room actually makes her more vulnerable to her Romantic imagination. Through her imagination Jane is able to manifest an aspect of her Romantic aesthetic inheritance - namely, her spirituality which is simultaneously a source of her liberation and a source of discipline.

> Alas![...]no jail was ever more secure. Returning, I had to cross before the looking-glass; my fascinated glance involuntarily explored the depth it revealed. All looked colder and darker in that visionary hollow than in reality: and the strange little figure there gazing at me, with a while face and arms specking the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still, had the effect of a real spirit (*JE*, 46).

Whatever Jane sees in the depth of the 'visionary hollow' empowers her to speak her first narrative which indirectly results in her liberation from the Reed home. As Janet Freeman argues, in *Jane Eyre*, 'the power of speech is supreme. It enables Jane to take more and more control of her life'[141]. Thus, Jane, later speaking in the discourse of victory exults in her new-found power. 'I was left there alone - winner of the field. It was the hardest battle I had fought, and the first victory I had gained[...]I enjoyed my conqueror's solitude' (*JE*, 69). Ironically, victory, which is normally restorative and regenerative, and the subsequent resulting power leads to further solitude for Jane.

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[141]Janet H. Freeman, 'Speech and Silence in *Jane Eyre*,' *Studies in English Literature* Winter (1984): 686.

However, Jane's initial inability to free herself from the Red Room, and her subsequent imaginative 'death' can also be read as the partial death of her Romantic aesthetic soul.

> I thought the swift darting beam was a herald of some coming vision from another world. My heart beat thick, my head grew hot; a sound filled my ears, which I deemed the rushing of wings; something seemed near me; I was oppressed, suffocated: endurance broke down[...] unconsciousness closed the scene (*JE*, 49-50).

After the Red Room incident Jane works to reassert the power of her remaining Romantic aesthetic self and of her spirituality.

Jane's continued resistance results in what can be read as imprisonment at Lowood in order to intensify the disciplinary endeavours. 'I dimly discerned a wall before me and a door open in it; through this door I passed with my new guide: she shut and locked it behind her' (*JE*, 75). Even the natural habitat contributes to the prison-like atmosphere by making the roads 'almost impassable' and preventing the students from 'stirring beyond the garden walls, except to go to Church' (*JE*, 92), thus enforcing their isolation. The students, who are orphans, now occupy the same margins as the criminal. The students are treated like prisoners: they must wear uniforms; they suffer corporal punishment; and they are semi-starved. But most significantly the students are subjected to a rigid routine centred around bible readings and they are marshalled as if they were in military training.

The associative linkage of church-school-prison (linking what are considered as ideological apparatuses and repressive apparatuses) also appropriate religious discourse not only as a spiritual authentication of the narrative's attempt to discipline, but also as a disciplinary agency itself: Mr. Brocklehurst, as a minister, presides over both the Church and school. The Church sermons and the learning of the catechism endeavour to convince the orphans of their guilt. Indeed, Church teachings are used as the punitive authority which justifies the deprivation of the children. 'It ought to be improved to the spiritual edification of the pupils, by encouraging them to evince fortitude under the temporary privation[....]Oh, madam, when you put bread and cheese, instead of burnt porridge, into these children's mouths, you may indeed feed their vile bodies, but you little think how you starve their immortal souls! (*JE*, 95). What Charlotte Bronte is criticising here is the use of

religion as a repressive SA; she does not appear to disagree with religion as an ISA - she even refers to the 'world-redeeming Creed of Christ' in her Preface.

More specifically, in Jane's case, Mr. Brocklehurst uses the Church's authority to justify her enforced isolation and to continue the reduction of her status, from human to subhuman to devil, which was initiated by the Reed family. With the Reeds Jane moves from child to that of child dependant and finally to 'less than a servant' (*JE*, 44). John habitually reminds Jane of her disempowered position as 'a dependant' who 'ought to beg, and not live here with gentlemen's children like us, and eat the same meals we do, and wear clothes at our mamma's expense' (*JE*, 42). As an orphan Jane loses her status as human. There are continual attempts by John (and Mrs. Reed) not only to treat Jane as some sort of stray animal, but to metamorphose her into one both by action and by language. Jane is considered less than human - a 'bad animal' (*JE*, 39), a 'rat' (*JE*, 42), a 'mad cat' (*JE*, 44), a 'wild cat' (*JE*, 59) - and is treated as such. At Lowood, Brocklehurst questions her origin and her character. Jane is linked, by Brocklehurst, with the Devil and thus isolated from the 'true flock' of God:

> God has graciously given her the shape he has given to all of us; no single deformity points her out as a marked character. Who would think that the Evil One had already found a servant and agent in her?[...]This girl who might be one of God's own lambs, is a little castaway - not a member of the true flock, but evidently an interloper and an alien[...]At last her excellent patroness was obliged to separate her from her own young ones, fearful lest her vicious example should contaminate their purity (*JE*, 98-99).

In this metamorphosis, the intersection between the bourgeois ideology of the family and Evangelical ideology is made manifest. The family, the Church, the school all act as agents of disciplinary technology and work towards reproducing the dominant bourgeois ideology - the 'narrow human doctrines' that will attempt to contain the individual, as signified by the orphan. All the orphans of Lowood are targeted for indoctrination to be subservient, self-denying and suffering in order to be dominated. Contrast this treatment with the treatment of Mr. Brocklehurst's own children who because of birthright have an expectation of a certain place in society, and are treated accordingly.

In Miss Temple and Helen Burns, Jane encounters two figures who are now acting as agents for religious ideology. Helen comes to symbolise the other-

worldliness of a self-sacrificing religious faith. Helen's doctrine of faith focuses on the denial of an earthly existence, or in other words intense self-discipline, in order to affirm the heavenly patriarchy of the 'mighty universal Parent': 'God is my father; God is my friend; I love Him; I believe He loves me' (*JE*, 113). By advocating that God 'makes eternity a rest - a mighty home - not a terror and abyss' (*JE*, 91), Helen manages, through interpellation into the larger spiritual family, to erase her orphanhood (and thus her individuality). However, although Helen Burns becomes a spiritual mentor for Jane, Jane discovers that she herself is 'no Helen Burns' (*JE*, 98). Jane refuses the interpellation and hence self-annihilation which Helen Burns advocates. Jane's instinct is for self-preservation, she rejects that 'chaos':

> And then my mind made its first earnest effort to comprehend what had been infused into it concerning heaven and hell: and for the *first time it recoiled* baffled; and for the first time glancing behind, on each side, and before it, it saw all round an unfathomed gulf: it felt the one point where it stood - the present; all the rest was formless cloud and vacant depth; and it shuddered at the thought of tottering, and plunging amid that chaos (*JE*, 110-11).

The move away from the discipline that Miss Temple represents is more difficult for Jane. Miss Temple, as her name signifies, gives Jane and Helen, 'her children' (*JE*, 105), a spiritual home and family. Through her role as maternal mentor, Miss Temple empowers Jane to speak her narrative. Jane, at this time, has two equally motivating needs: her identification of her self as an individual in society; and the tremendous emotional needs of love and family that have been denied to her because of her orphan status. With Miss Temple Jane finds 'continual solace; she [Miss Temple] stood me [Jane] in the stead of mother, governess, and, latterly, companion' (*JE*, 116). For the emotional rewards of Miss Temple's company and a sense of familial belonging, Jane is willing to deny her self and her passionate nature in order to emulate Miss Temple. In other words, Jane has allowed an interpellation for the love and security of the serene Miss Temple:

> I had imbibed from her something of her nature and much of her habits; more harmonious thoughts, what seemed better regulated feelings had become the inmates of my mind. I had given in allegiance to duty and order; I was quiet; I believed I was content (*JE*, 116).

But Miss Temple's departure reveals that Jane has not actually internalised this discipline but merely mimicked it. Thus, Jane is freed to realise the self she has denied.

> My mind had put off all it had borrowed of Miss Temple - or rather, that she had taken with her the serene atmosphere I had been breathing in her vicinity - and that now I was left in my natural element, and beginning to feel the stirrings of old emotions. It did not seem as if a prop were withdrawn, but rather as if a motive had gone: it was not the power to be tranquil which had failed me, but the reason for tranquillity was no more[...]Now I remembered that the real world was wide, and that a varied field of hopes and fears of sensations and excitements, awaited those who had courage to go forth into its expanse, to seek real knowledge of life amidst its perils (*JE*, 116).

The 'natural element' that Jane identifies is her Romantic self; and the discourse of power embedded in the passage is derived from Jane's Romantic nature. The identification of this self charges Jane with a powerful visionary insight which empowers her to fulfil both her Romantically determined roles as artist and redeemer.

Jane's artistic imagination resists disciplining. There is a significance in the fact that Jane learned the French verb meaning 'to be' and drew her first artistic drawing on the same day precisely because the freedom of Jane's artistic imagination allows her 'to be' and to realise her self. Her commencement of drawing marks her first discovery of her artistic potential. This commencement serves as a basic artistic apprenticeship which gives her the tools to produce her later surreal inner landscapes and ultimately her autobiography - both of which act as vehicles for her own liberation. Here Jane's imagination celebrates the natural world - access to which she had been denied at Lowood.

> I feasted[...]on the spectacle of ideal drawings, which I saw in the dark - all the work of my own hands; freely pencilled houses and trees, picturesque rocks and ruins, Cuyp-like groups of cattle, sweet paintings of butterflies hovering over unblown roses, of birds picking at ripe cherries, of wrens nests enclosing pearl-like eggs, wreathed about with young ivy sprays (*JE*, 106).

Jane is eager to act upon the subsequent feeling of power. She allows her

> Mind's eye to dwell on whatever bright visions rose before it - and, certainly, they were many and glowing; to let my heart be heaved by the exultant movement, which, while it swelled it in trouble, expanded it with life; and, best of all, to open my inward ear to a tale that was never ended - a tale my imagination created, and narrated continuously; quickened with all of incident, life, fire, feeling, that I desired and had not in my actual existence. It is in vain to say human beings ought to be satisfied with tranquillity: they must have action (*JE*, 141).

Jane's time at Thornfield marks the development of both her artistic self and her powers as redeemer: both of which are inherited in Jane's Romantic aesthetic identity. Unlike Blanche who, having a 'heart barren by nature', is 'not genuine', and thus '*could not charm him* [Rochester]' (*JE*, 215), Jane 'charm[s]' Rochester from their first encounter. Jane possesses full self-awareness of the power she can exercise over Rochester.

> I knew the pleasure of vexing and soothing him by turns; it was one I chiefly delighted in, and a sure instinct always prevented me from going too far; beyond the verge of provocation I never ventured; on the extreme brink I liked well to try my skill (*JE*, 187).

This power enables Jane to control their relationship, and later it will allow her to act both as his Redeemer and as his reformer.

Jane's power again is derived from her resistance - this time to Rochester's attempts to remould her. She insists on her self as Rochester's 'equal' (*JE*, 164). From her margins Jane can identify the larger bourgeois ideology of the family. She can perceive Rochester's actions and those of his guests as 'in conformity to ideas and principles instilled into them, doubtless, from their childhood. All their class held these principles' (*JE*, 216). This knowledge of and resistance to this ideological interpellation, possible because of her orphanhood, empowers Jane. 'I still felt as a wanderer on the face of the earth; but I experienced firmer trust in myself and my own powers, and less withering dread of oppression' (*JE*, 256). But most importantly, this inner self-possession allows Jane to resist Rochester's efforts to possess her. Rochester, like Monsieur Paul in *Villette*, recognises the source of this resistance because, like Oliver, Jane's inherent nature is reflected in her face.

> I see no enemy to a fortunate issue but in the brow; and that brow professes to say - 'I can live alone, if self-respect and circumstances require me so to do. I need not sell my soul to buy bliss. I have an inward treasure born with me, which can keep me alive if all extraneous delights should be withheld, or offered only at a price I cannot afford to give (*JE*, 230).

Rochester's attempt to dominate Jane is in fact an ideological attempt to subject Jane and thus continue the endeavours initiated by the Reeds and Brocklehurst. Jane sees this tendency manifested in the relationship between Mason and Rochester. 'Mr. Mason was submissive to Mr. Rochester; that the impetuous will of the latter held complete sway over the inertness of the former' (*JE*, 240). This helps Jane in her resolve to maintain her own soul through resistance.

> Do you think, because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong! - I have as much soul as you - and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you. I am not talking to you now through the medium of custom, conventionalities, nor even of mortal flesh: it is my spirit that addresses your spirit; just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal - as we are![...]I am no bird; and no net ensnares me; I am a free human being with an independent will, which I now exert to leave you (*JE*, 281-82).

Jane resists Rochester's attempts to subject her through an imposed choice of clothes, jewels and, most importantly, renaming. Jane also resists Rochester's attempt to idolise her, by asserting herself as an earthly, not spritely woman. Jane sees the attempt to worship her as an angel as another way of denying her identity. Indeed she asserts that she would 'rather be a *thing*, than an angel' (*JE*, 291). Thus, Jane is not a Little Nell, Oliver, or Rose, rather she insists on the reality of her identity. Ultimately, Jane is more powerful than the earlier orphans because her insistence on her self gives her an actual identity as a character: she is not an 'empty signifier' as David Miller suggests of Oliver, but rather is an active redeemer.

In the end, then, Rochester does not eclipse Jane as she fears (*JE*, 302), she retains her inner self and as a result - her power. Instead he is forced to acknowledge that the inherent soul Jane possesses results in both power and

freedom - something, which he as a product of bourgeois familial ideology cannot possess.

> Never was anything at once so frail and so indomitable[....] Consider that eye: consider the resolute, wild, free thing looking out of it, defying me, with more than courage - with a stern triumph. Whatever I do with its cage, I cannot get at it - [....]Conqueror I might be of the house; but the inmate would escape to heaven before I could call myself possessor of its clay dwelling-place (*JE*, 344-45).

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The development of the role of the supernatural in Jane's life reaches its maturation point in the Thornfield section of the novel. Alongside the increasing power of the supernatural is Jane's developing conviction in her own inherent spiritual soul - which was one of Jane's self-discoveries in the Red Room. The other discovery in the Red Room was that of the subjection demanded by her spirituality.

Jane has always been attuned to the supernatural elements around her. Rochester's arrival at Thornfield is laden with premonition for Jane. Thornfield becomes a 'grey hollow filled with rayless cells' that Jane cannot 'see into[...her] eyes and spirit seemed drawn from the gloomy house' (*JE*, 148) - symbolic perhaps of Rochester and the deep secret he hides. The setting has a spiritual as well as a prison ethos. In Bertha's laugh Jane can recognise as 'tragic as preternatural a laugh as any I ever heard' (*JE*, 138), from one (Bertha) who is both an actual and cultural orphan.

Rochester immediately perceives Jane's inherent supernatural power. Like Brocklehurst, Rochester questions Jane's actual origins in demanding to know who her parents are, but instead of perceiving her a devil, Rochester confuses her with a spiritual being, a sprite or an elf. From their first encounter, Jane's supernatural aura, which is as visible as Oliver's innocence is, has charmed him.

> No wonder you have the look of another world. I marvelled where you had got that sort of face. When you came on me in Hay Lane last night, I thought unaccountably of fairy tales, and had half a mind to demand whether you had bewitched my horse: I am not sure yet. Who are your parents?[...]the men in green: it was a proper moonlight evening for them. Did I break through one of your rings, that you spread that damned ice on the causeway? (*JE*, 153-54).

The 'singularity' of Jane (*JE*, 162) that charms Rochester, quickly becomes a focus of worship with Rochester - which in turn establishes Jane as his spiritual redeemer. For Rochester, Jane is no earthly being, but one who possesses spiritual powers that are both of this world and other worldly. At Thornfield she plays the role of reformer thus facilitating Rochester's own reformation and rebirth.

As an orphan, Jane is liberated from the burdens of familial memory. Memory, embodied by Thornfield as the 'shrine of memory' (*JE*, 137), means the collective familial ideological history, the implications of which will haunt, restrict and define the family members.

> I might have been as good as you - wiser - almost as stainless. I envy your peace of mind, your clean conscience, your unpolluted memory. Little girl without blot or contamination must be an exquisite treasure - an inexhaustible source of pure refreshment (*JE*, 166).

Rochester can see immediately that Jane as a orphan has a 'clean conscience' and 'unpolluted memory'. She is untainted by family. 'Orphanhood becomes her glory'[142].

The spiritually charged nature of the orphan is not only exemplified in Jane's visionary abilities, but also in the myth/local folklore of the day where the Christian discourse subsumes the familial discourse. Bessie sings to Jane the ballad of *The Poor Orphan Child*, which arises from the Romantic notion of the orphan not having an earthly genealogy but rather a heavenly one. The orphan has no father except for the Fatherhood of God. Likewise, the orphan, while having no earthly place or home has a heavenly one:

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[142]Nina Auerbach, 'Incarnations of the Orphan,' 404.

> Still will my Father, with promise and blessing,
> Take to His bosom the poor orphan child.
> There is a thought that for strength should avail me;
> Though both of shelter and kindred despoiled;
> Heaven is a home, and a rest will not fail me;
> God is a friend to the poor orphan child (*JE*, 54).

Jane, then, enters Thornfield as a redeemer and prop. From her first meeting, the fact that Rochester leans on her when he stumbles from his horse has a larger symbolic significance. Her redemptive influence is immediate - as seen through her power over Rochester and the religious images she inspires. 'I [Rochester] have received the pilgrim - a disguised deity, as I verily believe. Already it has done me good: my heart was a sort of charnel; it will now be a shrine' (*JE*, 168). Rochester becomes eager for Jane's influence, 'the more you and I converse the better, for while I cannot blight you, you may refresh me' (*JE*, 175). Jane reveals that Thornfield is in fact a false shrine. 'Thornfield Hall - this accursed place - this tent of Achan - this insolent vault, offering the ghastliness of living death to the light of the open sky - this narrow stone hell, with its one real fiend, worse than a legion such as we imagine' (*JE*, 328).

Ironically, in order to redeem Rochester it is necessary for Jane to discipline him. But her redemption of Rochester is never at the expense of her own inherent self.

> I [Jane] like you more than I can say; but I'll not sink into a bathos of sentiment: and with this needle of repartee I'll keep you from the edge of the gulf, too, and, moreover, maintain by its pungent aid that distance between you and myself most conducive to our real mutual advantage (*JE*, 301).

In the same spirit, Jane returns to Mrs. Reed in order to act as triumphant reformer. This is the other lesson of the Red Room: Jane learns that her power lies not only in her Romantic aesthetic genealogy as redeemer but also in her ability, as ideological agent, to discipline and thus reform others. Jane, then, starts to reproduce the technique of discipline in her redemptive endeavours. 'I felt a determination to subdue her [Mrs Reed] - to be her mistress in spite of both of her nature and will' (*JE*,

259). Mrs. Reed acknowledges her subjugation to Jane's power 'You were born, I think to be my torment' (*JE*, 267).

The supernatural influences around Jane, by which she will eventually be guided, are Romantic in origin. 'I never laughed at presentiments in my life, because I have had strange ones of my own[...]and signs, for aught we know, may be but the sympathies of Nature with man' (*JE*, 249). The Marxist-Feminist Collective interprets this supernatural sympathy as reinforcing patriarchal stereotypes of women as more intuitive and less rational. In their article, 'Women Writing: *Jane Eyre, Shirley, Villette, Aurora Leigh*', the Collective claims that underlying the focus on the intuitive power of women is the assumption that:

> Women exist in a state of unreflective bios, the victims of instincts, intuitions, and the mysterious pulsation of the natural world. Intuition is held to be a prelapsarian form of knowledge, associated especially with angels, children, idiots, 'rustics' and women.[143]

I disagree with this analysis. In Jane Eyre, and in all the early female literary orphans, this intuition is powerful - so much so that bourgeois ideology continuously seeks to repress it. Ultimately, this study will argue that this intuition is not necessarily prelapsarian but privileged. With these premonitions, Jane's Romantic aesthetic inheritance is strengthened and becomes more apparent - something which empowers Jane, as orphan, as artist, as visionary, and as prophet. Jane is able to perceive, when Rochester cannot, the true quality of the ideological forces he experiences. At first Jane tries to deny her visionary ability, 'I became ashamed of feeling any confusion: the evil - if evil existent or prospective there was - seemed to lie with me only' (*JE*, 278). But with the announcement of her impending marriage, the premonitions become stronger.

> I did, and I could not quite comprehend it: it made me giddy. The feeling the announcement sent through me was something stronger than was consistent with joy - something that smote and stunned: it was, I think, almost fear (*JE*, 287).

Indeed, Rochester's desperate attempts to remodel Jane can be seen as an attempt to alter Jane. 'Forget visionary woe, and think only of real happiness!' (*JE*, 309). In spite of her love for Rochester, Jane remains aware of 'a strange, regretful

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[143]Marxist-Feminist Collective, 'Women Writing: *Jane Eyre, Shirley, Villette, Aurora Leigh,' Modern Literary Theory* ed. Philip Rice & Patricia Waugh (London: Edward Arnold, 1989), 103.

consciousness of some barrier dividing us' (*JE*, 309). Indeed, Rochester cannot eclipse Nature, which continues to send signs of warning that Jane, prophet-like, can read:

> As I looked up at them, the moon appeared momentarily in that part of the sky which filled their fissure; her disc was blood-red and half overcast; she seemed to throw on me one bewildered, dreary glance, and buried herself again instantly in the deep drift of cloud (*JE*, 304).

These signs can be read as an external representation of Jane's own spirituality. Her strongest warnings come in her dreams when, prophet-like, she sees the future condition of Thornfield:

> I dreamt another dream, sir: that Thornfield Hall was a dreary ruin, the retreat of bats and owls. I thought that of all the stately front nothing remained but a shell-like wall, very high and very fragile-looking (*JE*, 310).

She also sees what will happen, to herself and to Rochester: 'You shall tear yourself away, none shall help you: you shall yourself pluck out your right eye; yourself cut off your right hand: your heart shall be the victim, and you the priest to transfix it' (*JE*, 325).

The final culmination of visions, premonitions, and natural signs resulting in the voice commanding Jane to leave, comes in the form of a dream vision. In this we see elements of all her past visions, including the Red Room vision, as if they were all immature elements, which culminate in her final powerful dream which causes her flight.

> The light that long ago had struck me into syncope, recalled in this vision, seemed glidingly to mount the wall, and tremblingly to pause in the centre of the obscured ceiling. I lifted up my head to look: the roof resolved to clouds, high and dim; the gleam was such as the moon imparts to vapours she is about to sever. I watched her come - watched with the strangest anticipation; as though some word of doom were to be written on her disc. She broke forth as never moon yet burst from cloud: a hand first penetrated the sable folds and waved them away; then, not a moon, but a white human form shone in the azure, including a glorious brow earthward. It gazed and gazed on me. It spoke to my spirit: immeasurably distant was the tone, yet so near, it whispered in my heart - 'My daughter, flee temptation.'
> 'Mother, I will.' (*JE*, 346).

Significantly, Jane sees a white ***human*** form. This is both the mother Jane never knew, and simultaneously the voice of her spirit crying out for self-preservation. In fleeing, Jane both resists and yet paradoxically ceases to resist Rochester.

The maturation of Jane's supernatural powers is accompanied by her corresponding developing artistic talents. Jane's self-possession, the subsequent freedom her imagination enjoys, and the supernatural influences all find an outlet in her artwork. Art becomes the vehicle through which Jane can represent her supernatural visions. In Jane's first attempts she lacks the skill to transmit her visions successfully.

> The subjects, had, indeed, risen upon my mind. As I saw them with the spiritual eye, before I attempted to embody them, they were striking; but my hand would not second my fancy, and in each case it had wrought out but a pale portrait of the thing I had conceived (*JE*, 156-7).

But Jane's later art successfully represents her supernatural visions. 'But I dare say you did exist in a kind of artist's dreamland while you blent and arranged these strange tints[...]And who taught you to paint wind?' (*JE*, 158). These self-revealing portraits, painted during her vacation at Lowood when she was alone, are a far cry from the sedate, standard watercolours that she first painted. The first painting, of a wreck with a drowned corpse, recalls her early fascination with the scenes of wrecks found in Bewick's *History of British Birds*. The second picture, of the 'Evening Star' hints towards her supernatural visions of a spiritual mother. The third picture again

retreats to the desolation of the Northern landscape. This picture portrays a female figure in the throes of despair and death - an image which foreshadows Jane's own flight from Rochester and her near death due to exposure. Jane's progression to self-realisation and sympathy with the supernatural is the precondition necessary for the realisation of her artistic potential. Of course, throughout the novel Jane is undergoing a maturation process that will allow her to realise and reveal her true self in art - but this art will be the art of writing. Jane is moving toward a point, to which she's been steadily progressing through her efforts at self-realisation and then self-determination, to where she can tell her own story. Through this she will act as a missionary to the reader.

3.2 The Orphan as Missionary

> *I'll be preparing myself to go out as a missionary to preach liberty to them that are enslaved - your harem inmates amongst the rest.*
>
> - Jane Eyre, (*JE*, 297).

This section will look at Jane's journey to, and arrival at, her ultimate role as a combined missionary/artist - one who both preaches liberty and realises her own liberty through her art.

Jane's flight from Rochester Jane is self-exiling - a solitary confinement which will allow her to commune with herself. In this sense, Jane applies certain disciplinary techniques to herself. This voluntary removal, or self-orphaning, follows a pattern already established in the novel. Simultaneously, alongside the social marginalisation that Jane experiences, Jane finds it necessary, at times, to isolate herself prior to periods of self-discovery. From the opening episode of her own enshrinement behinds the curtains to her departure from Lowood, Jane actively reinforces her social marginalisation to further her self-development. This exile also exposes Jane to the ideology of religion - embodied in the figure of St John. The self-exiling journey that Jane undertakes is, like Little Nell's journey, an allegorical one. Jane's flight from Rochester takes her to Whitcross - the road junction which can be read as the physical manifestation of the cross. Jane's quest leads her to the figure of St John, one who represents the heart of the self-effacing belief.

Jane enters this journey destitute; an 'outcast' self-orphaned from society. But again, she finds initial solace in her intuitive relationship with Nature:

> Nature seemed to me good; I thought she loved me, outcast as I was;[...]Tonight, at least, I would be her guest, as I was her child: my mother would lodge me without money and without price (*JE*, 350).

Jane espouses the Romantic Pantheistic philosophy as it is in Nature that she is able to identify God:

> We know that God is everywhere; but certainly we feel His presence most when his works are on the grandest scale spread before; and it is in the unclouded night-sky, where His worlds wheel their silent course, that we read his clearest His infinitude, His omnipotence (*JE*, 350).

Later, Nature will be the medium through which Jane receives her decisive summons. But first she is required to undergo the discipline of the pilgrimage. Once more, Jane is reduced to feeling subhuman, 'a lost and starving dog' (*JE*, 354). She is absolutely orphaned at this moment: from social family and from the spiritual family of God. She arrives at the Church but the clergyman is, significantly, absent and she receives no charity there. The social stigma of her orphanhood permeates her psyche to the point where she has no expectation of any basic human charity to be extended to her 'I wandered away: always repelled by the consciousness of having no claim to ask - no right to expect interest in my isolated lot' (*JE*, 354). At this moment Jane becomes an symbolic orphan as Nature forsakes her - 'no sense of safety or tranquillity befriended me ' (*JE*, 355). Ultimately, the orphan becomes the archetype of all who fall outside the social structures, and hence are marginalised by society. Yet Jane still rejects the type of imprisonment that society offers as charity: 'And far better that crows and ravens - if any ravens there be in these regions - should pick my flesh from my bones, then that they should be prisoned in a workhouse coffin and mould in a pauper's grave' (*JE*, 356).

Jane manages to complete the journey through the Valley of the Shadow of Death guided by a light out of the 'Slough of Despond', to Marsh End (the influence of Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* is as identifiable in *Jane Eyre* as it is in *Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop*).

> There are great moors behind and on each hand of me; there are waves of mountains far beyond that deep valley at my feet. The population here must be thin, and I see no passengers on these roads; they stretch out east, west, north and south - while, broad, lonely; they are all cut in the moor, and the heather grows deep and wild to their very verge (*JE*, 349).

Significantly, it is only when Jane in interpellated, signified by her adoption of the discourse of self-effacement in her decision to give up her life, 'I can but die,[...]I believe in God. Let me try to wait His will in silence' (*JE*, 361), that she is able to reach the heart of her spiritual quest - embodied in the figure of St John Rivers. His sudden response out of the darkness is both actual and symbolic: he responds to her immediate despair; and he replaces the supernatural voice answering Jane's plea for charity. St John tells Hannah 'You have done your duty in excluding, now let me do mine in admitting her' (*JE*, 362). The notion that social duty is in excluding establishes what is later manifested as disciplinary social power relations. Also, the notion that this exclusion is a necessary pre-requisite for re-interpellation translates into the cultural production of orphans in order that the bourgeois ideology of the family can successfully perpetuate itself.

The death/resurrection symbolism is easily identified here in the three-day patterning, as Jane wanders for three days before being rescued and then lies dormant, 'dead', for three days before recovering - all the time under the surveillance of God. Fearing that Rochester would eclipse this God, and hence all her moral codes of right and wrong, Jane flees Rochester. Ultimately, Jane comes to the edge of death in order to live more actively. Marsh End is the point to which she has been progressing throughout the novel. Her arrival, led by the light in the darkness, not only saves her life but allows her to join the congregation of God, the spiritual family, based on her re-discovered familial genealogy: 'I am an orphan, the daughter of a clergyman' (*JE*, 373). Yet once in the household, a family of orphans, Jane feels a sense of integration 'Now that I had crossed the threshold of this house, and once was brought face to face with its owners, I felt no longer outcast, vagrant and disowned by the wide world' (*JE*, 363). By losing her status as an outcast Jane can also be seen as starting to lose her individuality. Yet simultaneously, she re-embraces her Romantic self by daring 'to put off the mendicant - to resume my natural manner and character' (*JE*, 363).

In the figure of St John Rivers, Jane confronts the choice of the essence of her belief and interpellation - a choice which ultimately rests between St John and Rochester. Her spiritual journey to St John is a voluntary immersion into the world of the disciplined, self-effacing Christianity. St John represents the intellect of the ascetic philosophy of religion. 'I am not a pagan, but a Christian philosopher - a follower of the sect of Jesus' (*JE*, 401). St John has suppressed and disciplined himself in the service of his religion: 'Reason, and not feeling, is my guide' (*JE*, 401); 'His chest heaved once, as if his large heart, weary of despotic constriction, had expanded, despite the will, and made a vigorous bound for the attainment of liberty' (*JE*, 390). Indeed St John's language reveals his self-discipline and his ultimate self-imprisoning notion of religious duty.

St John poses the greatest threat to Jane's hard won individuality because he demands all from her - not only companionship, but complete interpellation in the form of self-discipline. His despotic nature and belief demands total control, 'my ambition is unlimited; my desire to rise higher, to do more than others insatiable' (*JE*, 401). Gradually, Jane starts to be subsumed by him, by her desire to fulfil his expectations, and by the demands of the religion:

> I found him a very patient, very forbearing, and yet an exacting master: he expected me to do a great deal; and when I fulfilled his expectations, he, in his own way, fully testified his approbation. By degrees, he acquired a certain influence over me that took away my liberty of mind: his praise and notice were more restraining than his indifference (*JE*, 423).

Ultimately, however, Jane does not 'love' her 'servitude' (*JE*, 423). Her nature chafes at the required imprisonment. The apparent serenity of her days is disturbed by the turbulence of her nights. Her natural passionate emotion demands and finds an outlet in her dreams. Significantly, the dreams are of Rochester and a situation in which she is dominant. To this, Jane gravitates. This contrasts inversely parallels St John's willing suppression and sacrifice of his passion for Rosamund Oliver for power and eternal reward. This is a case where the ideologies of the family and Evangelical religion can be seen as competing ideologies - demanding a choice between them. Jane is able intuitively to realise the inherent contradiction between their natures when she perceives St John as icy cold, 'whereas I am hot, and fire dissolves ice' (*JE*, 409). Jane resists such self-denial - as she realises that the personal cost is too great:

> I daily wished more to please him; but to do so, I felt[...]that I must disown half my nature, stifle half my faculties, wrest my tastes from their original bent, force myself to the adoption of pursuits for which I had no natural vocation (*JE*, 424).

With the affirmation of the importance of her own identity and nature, Jane rediscovers her intuitive insight. She is able to perceive the lack of self-fulfilment in St John and hence, in the creed he practices:

> Zealous in his ministerial labours, blameless in his life and habits, he yet did not appear to enjoy that mental serenity, that inward content, which should be the reward of every sincere Christian and practical philanthropist (*JE*, 348).

The chink she discovers in St John and inherent in his religion - despotic ambition, ruthlessness and self-important seriousness, allows Jane, by contrast, to define the essence of the belief that she will hold. After a serious struggle, in which she is sorely tempted to 'cease struggling with him - to rush down the torrent of his will into the gulf of his existence, and there lose my own' (*JE*, 443), she denies the call to this faith, turning instead to a more human, intuitive, self affirming and supernatural belief:

> It was as if I had heard a summons from Heaven - as if a visionary messenger, like him of Macedonia, had enounced, 'Come over and help us!' But I was no apostle - I could not behold the herald - I could not receive his call (*JE*, 427).

Significantly, the choice of this belief is also the choice of the family. Jane knows she cannot accomplish what St John desires because it involves denying her own inherent Romantic nature. Instead, she chooses the 'world-redeeming Creed of Christ'. She acts to practice her faith as a missionary where she will be most effective - initially to Rochester and then to the reader. It is quite significant that when Jane receives her summons through Nature, St John cannot hear or receive it:

> It was my time to assume ascendancy. My powers were in play and in force[...]I must and would be alone. He obeyed at once. Where there is energy to command well enough, obedience never fails. I mounted to my chamber; locked myself in; fell on my knees; and prayed in my way - a different way to St John's but effective in its own fashion. I seemed to penetrate very near a Mighty Spirit; and my soul rushed out in gratitude at His feet (*JE*, 445).

Jane's full influence as Redeemer is with Rochester after she returns to him. With Jane gone Rochester loses his family home, his eyes and hand. The physical loss is also a symbolic loss. With Jane's departure Rochester loses his strength and sight - for she has acted as the moral guide and has been strong in preserving not only herself but Rochester as well. Repeatedly, Jane has been associated with the eyes of the soul - through her imagination, her visions and her art. Through her, Rochester has been disciplined to be able to gleam the divine. After her departure, he reproduces the discipline he has internalised from her instruction in his repentance and his voluntary exile, or solitary confinement. Jane's return marks the end of his exile and his regaining of his sight. She has managed to accomplish Rochester's spiritual rebirth through faith and action, his actual regeneration in the form of their child - both of which contribute to his ideological re-interpellation into the family.

On another level, Rochester represents the choice of the focus for Jane's missionary work. Jane's own power is freed, by Rochester's appeal, from the 'stalled blockade' of self-denying passivity. After the supernatural summons, she sees the way clear - her missionary work lies not only in the domestic sphere but also in writing to 'redeem society'. The journey Jane has undergone has artistic ramifications as well spiritual ones. She cannot function in St John's world - 'The thing was as impossible as to mould my irregular features to his correct and classic pattern, to give to my changeable green eyes the sea-blue tint and solemn lustre of his own' (*JE*, 424). By choosing an art form - an autobiography with strong Romantic elements - that is in accordance with her spiritual choice, Jane's art becomes a vehicle for her missionary role.

Jane's development as a painter helps her development as a writer. Her ability to see and to portray truth, in the form of her supernatural portraits, is reflected in her ability to see and to portray, through writing, the inherent self. The

best example of this being her ability to capture the essence of Rosamund Oliver in painting, and in observing St John's response to this painting she can realise his true nature. Most importantly, Jane constructs her own self through autobiography. It is this narrative portrait that she utilises to do her missionary work to the reader.

Increasingly throughout the Victorian era narrative - especially the fictional autobiography - takes on strong religious overtones: either in creation (of identity) or in confession (of personal guilt). With the Romantic period, particularly Wordsworth's doctrine of the poet assuming the responsibilities of the priest of the tribe, it is only natural that her art becomes her 'tool'. In fact, the sanctity and importance of the role of art is argued most strongly first by Charlotte Brontë in her tribute to Thackeray as role model of the social regenerator, and then by St John Rivers as he reveals his own earlier dilemma as to whether to become a traditional missionary or an artist:

> I know poetry is not dead, nor genius lost; nor has Mammon gained power over either, to bind or slay; they will both assert their existence, their presence, their liberty and strength again one day[...]No; they not only live, but reign and redeem: and without their divine influence spread everywhere, you would be in a hell - the hell of your own meanness (*JE*, 396).

Although both Jane and St John burn 'for the more active life of the world - for the more exciting toils of a literary career - for the destiny of an artist, author, orator' (*JE*, 388), it is only Jane who can embrace the active life of the artist and missionary. Both do become missionaries, although with radically different focuses - one on the present and one on eternity. Both respond to a calling that requires similar qualities:

> God had an errand for me; to bear which afar, to deliver it well, skill and strength, courage and eloquence, the best qualifications of soldier, statesman and orator, were all needed: for these all centre in the good missionary (*JE*, 388).

In the process of her written missionary work, Jane is completing the final step in the realisation of both her identity and her artistic potential. She is also contributing to the development of the penal narrative. In portraying her self, Jane reaches the ultimate extension of her earlier painted portraits of truth and self: she revisits her earlier struggles as a witness to what she suffered. More importantly, she is finally able to tell her own story from her own point of view. The use of the 'I' in the first person narrative implies individual power. In this case, the device of

fictional autobiography represents Jane's construction of her individual identity in resistance to the ISAs. More generally, her struggle to determine her self is representative of the artist's struggle to realise his/her own creative imagination. The orphan status is the necessary precondition for the artist in the larger society:

> The commonplace Victorian complaint of spiritual hunger eventuates in the burdening of fiction, poetry, and nonfiction prose with metaphoric quests for that which may compensate for cultural loss. The Victorians sought in literature, especially in narrative, both a diagnostic tool and a cure for social, cultural and psychical malaises.[144]

Jane is required to redeem Rochester in the end, even though he has come to some understanding of belief, because Rochester, as a product of his own increasingly disciplinary society, is ultimately too impotent to carry his own self-redemption to completion. The family model he and Jane establish is regenerating: they replicate the family model, but one outside of society in an Edenic paradise. However, in the replication of the family, Jane's process of liminality is complete and she has contributed to the developing penal narrative.

The fact that the last paragraph of Jane's fictional autobiography focuses not on herself but rather on St John is of great interest. After all the process of writing was both to construct a personal identity and to act as a vehicle for her larger redemptive efforts. The figure of St John, also a orphan, does not only represent a missionary but a figure of intense self-discipline. The final focus then of Jane's writing is not on her familial state but rather on the orphan figure who has disciplined his will into passivity - which can be read as a state of impotence in its nullification of the will. Thus, *Jane Eyre* finishes not only by celebrating Jane's power but also by anticipating the impotent state of the orphan in subsequent fiction.

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[144]Sarah Gilead, 'Liminality in Charlotte Brontë's Novels,' *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 29 (Winter 1987): 302.

3.3 Becky Sharpe and the Pragmatic Identity

> *Do you suppose I have no feeling of self respect, because I am poor and friendless, and because rich people have none?*[145]

Although Becky Sharpe uses the same language as Jane Eyre to express her sense of the injustice she suffers as an orphan, the injustice Becky perceives is social in nature. Whereas Jane refers to her equality of soul, Becky refers to her equality as a social being. The setting of *Jane Eyre*, rural northern England, combined with both Jane's own intense emotional feelings and her spiritualism, helps to reinforce Jane's strong Romantic heritage. However, the sheer power of Jane as an individual is rooted in both a strong link to her Romantic aesthetic heritage and in the bourgeois ideology of self-help - a discourse which gains increasing prominence during the rise of capitalism. Significantly, Jane remains ultimately unhindered by ideological apparatuses partly because of the novel's setting and partly because of her personal resistance.

In contrast, the setting of *Vanity Fair* - the cities of London and other major European cities - emphasises the social focus of the novel. Here, the orphan confronts class ideology. Becky embodies the struggle of the orphan to establish her own social position in the face of an increasingly powerful and repressive social class. Even though Jane battles against some restrictive ISAs, *i.e.*, school, self-effacing orthodox belief, and to a certain extent social class, on the whole, she exists on the margins. Becky, on the other hand, defines herself within society (she is fully interpellated) and her 'expectations' are for individual fulfilment - in the form of social aspirations. Becky's identity does not exist independent of ideology. Becky lacks the same sense of a self that Jane has which arises out of fixed principles. This lack of principles enables her to exist as a chameleon of incredible mutability, as her sense of pragmatism requires, in order to further her own self-interest. The allegorical title, *Vanity Fair*, establishes the different generic purpose of this novel as a satire in contrast to the assertive, individual psychological portrait of *Jane Eyre*. In fact, in the preface to *Jane Eyre*, Brontë praises Thackeray, 'the satirist' as one 'who speaks truth as deep, with a power as prophet-like and as vital, a mien as dauntless and as daring'[146]. Becky then is constructed as a puppet subjected to

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[145]William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), 175. All further references will be to this edition and will be noted in parentheses in the text, denoted by *VF*.
[146]Charlotte Brontë, 'Preface.' *Jane Eyre* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), 36.

Thackeray the puppet master, the result of which is that Becky does not write her own narrative.

Becky, because of her poverty and low social class, has been denied a childhood.[147] 'She never had been a girl, she said; she had been a woman since she was eight years old' (*VF*, 49). Becky is forced, in a way Jane never was, to become worldly, at a young age. 'Rebecca thought about her own youth and the dark secrets of those early tainted days' (*VF*, 487). Like Fagin's boys, the education that Becky receives is that of poverty. 'We have talked of shift, self, and poverty, as those dismal instructors under whom poor Miss Becky Sharp got her education' (*VF*, 151). It is here amidst this poverty that Becky's social aspirations are fuelled as a matter self-preservation. These aspirations for a social place if realised would ensure a social identity. Like Jane, Becky acutely feels the injustice she has experienced:

> For two years I have only had insults and outrage from her [Miss Pinkerton]. I have been treated worse than any servant in the kitchen. I have never had a friend or a kind word, except from you [Amelia]. I have been made to tend the little girls in the lower schoolroom, and to talk French to the Misses, until I grew sick of my mother-tongue (*VF*, 47).

Although Becky strives to assert her own individual identity, these efforts are indistinguishable from her desire for a social position which can also be read as the desire for interpellation.

Jane and Becky both suffer because of their orphan status and find refuge in their imagination. However, here Becky has a stronger affinity with David Copperfield than with Jane as Becky's imagination is not used, like Jane's, to fulfil inner emotional needs, but rather like David, Becky's imagination reflects her social aspirations:

147This notion is first introduced by the grandfather in *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

> She had a vivid imagination; she had, besides, read the **Arabian Nights** and **Guthrie's Geography**; and after she had asked Amelia whether her brother was very rich, she had built for herself a most magnificent castle in the air, of which she was mistress, with a husband somewhere in the background[...]she had arrayed herself in an infinity of shawls, turbans, and diamond necklaces, and had mounted upon an elephant to the sound of the march in 'Bluebeard', in order to pay a visit of ceremony to the Grand Mogul (*VF*, 58).

Becky and David share a similar literary passion for the expansive and creative nature of *Arabian Nights*. In Becky's dreams, she inverts the dreams that Rochester has of dressing Jane and putting her in his pleasure harem. In this inversion, it is Becky who, in foregrounding herself, retains the power of dressing herself and the power of pleasure - her husband is relegated to the distant background 'somewhere'.

Significantly, however, Becky still possesses the undiluted power of Jane. In fact, Becky actually derives more power from her orphan status than Jane by using it both as a motivation for her social aspirations and as a means to help achieve this social status. In Becky's hands being an orphan becomes a weapon. Becky is constantly referring to her disadvantaged and unprotected state, 'Everybody felt the allusion[...]to her hapless orphan state' (*VF*, 73). From the subsequent pathos evoked because of her orphan status, Becky derives substantial power. 'Rebecca[...]easily got the pity of the tender-hearted Amelia, for being alone in the world, an orphan without friends or kindred' (*VF*, 54). This is a key difference between Becky and Jane. Both Jane and Becky, are treated unjustly because they are orphans. Jane, then internalises this sense of outrage to enable her to develop her own personal identity from the margins of society. Becky who is more socially oriented than Jane, sees in her orphan status her own disadvantaged social position. Becky then turns the very weapon used to oppress her against her oppressors: her orphanhood becomes the agency through which she gains a social place. By doing this, Becky ultimately empowers herself by shrouding herself in a sense of pathos.

> 'Do you think I have no heart? Have you all loved me, and been so kind to the poor orphan-deserted-girl, and am *I* to feel nothing? O my friends! O my benefactors! may not my love, my life, my duty, try to repay the confidence you have shown me? Do you grudge me even gratitude, Miss Crawley? It is too much - my heart is too full;' and she sank down in a chair so pathetically, that most of the audience present were perfectly melted with her sadness (*VF*, 189).

Becky's orphan status then becomes a powerful weapon to combat the social barriers that, in seeking to identify her as outsider, prevent the realisation of her own social identity.

By acting as a catalyst for realising her social aspirations, Becky's orphan status generates personal power. In her case then the orphan state is a self-empowering one, because she realises that *she* must act to achieve her own social desires. Socially, being an orphan means that she is deprived of the network of family that will help her advancement and secure a social position for her. 'She determined at any rate to get free from the prison in which she found herself, and now began to act for herself' (*VF*, 51). For Becky then, a social position translates into personal liberty. To further her own social interests, she takes advantage of the opportunity to arm herself, for free, with the social tools that others have provided for them. 'She took advantage, therefore, of the means of study the place offered her; and[...]she speedily went through the little course of study which was considered necessary for ladies in those days' (*VF*, 51). Becky is keenly aware 'That if she did not get a husband for herself, there was no one else in the wide world who would take the trouble off her hands' (*VF*, 57).

Thus, on the level of individual development, being an orphan actually acts as a benefit for Becky. Instead of being a passive creature imprisoned by social restrictions and dependant on others (*e.g.*, Amelia and Lady Jane Sheepshanks), Becky, by working for her own self-advancement, cynically plays the game of conformity and exploits the norms of behaviour and class. This action to further oneself socially mirrors the rise of the capitalist ideal. Becky, through her own endeavours, her own labour and her own ingenuity, can work for a class position. She can become self-made in a way that parallels a capitalist becoming self-made. From a young age, Becky recognises that she has the ability to shape her own future: she is free from dependency on relations for her social advancement; and she has the ability (from natural talents) to further herself. 'I am alone in the

world,[....]I have nothing to look for but what my own labour can bring me' (*VF*, 125).

> 'I have passed beyond it [her original humble station], because I have brains,' Becky thought, 'and almost all the rest of the world are fools[....]Lords come up to my door with stars and garters, instead of poor artists with screws of tobacco in their pockets. I have a gentleman for my husband, and an Earl's daughter for my sister, in the very house where I was little better than a servant a few years ago' (*VF*, 496).

The social identity that Becky comes to enjoy, compared to her earlier position as a 'young lady of whom nobody took any notice' (*VF*, 44), is due entirely to her own endeavours. In this sense, Becky can be considered as self-made.

Becky's ability to make herself socially can be traced to her enormous personal power. As mentioned, Becky derives a certain amount of power from her orphan status. But Becky, like her predecessor Jane, also possesses an inherent power of personality which is initially revealed in the skirmishes with Miss Pinkerton. 'Worthy Miss Pinkerton[...]had no will or strength like that of her little apprentice, and in vain did battle against her, and tried to overawe her' (*VF*, 52). This incident foreshadows Becky's future social successes: Becky has the individual power that class finds difficult to combat. Thackeray, by setting this novel during the time of the Napoleonic Wars and by making Becky of French origin, increases Becky's already considerable personal power by historical association with Napoleon. And like Napoleon, Becky is viewed by the established classes as a usurper. 'In order to maintain authority in her school, it became necessary to remove this rebel, this monster, this serpent, this firebrand' (*VF*, 52). In fact, Becky indirectly makes this identification herself when she attributes her success over Miss Pinkerton to her French origin. 'She doesn't know a word of French, and was too proud to confess it. I believe it was that which made her part with me; and so thank heaven for French. **Vive la France! Vive l'Empereur! Vive Bonaparte!**' (*VF*, 47). Becky's other more bohemian artistic roots add to her ability to move freely through society - unrestricted by conventional notions of behaviour.

In fact, to trace Becky's rise through society is to document the power of her personality. In an ironic parody of the earlier orphan figures, people feel that Becky must have mystical powers.

> 'Miss B., they are all infatyated about that young woman,' Firkin replied. 'Sir Pitt wouldn't have let her go, but he daredn't refuse Miss Crawley anything. Mrs Bute at the Rectory jist as bad - never happy out of her sight. The Captain quite wild about her. Mr Crawley morial jealous. Since Miss C. was took ill, she won't have nobody near her by Miss Sharp, I can't tell for where nor for why; and I think somethink has bewidged everybody.' (*VF*, 170-71).

However, the power Becky achieves over others is not due to mystical powers but rather is a result of her own inner fortitude - she has nerves of 'iron' and is 'unshaken' by the demands of her 'duty' (*VF*, 173). Becky's success at Miss Pinkerton's and Queen's Crawley are only preliminaries to her future social success. As she moves into society after marrying Rawdon, Becky unleashes her personal power.

As Becky starts her social campaign, every foe is soon vanquished, 'Thus was George utterly routed. Not that Rebecca was in the right; but she had managed most successfully to put him in the wrong[...]and he now shamefully fled' (*VF*, 182). Rawdon is completely overawed. 'Her words were oracles to him, her smallest actions marked by an infallible grace and wisdom[....]And he would say to her in confidential moments, "By Jove, Beck, you're fit to be Commander-in-Chief, or Archbishop of Canterbury, by Jove."' (*VF*, 196). Gradually, as Becky's power, of personality and of social position, increases Rawdon's diminishes until he does not exist as her husband anymore, but rather as her servant. 'He was her upper servant and **maitre d'hotel**. He went on her errands: obeyed her orders without question' (*VF*, 449). Becky is all the more powerful because Rawdon is aware of her increasing power and status. 'Rawdon Crawley was scared at these triumphs. They seemed to separate his wife farther than ever from him somehow. He thought with a feeling very like pain how immeasurably she was his superior' (*VF*, 601). In fact, Becky has so much power over Rawdon that he actually loses his own identity. '"How is Mrs Crawley's husband?"[...]He was Colonel Crawley no more. He was Mrs Crawley's husband' (*VF*, 446).

Through associated imagery Becky, whose battles are continually fought on the social front, becomes the social equivalent to Napoleon. Indeed, the language describing the social gatherings is that of a military campaign:

> The brilliant Lady Stunnington tried a passage of arms with her, but was routed with great slaughter by the intrepid little Becky[....Mr Wagg] one evening began an assault upon Becky, who was unsuspiciously eating her dinner. The little woman attacked on a sudden, but never without arms, lighted up in an instant, parried and riposted with a home-thrust, which made Wagg's face tingle with shame (*VF*, 590).

Becky and Napoleon symbolically become intertwined as Vanity Fair undergoes a type of class revolution, thus increasing Napoleon's actual influence on this society. The historical association with the Napoleonic Wars is so strong in the novel that Napoleon affects the course of the lives of most of the characters in the novel on a personal level, as does Becky. We see the ramifications of the events of history and the class revolution on the individual in the novel. Napoleon is blamed personally for the ruined fortunes, not only of his own people but those of Mr. Sedley and ultimately Amelia. 'It was he that ruined the Bourbons and Mr John Sedley' (*VF*, 221). In this class war, John Sedley attributes his personal ruin to both Napoleon and the power thirsty middle class of his own society - specifically in this case the Osbornes. 'Ruined by that damned scoundrel - and by a parcel of swindling thieves [Osbornes] in this country whom I made, sir, and who are rolling in their carriages now' (*VF*, 242). In fact, the whole society is described as if it is constantly doing battle socially or constantly under siege:

> All Brussels had been in a state of excitement about it, and I have heard from ladies who were in that town at the period, that the talk and interest of persons of their own sex regarding the ball was much greater even than in respect of the enemy in their front. The struggles, intrigues, and prayers to get tickets were such as only English ladies will employ, in order to gain admission to the society of the great of their own nation (*VF*, 341).

In this social battlefield, Becky thrives and gains great power.

In addition, by giving Becky a biblical significance by associating her with Delilah, "'**I'll** make your fortune," she said; and Delilah patted Samson's cheek' (*VF*, 204), Thackeray only increases the already considerable personal power of Becky through both historical and biblical associations. Thus, by interweaving biblical allusions with a sense of slavish adherence to class and class ambition, Thackeray puts forward his argument that class has become the new religion (*VF*, 278).

As a result of her considerable power then, Becky's rise in society appears unlimited as her success continues to spread. Soon, she becomes powerful enough so that her past ceases to have the power to restrict her socially. In fact, the success of Becky's rise is such that she manages to be presented at court, which not only marks the pinnacle of society, but also that she has finally achieved a social rebirth - in the form of respectability. Hence, Becky has achieved her ultimate goal, 'To be, and to be thought, a respectable woman' (*VF*, 556).

Ultimately, Becky's power is such that, although denied the power of narrative that other literary orphans possess, she actually takes over the novel on more than one occasion. First, she usurps all other characters to become the acknowledged heroine in this 'novel without a hero'. 'If this is a novel without a hero, at least let us lay claim to a heroine. No man in the British army which has marched away, not the great Duke himself, could be more cool or collected in the presence of doubts and difficulties, than the indomitable little aide-de-camp's wife' (*VF*, 353). Second, her association with Napoleon and the French Revolution dictates the language of the novel. But third and most important, is that even though Becky is denied the power of telling her own story, she actually takes over the role of the author in determining the direction that the plot will take. 'She [Amelia] shan't marry either of these men. It's too bad of Loder. No; she shall marry the bamboo-cane, I'll settle it this very night.' (*VF*, 788).

Ultimately, Becky possesses the enormous personal power of Jane, Napoleon and Delilah without the moral or religious constraints on her behaviour. From the outset, Becky refuses to be limited by society or conventional morality. Her parting gesture of throwing the dictionary out of the coach window symbolises her rejection of not only the place that society gives to her, but also the rules of polite behaviour of such a society. Not only is Becky unrestricted by a code of behaviour and thus able to act entirely on a pragmatic basis, but she is also unrestricted by a fixed identity - rather her identity and background are entirely works of her own fiction. The lack of a consistent identity frees Becky to allow her to assume a number of identities - all of which are donned to further her social aims. 'Becky changed her habits with her situation in life' (*VF*, 783). If Becky has an independent inner self, it exists merely to achieve her social aims. In fact, the essence of Becky's character is that she is an entirely social being. 'Becky loved society, and, indeed, could no more exist without it than an opium-eater without his dram' (*VF*, 745). When Rawdon comments on the change in her tastes since they married, Becky's response

freely indicates that her mutability is self-serving, 'That was when I was on my promotion' (*VF*, 524). Such mutability is a powerful tool in a society where most identities are rigidly fixed and it gives Becky the ability to freely float throughout society while the social classes seem unable to restrict her.

Such mutability ultimately necessitates amoral behaviour, and with Becky craving for social advancement like 'an opium addict craving opium', her behaviour is totally unrestrained by any considerations of morality. Becky is described as being 'unsurpassable in lies' (*VF*, 609); she has a dual nature, 'He did not see the face opposite to him, haggard, weary, and terrible; it lighted up with fresh candid smiles when he woke' (*VF*, 612). This 'terribleness' only increases as Becky pursues her social desires beyond the limits of all morality - 'her soul is black with vanity, worldliness, and all sorts of crime' (*VF*, 638). Becky then has become perceived as a criminal in pursuing her social desires - a category in which the fictional orphan is continually placed during this century. In fact, in capitalist terms, Becky is described as being 'bankrupt' (*VF*, 622) of more than money - of soul. Thus, in pursuing her social interests Becky has squandered her Romantic inheritance - her soul. In the end, she murders Jos for his money.[148] The murder has been foreshadowed in her earlier role playing as Clytemnestra in which she performs the murder that Aegisthus cannot do. 'Rebecca performed her part so well, and with such ghastly truth, that the spectators were all dumb' (*VF*, 596). Becky, unconstrained by morality, has the nerve to go to the extreme to fulfil her own self interest. Jos is terrified by what he sees in her. '[Jos was] dreadfully afraid of Rebecca[...]He would do anything: only[...]they mustn't say anything to Mrs Crawley: she'd kill me if she knew it. You don't know what a terrible woman she is' (*VF*, 795). Echoing her counterpart Napoleon, Becky the orphan becomes Becky the megalomaniac despot. Indeed, Becky's final murderous action is the logical conclusion of her increasingly amoral behaviour. As Becky is the spokesperson for the self-made individual, her bankruptcy of soul is significant - in that it points to a larger bankruptcy of the self-help ideology.

The reference to Becky's acting, and indeed, living the character of Clytemnestra, reveals Becky's own artistic talents. Like Jane, Becky displays a natural creative talent - which she channels to help fulfil her social aspirations. Although, as mentioned previously, Becky does not get the power of narration

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[148]Although Thackeray does not make the murder explicit, he has prepared for it by the Clytemnestra scene, the placing of the illustration, the description of Jos's death by the solicitor as the 'blackest case that ever had come before him' (*VF*, 796).

through which she can reconstruct her own identity, Becky refuses to remain a passive character and actually wrests control of the plot from Thackeray when she insists on assuming the author's role in determining the fate of Amelia. In *Vanity Fair*, and in the orphan figure of Becky, the word artist takes on a new meaning, or rather, as Nina Auerbach argues in her article 'Incarnations of the Orphan', its original meaning - namely that of the dissembler, or the con artist. Significantly, Becky's parents are both artists and are both disreputable. Part of Becky's own mutability rests in her artistic abilities through which she is constantly acting out different identities. From a young age, Becky is practising as an artist, initially as a mimic - for which she displays a natural aptitude. 'Miss Pinkerton would have raged had she seen the caricature of herself which the little mimic, Rebecca, managed to make out of her doll' (*VF*, 50). Becky continues increasing her audience and ultimately her personal influence. 'When the parties were over,[...]the insatiable Miss Crawley would say, "Come to my dressing-room, Becky, and let us abuse the company"[...]all of which Becky caricatured to admiration[...]Miss Sharp tore them to tatters, to the infinite amusement of her audience' (*VF*, 142). Becky uses her artistic talents of mimicry to increase her power base by discrediting her rivals through ridicule and to make herself indispensable to those who she amuses. Finally, Becky ceases to mimic others because she now is ready to act her own role - to improve her own social position by deception.

Unlike Jane then, Becky's art is not used as a creative outlet of her imagination, but rather pragmatically for her own social status. Becky's increasing power enables her to grow into an artist (actress). Acting can be seen as a parallel to artistry - Becky is able to act out several identities, whichever is required by the moment, to both improve her condition, and to gain power over others - either as entertainer or manipulator. 'What an artful little minx!' (*VF*, 588). For Becky acting and manipulating become intertwined. 'The consummate little tragedian must have been charmed to see the effect which her performance produced on her audience' (*VF*, 765). As an actress Becky eclipses all around her:

> She had reached her culmination: her voice rose trilling and bright over the storm of applause and soared as high and joyful as her triumph. There was a ball after the dramatic entertainments, and everybody pressed round Becky as the great point of attraction of the evening. The Royal Personage declared, with an oath, that she was perfection, and engaged her again and again in conversation. Little Becky's soul swelled with pride and delight at these honours; she saw fortune, fame, fashion before her[....]she **écrased** all rival charmers (*VF*, 600-1).

This marks the pinnacle of Becky's artistic and social achievement - the time at which her power of influence is strongest and her self-made status the highest.

Even though Becky attains the social status that she has always desired, she does not achieve full integration in society. Although powerless to prevent Becky's rise in society, ultimately, the power of the upper classes prevent her full integration. Like all orphans she remains alienated. This is nowhere more apparent that when Becky's power begins to wane and she becomes ostracised from society - forced into exile - in an effort to subdue her:

> But all her [Ladyship's] energies rallied the instant she saw Becky smiling roguishly under a pink bonnet: and giving her a glance of scorn, such as would have shrivelled up most women, she walked into the custom-house quite unsupported. Becky only laughed: but I don't think she liked it. She felt she was alone, quite alone; and the far-off shining cliffs of England were impassable to her. (*VF*, 741).

The upper classes rally to exclude her - a manifestation of solitary confinement by exclusion. As her social power wanes so does Becky's personal power, and for once, Becky feels her alienation. 'She began to feel that she was very lonely indeed' (*VF*, 742). This feeling of alienation forces Becky to attempt outwardly to conform to social dictates in order to achieve not only respectability but integration.

> Still she held up in spite of these rebuffs, and tried to make a character for herself, and conquer scandal. She went to church very regularly, and sang louder than anybody there[....]In a word, she did everything that was respectable[....]She saw people avoiding her, and still laboriously smiled upon them; you never could suppose from her countenance what pangs of humiliation she might be enduring inwardly (*VF*, 743).

Becky's addiction to society dictates that she will outwardly adjust her behaviour to be an accepted member - which, however, is to no avail:

> Whenever Becky made a little circle for herself with incredible toils and labour, somebody came and swept it down rudely, and she had all her work to begin over again. It was very hard; very hard; lonely and disheartening[....]From one colony to another Becky fled uneasily. [...]trying with all her might to be respectable, and alas! always found out some day or other, and pecked out of the cage by the real daws (*VF*, 744).

This demonstrates the considerable power of class over the individual. Becky exists as one of the most powerful orphan figures, yet she ultimately is forced into conformity.

However, whether this conformation occurs inwardly as well is ambiguous. Ultimately, Becky, through her dealings with Jos and her earlier endeavours, manages to achieve a stall in Vanity Fair, that is, she finally achieves a social position. But the ending remains ambiguous as to who ultimately has the power - Becky or society.

> Rebecca, Lady Crawley, chiefly hangs about Bath and Cheltenham, where a very strong party of excellent people consider her to be a most injured woman. She has her enemies. Who has not? Her life is her answer to them. She busies herself in works of piety. She goes to church, and never without a footman. Her name is in all the Charity Lists (*VF*, 797).

The ambiguity lies in whether in her achievement of a social position, Becky is more powerful than class or whether this final state represents her succumbing to the demands of society to conform in order to be integrated. This social power will increase during the century as ISAs gain increasing autonomy, and the orphan will cease to have the power of Becky. The statement that Becky is a 'wanderer[...]by force and inclination' (*VF*, 779) is crucial in revealing that *Vanity Fair* is a pivotal novel, in which the power (the inclination) of the orphan/individual and that of society (the force) is evenly balanced.

3.4 David Copperfield: The Last Vestiges of the Romantic Soul

> *I was a child of close observation,[...]as a man I have a strong memory of my childhood.*[149]

The previous two sections traced the revolutionary power of the orphan as individual and artist. In the figure of Jane Eyre this revolutionary power, derived from her Romantic aesthetic genealogy, enables her to act as spiritual redeemer and to write her own private narrative in resistance to the public narratives. In Becky, this revolutionary power also gives rise to her 'artistry' - namely the power to dissemble. Becky's art, therefore, helps her to create her social identity in the face of restrictive class institutions. The final novel this chapter will deal with is *David Copperfield*: a novel which traces David's growth from a Romantic child into a fully interpellated bourgeois subject. Unlike, *Jane Eyre*, *David Copperfield* is a novel in which the balance between the Romantic construction of the artist and the bourgeois narrative of the family tips towards the latter. David possesses the aesthetic power of the Romantic artist - namely, the ability to retain the powers of childhood - which he reveals in his statement reproduced as the epigraph to this section. Perhaps, part of David's ability to recall his childhood is because like Becky, he knows his parents: thus, he possesses a certain familial identity in his formative years. Also like Becky, David is increasingly implicated in the penal narrative by his yearning for a social identity and his encounters with the ISAs. As a result of his participation in the larger social narratives David increasingly becomes aware of his need to discipline his 'undisciplined' (or Romantic) heart (*DC*, 838). David can be read as the orphan whose identity is constructed by the penal narrative he encounters hence, he does not possess the power of Jane nor Becky. This tension between the Romantic and constructed identities found in David is represented in the novel as a tension between observation and surveillance. After this novel, for example in *Little Dorrit* , this ambiguity will disappear as the bourgeois ideology of the family becomes more powerful, thus making the orphan/individual increasingly more impotent. The following section on *David Copperfield* will follow David's progression from observation to discipline to self-discipline.

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[149]Charles Dickens, *The Personal History of David Copperfield* (*David Copperfield*), ed. Trevor Blount (1966. London: Penguin, 1985), 61. All subsequent references to this text will be from this edition and will be indicated in the text in parentheses, denoted by *DC*.

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Ut supra, in *David Copperfield* the tension between the Romantic aesthetic genealogy and the penal narrative being constructed is manifested in the tension between observation and surveillance. David's view of the power of observation being a trait associated with childhood is really the Romantic manifesto of the child being the father of the man and the necessary state for the artist.

> I believe the power of observation in numbers of very young children to be quite wonderful for its closeness and accuracy. Indeed, I think that most grown men who are remarkable in this respect, may with greater propriety be said not to have lost the faculty, than to have acquired it; the rather, as I generally observe such men to retain a certain freshness, and gentleness, and capacity of being pleased, which are also an inheritance they have preserved from their childhood (*DC*, 61).

Observation then is an ability which originates in childhood and which the artist retains in adulthood. But significantly, the one figure in the novel who exists as a pure Romantic artist is Mr Dick who manages to keep his childhood innocence into adulthood and is continually writing his narratives on his kites. The Romantic artist then is increasingly rendered impotent by his child-like status, which in Mr Dick's case is considered akin to senility.

Similarly, although observation is an ability to see things, it is not necessarily akin to Jane Eyre's visionary ability. Often, in *David Copperfield*, this observation is unaccompanied by any special power. David acknowlédges that observation was a process of gaining knowledge but as a child his inability to use this knowledge meant that this knowledge was not empowering. 'I could observe, in little pieces, as it were; but as to making a net of a number of these pieces, and catching anybody in it, that was, as yet, beyond me' (*DC*, 70). But the process of surveillance - a more powerful form of observation - becomes a tool in the ideological power relations.

As an orphan, David's character is a mixture of Romanticism (in his early childhood) and the socially constructed identity of his later adolescence and adult years. From birth David, like Jane Eyre, is gifted with possessing special visionary powers, 'I was privileged to see ghosts and spirits' (*DC*, 49). Yet simultaneously, the fact that David's moment of birth was determined rather humorously by Aunt Betsey, who gave his mother such a fright as to induce labour, signifies that David,

in being unable even to determine the moment of his birth, lacks the same overwhelming self-determination that Jane Eyre possesses. The opening sentence of David's narrative, 'Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show' (*DC*, 49), reveals the extent of David's anxiety and self-doubt. This self-doubt arises from the fact that David is losing the Romantic memory of his divine origins and consequently is losing any sense of his inherent identity. David's narrative then is not ultimately an empowering device.

David's recollection of his early life is in the language of a fairy tale. David has a mother who is both an orphan and almost a child herself. Their early time together is one of Romantic childhood bliss in which David emphasises the naturalness of both their surroundings and their love. David's trip to Mr Peggotty's has all the aspects of a fairy tale - the boat which was 'like an enchantment' (*DC*, 82); its 'very smallness' making it a 'child's paradise'[150]. Here David has been removed to a natural paradise populated by orphans, waifs and strays. During this trip, David's childish fancy metamorphoses Emily into an angel - an image which recalls Little Nell. 'I am sure my fancy raised up something round that blue-eyed mite of a child, which etherealized, and made a very angel of her' (*DC*, 87). Later this fancy will develop into a Romantic (childhood) love of Emily.

> What happiness (I thought) if we were married, and were going away anywhere to live among the trees and in the fields, never growing older, never growing wiser, children ever, rambling hand and hand through sunshine and among flowery meadows, laying down our heads on moss at night, in a sweet sleep of purity and peace, and buried by the birds when we were dead (*DC*, 202).

However, David does not fully belong to this paradise of orphans; he will grow older. Ultimately, David indirectly aids in the destruction of this paradise by introducing Steerforth. There are distinctions between his orphanhood and Little Emily's. It is significant that David can locate his father's grave and therefore can more easily identify his own genealogy. But perhaps the more important distinction between the two orphans is that David belongs to a higher class than Little Emily. 'Your father was a gentleman and your mother is a lady; and my [Emily's] father was

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[150]Chris R. Vanden Bossche, 'Family and Class in *David Copperfield*.' *David Copperfield*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992),, 175.

a fisherman and my mother was a fisherman's daughter, and my uncle Dan is a fisherman' (*DC*, 85).

This trip to Peggotty's family marks the end not only of David's brief Romantic childhood, but of the phase in his life which is characterised by his powers of observation. This observation, however can no longer be seen as empowering. At best, this ability is neutral in the ideological power relations of *David Copperfield*. At worst, as mentioned earlier, in the figure of Mr Dick, this childishness is now seen as a state of impotent rebellion against an increasingly disciplinary penal narrative.

3.5 Discipline

'Shades of the prison-house begin to close/Upon the growing Boy'[151] with the introduction of the Murdstones into David's life. Their entrance into David's home robs David of his power and his place, as the power of surveillance outstrips the passivity of observation. Murdstone quickly outstares David and usurps David's place in his mother's bedroom. The arrival of the Murdstones signifies not only David's loss of power but also the arrival of discipline in his life: Murdstone's vow to 'conquer that fellow [David]' (*DC*, 96) reveals that his target is not only Mrs. Copperfield but David himself. David's narrative now introduces the image of imprisonment. Miss Murdstone acts as a jailer with her 'very jail of a bag[...]hung[...]by a heavy chain' (*DC*, 97) which is covered with 'numerous little steel fetters and rivets' (*DC*, 98), and from which she occasionally makes 'a jail-delivery of her pocket- handkerchief' (*DC*, 100). Miss Murdstone takes control of the keys - which she keeps 'in her own little jail all day' (*DC*, 99). In fact, Miss Murdstone keeps the house under surveillance by sleeping with 'one eye open' (*DC*, 98).

Mr. Murdstone endeavours to reform the orphan, Mrs. Copperfield, through discipline. 'I had satisfaction in the thought of marrying an inexperienced and artless person, and forming her character, and infusing into it some amount of that firmness and decision of which it stood in need' (*DC*, 100). Mrs Copperfield being both an orphan and childish in nature (a 'childish mother' {*DC*, 53}) is an obvious target for reformation through disciplinary techniques. Although Mrs Copperfield quickly internalises and reproduces Murdstone's penal narrative, David, like Jane, actively resists Murdstone's efforts to conquer him. From the moment David meets

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[151]William Wordsworth, *Ode*, 67-68.

Murdstone David tries to nullify Murdstone's power 'I was jealous that his hand should touch my mother's in touching me - which it did. I put it away, as well as I could' (*DC*, 67). When David finds he cannot 'put' this hand away, he bites it. After David finds his mother has married Murdstone David not only refuses to see him, but tries to negate the power that Murdstone gains through surveillance by refusing to return his stare. But eventually, David is attracted to the magnetism of Murdstone's stare and to the authority that Murdstone represents. '[Murdstone] looked steadily into my eyes. I felt my own attracted, no less steadily to his' (*DC*, 95). Although David continues his resistance to Murdstone's efforts, David is soon reduced from seeing to darkness - a state which signifies an impotence of self. 'I could hardly find the door for the tears that stood in my eyes[...]I groped my way out, and groped my way up to my room in the dark' (*DC*, 101). This inability to see and Murdstone's disciplinary endeavours signals the end of David's Romantic childhood. 'These solemn lessons which succeeded those, I remember as the death blow of my peace, and a grievous daily drudgery and misery' (*DC*, 103).

Instead, as the Murdstones' disciplinary endeavours award them more power, David's childhood existence becomes that of a prisoner and correspondingly the language of his narrative becomes the language of the prison and the penal narrative. 'Again, the dreaded Sunday comes round, and I file into the old pew first, like a guarded captive brought to a condemned service' (*DC*, 102). This description of his childhood Sundays anticipates the description of Arthur Clennam's childhood Sundays. The continual surveillance of the Murdstones quickly begins to subject David. 'The very sight of these two has such an influence over me[...]I trip over a word. Mr. Murdstone looks up. I trip over another word. Miss Murdstone looks up' (*DC*, 103). In addition to being under continual surveillance, David is increasingly alienated from his mother and eventually from anyone outside the family: the penal narrative is working to re-orphan David in order that it might perpetuate itself. Like Jane, David's only escape is into his imagination. 'They [his father's books] kept alive my fancy, and my hope of something beyond that place and time' (*DC*, 105). This imaginary escapism serves to encourage David - as it did Jane. 'I[...]consoled myself under my small troubles[...]by impersonating my favourite characters[...]and by putting Mr and Miss Murdstone into all the bad ones' (*DC*, 105-6). David reads voraciously as if retreating into his imagination will somehow regain the lost freedom of his earlier Romantic childhood and through his father's books his lost family. '[In the] summer evening, the boys at play in the churchyard, and I sitting on my bed, reading as if for life' (*DC*, 105).

David's enforced confinement results not only in David's misery but in his desperation. David's resistance culminates in his biting Murdstone. This act of biting is not only the direct product of Murdstone's treatment of David as an animal but is also the commission of a 'crime'. After the commission of the crime, David is a literal prisoner as he is now placed in enforced solitary confinement. David's room becomes his cell, locked from the outside. David is guarded as a criminal, 'escorted[...]where I was stationed, a young outlaw, all alone by myself near the door; and whence I was solemnly conducted by my jailer' (*DC*, 109).

Gradually David's solitary confinement begins to act on his already 'reproachful young conscience' (*DC*, 91) leaving him feeling 'wicked' (*DC*, 108) - a response which is markedly different to Jane's response in the Red Room. David, 'weighed down by the stale and dismal oppression of remembrance' (*DC*, 109) communes with his disgraced self and ultimately begins to internalise his oppression into a sense of guilt. 'My stripes[...]were nothing to the guilt I felt. It lay heavier on my breast than if I had been a most atrocious criminal' (*DC*, 108). David actively begins to reinforce his isolation. 'When the boys played in the churchyard, and I watched them from a distance within the room, being ashamed to show myself at the window lest they should know I was a prisoner' (*DC*, 109). Eventually David repents, begging 'pardon' for his 'suffering soul' (*DC*, 112).

Like Jane's move to Lowood, David's move to Salem House, with its 'high brick wall' (*DC*, 129), is the transference of his prison sentence from the control of Murdstone, an individual ideological agent, to an ISA. David's name is changed from Copperfield to Murdstone (although significantly, the other children still call him Copperfield, the name of his childhood), emphasising the end of his Romantic childhood identity and the move into both an adolescent period of discipline and the penal narrative. The operating ethos of Salem House is akin to that of the Panopticon. The sign that David is forced to wear not only acts as a criminal brand but also aids in David's internal reformation process causing him to abhor his own nature as wicked. 'I positively began to have a dread of myself, as a kind of wild boy who did bite' (*DC*, 131). David, feeling 'sad and solitary' (*DC*, 132) is continually 'supervised' (*DC*, 132) by Creakle's assistant. Creakle, the warden, demands to know David's 'report' (*DC*, 134) or case history. Indeed, Creakle speaks of David as if he is a prisoner, ordering his assistant to 'take him away' (*DC*, 135). David begins to internalise the effects of constant surveillance while suffering under his criminal brand. 'Whether it was possible for people to see me or not, I always fancied that

somebody was reading it. It was no relief to turn round and find nobody; for wherever my back was, there I imagined somebody always to be' (*DC*, 130-31).

Once again, experiencing constant surveillance David becomes attracted to the source of the surveillance, the eye of the authority figure. 'I don't watch his eye in idleness, but because I am morbidly attracted to it' (*DC*, 142). The knowledge David gains is not only of his guilt but of fear. Under constant threat of corporeal punishment, David's fear and the fear of the other boys reduces them to the subhuman state of 'miserable little dogs' (*DC*, 142). Gradually, as intended in the theory of the Panopticon, David begins to internalise the effects of being under possible surveillance and begins to reproduce this oppression in his manner. 'I am in the playground, with my eye still fascinated by him, though I can't see him. The window[...]stands for him, and I eye that instead. If he shows his face near it, mine assumes an imploring and submissive expression' (*DC*, 142).

David's release from his confinement at Salem House for the holidays is interesting as it reveals that David has become the 'third interesting penitent' of whom Carl Bandelin writes.[152] The first moment David sees Murdstone he shows his repentance by begging Murdstone's forgiveness. Indeed, contrary to Jane, David perceives that ill treatment has metamorphosed him into an animal. 'He ordered me like a dog, and I obeyed like a dog' (*DC*, 173). David has fully internalised his ill treatment. This process of internalisation acts to intensify David's feeling of alienation. 'What meals I had in silence and embarrassment, always feeling that there were a knife and fork too many, and that mine; an appetite too many, and that mine; a plate and chair too many, and those mine; a somebody too many, and that I' (*DC*, 174). Ultimately, David feels alienated even from himself. 'I was not a favourite there with anybody, not even with myself' (*DC*, 170). The result of David's internalisation of his ill treatment and alienation is self-nullification. 'What a blank space I seemed, which everybody overlooked, and yet was in everybody's way' (*DC*, 174).

David is not only a target of reformation but is also used as a disciplinary tool in his mother's reformation. 'I was still held to be necessary to my poor mother's training, and, as one of her trials, could not be suffered to absent myself' (*DC*, 171). Mrs. Copperfield has not only internalised the dominant discourse of the Murdstones but she is now actively reproducing it. 'I ought to be very thankful to him, and very

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[152]Carl Bandelin, 'David Copperfield: A Third Interesting Penitent.' *Charles Dickens's* David Copperfield, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), 21-30.

submissive to him even in my thoughts; and when I am not, Peggotty, I worry and condemn myself' (*DC*, 168). In fact, Murdstone encourages Clara reproduce the technique of domination, surveillance by 'keep[ing] a watch upon [herself]' (*DC*, 172).

The death of his mother completes David's alienation. 'I had already broken out into a desolate cry, and felt an orphan in the wide world' (*DC*, 176). In fact, David is doubly orphaned having lost Peggotty after having lost his mother. The loss of both mother figures not only alienates David but also serves to signify the death of his childhood - the state which the earlier orphan figures, such as Oliver and Nell, never grow out of. 'The mother who lay in the grave, was the mother of my infancy; the little creature in her arms was myself, as I had once been, hushed for ever on her bosom' (*DC*, 187). The significance of this death of childhood is that it begins to mark the death of Romantic aesthetic identity in the Victorian literary orphan. David's ill treatment is now that of enforced solitude - which marks the shift in the penal narrative's disciplinary efforts from the corporeal punishment of Creakle to the now more sophisticated psychological methods of Murdstone. 'I was not actively ill-used, I was not beaten, or starved; but the wrong that was done to me had no intervals of relenting, and was done in a systematic, passionless manner' (*DC*, 204). This shift echoes the larger changing focus of disciplinary endeavours from retributive justice to internal reformation. With his mother dead, David is identified as Murdstone's sole target for his disciplinary endeavours. 'It is especially so for a young boy of your disposition which requires a great deal of correcting; and to which no greater service can be done than to force it to conform to the ways of the working world, and to bend and break it[...]What it wants is, to be crushed. And crushed it must be. Shall be, too!' (*DC*, 206). Murdstone's words anticipate the language of Arthur Clennam in his description of Mrs. Clennam's disciplinary endeavours. Thus as an orphan, David loses his place in the larger human society by becoming the animal, 'the little labouring hind' (*DC*, 208), that Murdstone and Creakle have tried to metamorphose him into. David manages to survive, like Jane, in a 'lonely, self-reliant manner' (*DC*, 223) with books acting as the refuge for his imagination.

Ultimately, David rejects this oppressive lifestyle by escaping in an endeavour to tell his story to his aunt. It is significant that this self-assertion, borne out of alienation, appears as a small narrative. This gesture is a microcosm of David's ultimate realisation of his artistic potential, in the form of fictional autobiography, in an endeavour to recreate his own self - as Jane does. The journey

to Betsey's, echoes Jane's journey to Whitcross. 'Sleep came upon me as it came upon many other outcasts, against whom house-doors were locked, and house-dogs barked' (*DC*, 237). Like Jane, David considers himself an 'outcast': re-orphaned by the penal narrative. However, where Jane feels no shame about her reduced circumstances, David's sense of guilt regarding his outcast state indicates to what extent he has started to internalise Murdstone's discipline. 'I felt quite wicked in my dirt and dust, with my tangled hair' (*DC*, 238). Like Jane, David is comforted during his flight by a spiritual vision of his mother. Unlike Jane's vision which is in the form of a mother signifying mother nature, David's talisman is a vision of his real mother. 'I seemed to be sustained and led on by my fanciful picture of my mother in her youth' (*DC*, 244). Again, unlike Jane, David is re-orphaned at the end of his journey by the loss of his vision. '[She] seemed to vanish like a dream, and to leave me helpless and dispirited' (*DC*, 244).

Although David, in going to Betsey's, flees from imprisonment to freedom there is no returning to the Romantic *freedom of his childhood. His* subsequent confrontation with Murdstone is depicted in the language of a trial as David is 'fenced[...]in with a chair, as if it were a prison or a bar of justice' (*DC*, 264). David, like Jane, is charged with having a 'sullen, rebellious spirit; a violent temper; and an untoward, intractable disposition' (*DC*, 266). In other words, David is charged with possessing an individual sense of self, his Romantic aesthetic genealogy, which Murdstone is determined to crush. Significantly, Betsey's victory over Murdstone lies in her power of observation, 'Do you think I can't understand you as well as if I had seen you[...]now that I *do* see and hear you?' (*DC*, 269). Betsey manages to nullify Murdstone by outstaring him. 'Murdstone['s...]face darkened more and more, the more he and my aunt observed each other, which they did very narrowly' (*DC*, 266). Ultimately, Betsey reverses the proceedings and accuses Murdstone of ill treating Mrs Copperfield, referring to him as she does his sister as the 'offender' (*DC*, 263). Ironically, Betsey will also undertake to 'discipline' David - or in other words, to interpellate David into the bourgeois family. The verdict of the trial is that David is freed from the Murdstones, but Betsey immediately renames her possession Trotwood.

Once freed from the Murdstones, David does not return to his prediscipliniary state. Betsey, recognising David's impotence and lack of sense of self counsels David to become 'a fine, firm fellow, with a will of your own[...to possess] strength of character that is not to be influenced, except on good reason, by anybody, or by anything' (*DC*, 332). However, David remains powerless in the face of all others,

particularly coachmen, waiters and Steerforth - who views David as his 'property' (*DC*, 348). David's personal power has been nullified which results in David returning to the position of being subject to both surveillance and other techniques of discipline. David now gravitates towards Uriah Heep in the same way that he has always been attracted to authority figures. 'It made me uncomfortable to observe that, every now and then, his sleepless eyes would come below the writing, like two red suns, and stealthily stare at me[...]I made several attempts to get out of their way[...]but they always attracted me back again' (*DC*, 278). David now begins to reproduce this surveillance, 'my stool was such a tower of observation, that[...]I watched him' (*DC*, 290-91). But through observation, Uriah has gained knowledge of David's proud nature. Uriah uses this information to manipulate David into a position where he falls under Uriah's power. Once in his house, Uriah and his mother interrogate David - something which David is powerless to resist. 'They did just what they liked with me; and wormed things out of me that I had no desire to tell[...]the skill with which the one followed up whatever the other said, was a touch of art which I was still less proof against' (*DC*, 314). Here, the term art is used closer to its original meaning of deception - something which was explored in the figure of the artist, Becky Sharpe.

Although Alexander Welsh reads David's narrative as 'celebrat[ing] the survival and success of Copperfield' in that it is about 'the child's overcoming helplessness and fighting back'[153], this section, tracing David's rebellion in biting Murdstone points to the opposite conclusion. As a direct result of this rebellion David became the target for ISA endeavours. David's experience of this interpellation moves him from the neutral position of observer to the receptor of the disciplinary discourse. In fact, David is not only the target of intense discipline but ultimately becomes the agent of bourgeois ideology. The disciplinary prison taint starts to characterise all of David's actions and the discourse of the narrative as he internalises the bourgeois ideology. David does not fight back but conforms. The child David, then on one important level - that of the Romantic - does not survive precisely because it is his childishness and small physical status that first identifies him as a target for reform.

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[153]Alexander Welsh, 'Young Man Copperfield.' *From Copyright to Copperfield: The Identity of Dickens* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1987), 160.

3.6 David's Self-Disciplining and David as Disciplinary Agent

Although Dickens traces, perhaps subconsciously, the effect of the penal narrative on the Romantic philosophy of the self, he does not, at this stage in his career, fully acknowledge its power. In his satirical parody of the Panopticon in his portrait of Pentonville, Dickens acknowledges that solitary confinement is heralded as 'the only true system of prison discipline; the only unchallengeable way of making sincere and lasting converts and penitents' (*DC*, 921). Indeed, through David Dickens elaborates on the underlying principles of solitary confinement. 'What were supposed to be the main advantages of this all-governing and universally over-riding system?[...]Perfect isolation of prisoners - so that no one man in confinement there, knew anything about another; and the reduction of prisoners to a wholesome state of mind, leading to sincere contrition and repentance' (*DC*, 923). Dickens is unequivocal in his derision of such a system - partly because Uriah, at least, is already the product of one such disciplinary social institution. '[They] were perfectly consistent and unchanged; that exactly what they were then, they had always been; that the hypocritical knaves were just the subjects to make that sort of profession in such a place; that they knew its market value at least as well as we did[...]it was a rotten, hollow, painfully-suggestive piece of business altogether' (*DC*, 930). It is very ironic then that Dickens, perhaps subconsciously, traces a similar process of solitary confinement in the forming of such penitents as Emily and David. This section will trace how David is targeted for solitary confinement and reformation by his child-like physique. It will also trace how, increasingly, David not only internalises bourgeois ideology and its disciplinary discourse but actively reproduces it in his own actions and in his narrative - ultimately becoming a penitent.

In calling David 'romantic Daisy' (*DC*, 349) Steerforth not only renames David but draws attention to his childlike nature. Such a childlike nature is no longer viewed as empowering, rather such naive innocence leaves David unable to combat the larger penal narrative. Indeed, Littimer constantly makes David feel inferior, 'he seemed to me to say as plainly as a man could say: 'You are very young, sir; you are exceedingly young' (*DC*, 385). David's childlike self now is a source of his perpetual feeling of inferiority. He enters his new office 'feeling very young[...]on account of the clerks poking one another with their pens to point me out' (*DC*, 413). What was empowering to Oliver, namely his childlike face which revealed his inherent innocence and spiritual genealogy, is a constant source of anxiety to David. Even

with Steerforth and his friends, David is 'not an hour older' rather is 'tormented' by his own 'youthfulness' (*DC*, 416). David's sense of inferiority and preoccupation with how he appears to others dominates his 'solitary pilgrimages' to his mother's grave. Whereas Oliver dreams of a Romantic childhood in the graveyard and Nell is preoccupied with visions of her own death in the graveyard, David's reflections are solely on constructing a social and heroic self - which would signify what Chris Vanden Bossche refers to as David's move from 'rookery to cookery'[154]. 'The figure I was to make in life, and the distinguished things I was to do. My echoing footsteps went to no other tune, but were as constant to that as if I had come home to build my castles in the air at a living mother's side' (*DC*, 378). In his sense of alienated orphanhood, David turns to his artistic potential in order to construct a social self. 'I was alone in the world, and much given to record that circumstance in fragments of English versification' (*DC*, 446). David's orphanhood then is both a precondition and a motivation for his artistic abilities.

In constructing his self David adopts the language of the penal narrative. In his listing of the necessary conditions for professional success, David repeatedly refers to the discipline necessary to ensure such success. However, David views himself as victim to his 'undisciplined heart' (*DC*, 838). This undisciplined nature refers to the fact that now his Romantic inherent self is disempowering rather than empowering. After visiting the Spenlow's garden David is 'enchanted' (*DC*, 450). The visit to the Spenlow's garden, and the fairy-tale language of his childhood recollections can be read as a return to his Romantic childhood with his mother - in the figure of Dora. This return, however, is actually disempowering. This disempowerment is further supported by David's choice of discourses - those of colonialism and difference. David's love for Dora (childhood) makes him 'a captive and a slave' (*DC*, 450) and by his acts of homage (boots) David makes himself a 'wretched cripple' (*DC*, 458). All of this contributes to David's loss of power which Betsey significantly likens to a loss in his ability to see - a direct echo of David's being rendered blind by Murdstone. David, like Rochester, is 'blind, blind, blind' and of 'a very pliant disposition' who needs someone to 'sustain and improve him' (*DC*, 565).

Another child-like orphan, Dora is depicted by Julia Mills in a language, now seen as absurdly Romantic, but nevertheless the language that recalls the figure of Little Nell. Julia sees Dora as a 'favourite child of nature. She is a thing of light, and airiness, and joy' (*DC*, 607). But Dora is definitely not Little Nell and lacks both

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[154]Vanden Bossche, 'Family and Class in *David Copperfield*,' 173.

Nell's power and spirituality. Indeed, the very characteristic that empowers Nell - namely her childhood - becomes a drawback in the figure of Dora. She is ultimately portrayed as silly and inadequate. What is not mentioned directly is that Dora is already the product of various ISAs. In what amounts to a small gesture of resistance to these endeavours, Dora embraces childishness - as seen in her gesture of renaming her self as 'child-wife' (*DC*, 711). Dora deliberately points to the fact that she has not grown, in a way similar to Oliver and Little Nell, but now this childishness is seen as a deficiency in a very adult world. Dora pleads to be excused from participating in this adult world, instead voluntarily allowing herself to be marginalised, to a certain extent, to the role of observer, focusing her 'blue eyes' on David with 'quiet attention'(*DC*, 714), yet resisting total marginalisation in begging to be able to 'see' (*DC*, 714) David write in order that he will not 'forget' her (*DC*, 715).

David reproduces the penal narrative in his endeavours to discipline Dora. 'I resolved to form Dora's mind' (*DC*, 762). But Dora, although allowing herself to be marginalised resists reformation. Ultimately, David is powerless in his disciplinary endeavours - indeed, he offers to reform himself. 'I had endeavoured to adapt Dora to myself, and found it impracticable. It remained for me to adapt myself to Dora' (*DC*, 766). One of the motivations behind David's endeavours is to create the will in Dora that he himself is beginning to develop. 'I did miss something of the realisation of my dreams[...]I did feel, sometimes, for a little while, that I could have wished my wife had been my counsellor; had more character and purpose, to sustain me and improve me by; had been endowed with power to fill up the void which somewhere seemed to be about me' (*DC*, 713). This 'void' David refers to can be read as the result both of the death of his inherent Romantic aesthetic identity and of his process of growing-up. Yet David's language - wanting someone to 'sustain' him and more significantly, wanting someone with 'power' to 'improve' him - reveals that he longs for Dora to be a ideological agent of reform. David is longing to be in a power relationship where his undisciplined heart is being disciplined. It is at this stage that the novel moves beyond the identification and realisation of David's undisciplined heart that Gwendolyn Needham argues[155], to the disciplining of this undisciplined heart. Ultimately, Dora realises that her childishness and the childlike love they shared was fine for their childhood but is inadequate as David grows into an adult, disciplined world.

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[155]Gwendolyn B. Needham, 'The Undisciplined Heart of David Copperfield.' *David Copperfield*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1992), 47-64.

> I am afraid it would have been better, if we had only loved each other as a boy and girl, and forgotten it. I have begun to think I was not fit to be a wife[...]I was very happy, very. But, as years went on, my dear boy would have wearied of his child-wife. She would have been less and less a companion for him. He would have been more and more sensible of what was wanting in his home. She wouldn't have improved. It is better as it is (*DC*, 837).

David begins to feel the inadequacies of their childlike undisciplined state in terms of family ideology - particularly in their inability to act as 'parents' to their servants (their 'children') in a disciplinary capacity. 'Everybody we had anything to do with seemed to cheat us' (*DC*, 707). David has learnt that the world is increasingly becoming a place of complex power relations in which each person, in their given place, will have power exercised on them but likewise must exercise the same power on others. 'Unless we learn to do our duty to those whom we employ, they will never learn to do their duty to us. I am afraid we present opportunities to people to do wrong, that never ought to be presented[...]We are positively corrupting people' (*DC*, 762). It is significant that David seems to be accepting the guilt of others' behaviour in terms of his failure as the family patriarch. Likewise, his inability to exercise discipline on others is portrayed in the language of the Murdstones - that of sin and corruption - as the family and the Evangelical narratives intersect. Indeed, David failure to discipline his servants gives him a sense of impotence. 'I got so ashamed of being such a victim, that I would have given him any money to hold his tongue, or would have offered a round bribe for his being permitted to run away[...]At last I ran away myself, whenever I saw an emissary' (*DC*, 760). The end result of David's failure to discipline both Dora and his servants is an increased sense of his own alienation. 'I could not endure my own solitary wisdom' (*DC*, 765).

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While David remains a mixture of his Romantic aesthetic inheritance and his socially constructed identity, there is another orphan in *David Copperfield*, whose identity, rather like Bertha Mason's is a mixture of social construction and self-tormenting - Rosa Dartle. Rosa is introduced as the 'motherless child of a sort of cousin of my father's' (*DC*, 353). The very vagueness of her genealogy in addition to her ability to sing 'unearthly' (*DC*, 496) songs contribute to Rosa's aura as 'Other'. Like David, Rosa's temper identifies her as an individual while simultaneously

contributing to her being regarded as an animal - she strikes Steerforth and then throws him off 'with the fury of a wild cat' (*DC*, 496). In fact, Rosa's scar - a symbolic mark of both punishment and individuality - is a barometer revealing the state of her temper which David reads like a narrative. The scar is 'like a mark in invisible ink brought to the fire. [Rosa was] for one moment, in a storm of rage; and the I saw it start forth like the old writing on the wall' (*DC*, 353). Again as with David, Rosa's possession of a temper (individuality) is seen as a deficiency. 'Her temper has been soured, remember, and ought not to be tried' (*DC*, 497). But Rosa's constant self-repressive gesture of her hand on her bosom 'as if to prevent the storm that was raging there, from being loud' (*DC*, 532), both reinforces the image of Rosa as a prisoner and indicates that Rosa has, to a certain extent, internalised and is now reproducing the discipline she has been subject to from Steerforth. 'She gave me the idea of some fierce thing, that was dragging the length of its chain to and fro upon a beaten track, and wearing its heart out' (*DC*, 583). In other words, Rosa efforts are now largely self-imprisoning. David witnesses Rosa's attempts to discipline her heart. 'I saw her look at him[...]I saw her try, more and more faintly, but always angrily, as if she condemned a weakness in herself, to resist the captivating power that he possessed' (*DC*, 495). In an ironic echo to early orphans, Rosa is seen as embracing a devilish nature. 'She has been an angel[...]and has run into the opposite extreme, since, by way of compensation' (*DC*, 496-97). But in disciplining herself Rosa's efforts have become ultimately self-destructive - she has become a living embodiment of her name. 'She took everything, herself included, to a grindstone, and sharpened it. She is an edge-tool, and requires great care in dealing with. She is always dangerous' (*DC*, 497). Ultimately, the effect of this internal disciplinary endeavour is that Rosa feeds a 'wasting fire within her' (*DC*, 350). Rosa Dartle then is a self-tormentor - a forerunner to Miss Wade.

Rosa's potential for danger arises from the fact that not only has she internalised the techniques of discipline but she is also actively reproducing these techniques. Rosa is not a passive observer like David but rather is an active surveyor.

> But what I particularly observed[...]was the close and attentive watch Miss Dartle kept upon me[...]So surely as I looked towards her, did I see that eager visage, with its gaunt black eyes and searching brow, intent on mine or passing suddenly from mine to Steerforth's; or comprehending both of us at once. In this lynx-like scrutiny she was so far from faltering when she saw I observed it, that at such a time she only fixed her piercing look upon me with a more intent expression still. Blameless as I was, and knew that I was, in reference to any wrong[...]I shrunk before her strange eyes, quite unable to endure their hungry lustre (*DC*, 491).

Rosa is also an active interrogator, 'she got everything out of me that she wanted to know' (*DC*, 416). Indeed, Rosa by exercising these techniques gains knowledge of the thoughts and actions of others. Rosa has gained full knowledge of Littimer's character through observation of his actions, but more importantly, his eyes. Ultimately, it is through observation of David's countenance that Rosa gains the knowledge of Steerforth's death.

> From the first moment of her dark eyes resting on me, I saw she knew I was the bearer of evil tidings[...]She withdrew herself a step behind the chair, to keep her own face out of Mrs. Steerforth's observation; and scrutinised me with a piercing gaze that never faltered[...]I met her look quickly; but I had seen Rosa Dartle throw her hands up in the air with vehemence of despair and horror, and then clasp them on her face (*DC*, 868-870).

Once Steerforth is dead, and Rosa, filled with grief, is yet finally free of his power she finds a voice and insists on telling her own narrative and confessing her love for him.

> I *will* speak to her. No power on earth should stop me, while I was standing here! Have I been silent all these years, and shall I not speak now? I loved him better than you ever loved him![...]I could have loved him, and asked no return. If I had been his wife, I could have been the slave of his caprices for a word of love a year. I should have been. Who knows it better than I? You were exacting, proud, punctilious, selfish. My love would have been devoted - would have trod your paltry whimpering under foot![...]I have been a mere disfigured piece of furniture between you both; having no eyes, no ears, no feelings, no remembrances (*DC*, 871-72).

David is able to observe that the scar is not only a barometer of Rosa's temper but of her pain. 'As she still stood looking fixedly at me, a twitching or throbbing, from which I could not dissociate the idea of pain, came into that cruel mark' (*DC*, 493). The narrative of Rosa's pain is then etched on her face - something which embodies the way she has sharpened herself on the grindstone.

However, Rosa has not only applied these internalised disciplinary techniques to herself but, after her liberation from Steerforth's power, she directs these techniques towards other orphans, thus reproducing the same ideological power relations that she was victim of, but this time as the oppressor. Rosa does not only dominate Littimer, but also Little Emily. Through surveillance, Rosa learns of Emily's whereabouts and significantly, Rosa goes to 'look' (*DC*, 785) at Emily. She wants the knowledge, and subsequently the power of surveillance, over Emily. Rosa's interview with Emily is conducted in the terms of a trial with Rosa as judge or confessor demanding 'penance' from Emily for her 'crimes' (*DC*, 787). Indeed, David's visualisation is of the dominance of Rosa's positioning. Rosa is in control of the situation and Emily is kneeling on the floor. As a result of such domination and the workings of her own conscience, Emily, on her knees, then confesses her guilt and her misery. The significance in this scene is not solely Rosa's dominance of Emily, but also David's role. Once again, David is in the role of marginalised observer. In fact, at first he cannot see them - he imagines their positioning - but later he is able to confirm his vision. David is powerless to intercede on this scene, he is powerless to confront Rosa. 'I did not know what to do. Much as I desired to put an end to the interview, I felt that I had no right to present myself; that it was for Mr Peggotty alone to see her and recover her. Would he never come?' (*DC*, 786). David is unable to act as redeemer because he has forfeited his power in relinquishing his Romantic childhood. Thus, David moves to the centre, away from

the margins where Emily is doomed to exist in Australia. There is little more marginal, for Dickens's readership, than Australia - the place where Victorian England also sent its 'convicts'. David, finally, can only act when Rosa tries to strike Emily. But ultimately, Rosa reveals that the knowledge she possesses of Emily's case history is power. Rosa, in the ultimate act of domination, now forcibly marginalises Emily - segregating her from society, making her an outcast from society; re-orphaning her. 'I am resolved, for reasons that I have and hatreds that I entertain, to cast you out, unless you withdraw from my reach' (*DC*, 790-91). It is significant that Emily, now fallen and dominated, loses the ability to tell her narrative - it is left up to Mr Peggotty to tell of her time when her undisciplined heart helped to make her 'a prisoner' (*DC*, 793). David again reveals his impotence in the final debunking of Uriah. This time it is another orphan, Traddles, the professional who possesses the power, arising from the knowledge derived by Micawber's surveillance and investigation, to reveal Uriah's crimes. Again at this confrontation David cannot act nor speak - he is neither interrogator nor liberator: 'Has that Copperfield no tongue?' (*DC*, 827).

David is left with a sense of inadequacy regarding his inability to act - focusing primarily on his inability to discipline his undisciplined heart. Thus, after Dora's death, David starts to reproduce the techniques of discipline on himself. David forces himself into exile - a form of solitary confinement - in order to commune with, and ultimately, discipline himself. 'I left all who were dear to me, and went away[...]I was left alone with my undisciplined heart' (*DC*, 885). In exile David realises the depth of his alienation. 'All I had lost - love, friendship, interest; of all that had been shattered - my first trust, my first affection, the whole airy castle of my life; of all that remained - a ruined blank waste, lying wide around me, unbroken, to the dark horizon' (*DC*, 885-86). David's journey, which anticipates that of Silas, has the elements of a spiritual crisis, 'I roamed from place to place, carrying my burden with me everywhere[...]Some blind reasons that I had for not returning home - reasons then struggling within me, vainly, for more distinct expression - kept me on my pilgrimage' (*DC*, 886). Finally, like Jane, David is restored through communing with Nature.

> The mountain-side[...]I think some long-unwonted sense of beauty and tranquillity, some softening influence awakened by its peace, move faintly in my breast. I remember pausing once, with a kind of sorrow that was not all oppressive, not quite despairing. I remember almost hoping that some better change was possible within me[...]All at once, in this serenity, great Nature spoke to me; and soothed me to lay down my weary head upon the grass, and weep as I had not wept yet' (*DC*, 887).

Like Jane, David finds a maternal comforter in Mother Nature and is able to realise his spiritual potentiality in Nature - even if it is less powerful than Jane's. Ultimately, in the same way that his orphanhood led to David's discovery of his artistic potential, David's orphanhood, his childhood experience, and now his enforced solitary confinement, lead him to identify his role as prophet. 'As the endurance of my childish days had done its part to make me what I was, so greater calamities would nerve me on, to be yet better than I was; and so, as they had taught me, would I teach others' (*DC*, 888). David does not, as Barry Westburg argues, use his autobiography 'to orient himself to both art and love'[156], but rather to continue the disciplining of himself and to teach the acquisition of this discipline to the readers. David's imitation of authority is not 'the necessary preliminary' to becoming his own authority as Westburg argues, because ultimately David does not substitute 'his own judgements for those of the judges'[157] but rather David perpetuates the dominant ideological discourse, the penal narrative. Thus, David, 'in the remembrance of that evening[...]resume[s...]his pen; to work' (*DC*, 889), returns to his art as a vehicle for his role as missionary of discipline to the reader. This is where the narrative, in revealing David's support of and active embracing of discipline, contradicts David Miller's somewhat gnomic assertion that '*David Copperfield* everywhere intimates a dreary pattern in which the subject constitutes himself against discipline by assuming that discipline in his own name'[158]. David never, as Miller asserts, openly identifies himself against discipline - rather he seems to crave it, and willingly becomes an agent of the penal narrative. While writing, David is also disciplining himself internally - attempting to live up to the ideal of Agnes (who interestingly is venerated for the very self-effacing qualities that Jane refuses to embrace).

156Barry Westburg, 'David Sees 'Himself' in the Mirror' *Charles Dickens's* David Copperfield ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), 40.
157*Ibid.*, 35.
158David Miller, *The Novel and the Police* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 220.

> The very years she spoke of, were realities now, for my correction[...]I endeavoured to convert what might have been between myself and Agnes, into a means of making me more self-denying, more resolved, more conscious of myself, and my defects and errors (*DC*, 891).

Ironically, this self-disciplining exercise only serves to reveal to David his inadequacies: David has internalised his early treatment to such an extent that he now considers this inadequacy as a sign of his guilt. David perceives that his apparently unrequited love now acts as a fitting punishment. 'It was right that I should pay the forfeit of my headlong passion. What I reaped, I had sown...I truly disciplined my heart to this' (*DC*, 903). (David's choice of language here evokes *Hard Times* - the novel about utilitarianism - which is divided into three books: Sowing, Reaping, and Garnering). Thus, the power of David's Romantic aesthetic inheritance is nullified by the larger disciplinary endeavours that he has experienced. In Agnes, David finds his child wife matured. 'And O, Agnes, even out of thy true eyes, in the same time, the spirit of my child-wife looked upon me, saying it was well; and winning me, through thee, to tenderest recollections of the Blossom that had withered in its bloom!' (*DC*, 936).

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In conclusion then the figures of Jane, Becky and David all exist as transitional figures in the movement of the perception of identity as aesthetic to ideological. In Jane the Romantic aesthetic inheritance is the strongest: Jane finds power in her marginalised position as she is able to operate a resistance from the margins. In this resistance, Jane identifies her liberty and her autobiography is a testimonial both to this liberty and to her role as missionary preaching liberty. Becky possesses both the power of character of Jane as well as the power derived from the lack of inherent identity. This lack of identity enables Becky to adopt whatever identity is needed to serve her purposes. Yet Becky, in existing as a free floating character, still manages to resist the larger class narrative that seeks to both restrict and repress her. David, however, lacks the inherent power of Jane and Becky. For David, the Romantic aesthetic inheritance is a thing of childhood. Adolescence and adulthood then are the things of discipline and the penal narrative. David's attraction to authority figures, and disastrous Romantic figures (*e.g.*, Steerforth who possesses a charismatic authority), ultimately reveals not only his lack of power but also his ripeness for the penal narrative. David's first

identification of his role as narrator in Salem House with that of Scheherazade (*DC*, 145) reveals his sense of imprisonment which foreshadows the larger power relationship displayed in his autobiographical narrative. His autobiography then becomes a mixture of the evocation of his Romantic aesthetic childhood and his sense of guilt which he sees as resulting from his 'undisciplined heart'. The other orphans - Dora, Emily and Rosa - are all products of the penal narrative. Dora finds her resistance to the ideological construction of her identity in regression. Rosa internalises and ultimately perpetuates the penal narrative on the orphan Emily by forcibly re-orphaning her. Emily, ultimately, becomes a disciplined penitent in exile but cannot be reintegrated back into the Victorian 'family'. The Romantic aesthetic origins and power traced from *Oliver Twist* have effectively died in *David Copperfield*, from this point onward the orphan figure becomes the power bearer and takes responsibility for the reform of his/her own psyche.

Chapter 4 - 'True' Confessions

> As monkeys are said to have the power of speech if they would but use it, and are reported to conceal this faculty in fear of its being turned to their detriment, so to me was ascribed a fund of knowledge which I was supposed criminally and craftily to conceal.[159]
>
> - Lucy Snowe, *Villette*

The novels in this chapter, *Villette* and *Little Dorrit*, mark the final phase in the construction of the penal narrative. In both of the novels, the process of narration is no longer creative. More specifically, the fictional autobiographical narratives and narrative fragments discussed in this chapter no longer serve as a means through which the orphan can construct her individual identity. Instead, the narratives function as the confessions of the criminalised orphan. Fittingly, both novels are set in overtly prison-like settings - Rue Fossette and the Marshalsea. Although Janet Gezari claims that it is *Villette*'s setting which 'registers more powerfully than that of any other nineteenth century English novel what Michel Foucault calls the emergence of modern disciplinary power'[160], *Little Dorrit*'s Panopticon structuring is even more powerful. In addition to the prison patterning, both narratives are set, for extended periods of time, outside of England. This reinforces the orphan's marginalised identity as 'Other' through her experience of religious, linguistic and cultural alienation.

In addition to acting as confessions, all the penal narratives dealt with in this chapter reveal that these orphans, *e.g.*, Lucy Snowe, Arthur Clennam, Miss Wade and Tattycoram, have internalised the disciplinary endeavours to the extent that they are now actively working to imprison themselves. These self-imprisonments take a number of forms ranging from guilt and repression to self-torment and self-punishment. There are linkages between all the orphans in this chapter. Arthur Clennam and Lucy Snowe share a strong perception of being outcasts bereft of both family and nation. Lucy Snowe and Tattycoram both possess strong passions which they endeavour to repress. Lucy Snowe and Miss Wade share self-tormenting

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[159]Charlotte Brontë, *Villette*, eds. Margaret Smith and Herbert Rosengarten (1984; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 444. All further references to this text will be from this edition and will be noted in the thesis in parentheses, denoted by *V*.

[160]Janet Gezari, *Charlotte Brontë and Defensive Conduct: The Author and the Body at Risk* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 146.

tendencies. In addition, the novels both present the institution of the Roman Catholic Church as a disciplinary agent.

> Out of men's afflictions and affections were forged the rivets of their servitude. Poverty was fed and clothed, and sheltered, to bind it by obligation to 'the Church;' orphanage was reared and educated that it might grow up in the fold of 'the Church;' sickness was tended that it might die after the formula and in the ordinance of 'the Church'[...]that they might serve Rome, prove her sanctity, confirm her power, and spread the reign of her tyrant 'Church' (*V*, 526-27).

Here Lucy identifies the Roman Catholic church as actively targeting marginalised groups, *i.e.*, orphans, to encourage their dependence in order both to discipline and to enslave them. As Lucy Snowe's autobiography, *Villette* documents her individual efforts as an orphan to resist the disciplining efforts of the Roman Catholic church. But, *Little Dorrit* puts forward the view, which Foucault shares, that the disciplinary impulse, which was once exclusive to the Roman Catholic church, is now a characteristic of all the state apparatuses.

Another fictional prodigy of Charlotte Brontë, Lucy's direct lineage from Jane Eyre is easily discernible in her fiercely defended individualism which arises both from her aesthetic heritage and from her Protestant ideology. Her awareness of the need to make her own place and her passion for acting link her with Becky Sharpe - although Lucy's awareness, and to a certain extent acceptance, of the restrictions of her allotted social place serve as a sharp contrast to Becky. And like David Copperfield, Lucy Snowe is actively recreating both her identity and her experience of being disciplined in her penal narrative, her autobiography. However, moreso than David's, Lucy's penal narrative reveals that her resistance to external disciplinary endeavours is offset by her extraordinary desire for self-repression and thus self-discipline. Lucy's narrative also reveals then, to what extent she is now fully reproducing these techniques of discipline on herself. For Lucy, the narrative process is no longer one of liberation but of confession. Lucy's narrative illustrates what Gezari characterises as 'the divisive impulses toward accommodation and resistance in[...Lucy's] life and art'.[161] Also, both narratives reveal that the disciplinary impulse is no longer being exerted primarily by individual ideological agents and apparatuses but rather by the repressive state apparatuses. '[In] the system of institutional authority characteristic of mature civilisation, domination

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[161]*Ibid.*, 29.

becomes increasingly impersonal, objective, universal, and also increasingly rational, effective, productive'.[162] This chapter then will trace the new confessional function of the penal narrative through the increasingly pervasive adoption, by the orphans, of the disciplinary discourse. In doing so, this chapter will also trace the last vestiges of the orphan's inherent Romantic identity in the inner battles of Lucy Snowe and Arthur Clennam before this identity becomes totally a social construct; in other words this chapter traces the final stages of the 'political axis of individualization'[163] (that is, where individual difference is tolerated rather than targeted for reform) in orphan fiction before its reversal.

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This first section of the chapter will be an extended study of *Villette*'s Lucy Snowe, in order to determine how Lucy ends up as a 'fettered', 'enchained', 'captive' (*V*, 555). From the beginning of her narrative, Lucy demonstrates the same power of personality as Jane Eyre. Like Jane, Lucy is practical and self-reliant. When she is orphaned Lucy finds a station with Miss Marchmont. When Miss Marchmont dies, Lucy experiences a sense of liberation and independence. 'My inner self moved; my spirit shook its always-fettered wings half loose; I had a sudden feeling as if I, who had never yet truly lived, were at last about to taste life' (*V*, 58). Acting to guarantee this new found independence, Lucy travels to the Continent and secures employment. Once in Rue Fossette, Lucy guards her independence by insisting on her identity as 'Other', namely as Protestant English woman, which emphasises her difference to the other inmates. Lucy emphasises this difference by actively creating her own place - one which is both actual and symbolic. 'I made myself gardener of some tintless flowers that grew between its closely-ranked shrubs; I cleared away the relics of past autumns, choking up a rustic seat at the far end[...]I made this seat mine' (*V*, 133). The evening of the fête, Lucy reinforces her own self-determination, her identity as a woman, and her own creative control in her insistence on dressing herself. 'To be dressed like man did not please, and would not suit me. I had consented to take a man's name and part; as to his dress-*halte là*! No. I would keep my own dress; come what might. M. Paul might storm, might rage: I would keep my own dress. I said so, with a voice as resolute in intent' (*V*, 171). Lucy insists on retaining artistic control. 'I will, monsieur; but it must be arranged in my own way: nobody must meddle; the things must not be forced upon me' (*V*, 171-72). Through the acting of this role Lucy allows her creative impulses to surface. 'Retaining the

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[162]Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization* (New York: Vintage Books, 1959), 80-81.
[163]Michael Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 192.

letter, I recklessly altered the spirit of the *rôle.* Without heart, without interest, I could not play it at all[...]Thus flavoured, I played it with relish' (*V*, 174). The ultimate result of this process of active self-determination is that Lucy is able not only to assert her own uninterpellated individual identity, 'I had not that vocation. I could teach; I could give lessons; but to be either a private governess or a companion was unnatural to me[...]I would deliberately have taken a housemaid's place[...]in peace and independence[...]I was no bright lady's shadow' (*V*, 371),[164] but is also able to resist all efforts to discipline and thus mould her identity. 'I felt, too, an inward courage, warm and resistant[...]with a now welcome force, I realised his entire misapprehension of my character and nature. He wanted always to give me a rôle not mine [*cf.*, Rochester]. Nature and I opposed him.' (*V*, 395). On one hand, this nature is defined in resistance to external constraints. Through this resistance, Lucy finds her own voice to express her own power as an individual. '*I* could not argue[...]but I could talk in my own way[...]I could defend my creed and faith in my own fashion' (*V*, 524). On the other hand, this nature appears to be Lucy's claim to her uninterpellated individual identity, as Mary Jacobus[165] and early feminist critics like Gilbert and Gubar[166] have argued.

Lucy, like Jane before her, has a special spiritual connection with Nature. Lucy is able to decipher the prophetic message of death that Nature sends through the wind: 'Three times in the course of my life, events had taught me that these strange accents in the storm - this restless, hopeless cry - denote a coming state of the atmosphere unpropitious to life' (*V*, 46). Lucy also derives power from Nature's phenomena. 'The Aurora Borealis[...]some new power it seemed to bring. I drew in energy with the keen, low breeze that blew on its path. A bold thought was sent to my mind; my mind was made strong to receive it' (*V*, 53). Lucy shares Jane's Romantic sensibility and her spiritual aura. She also experiences the childhood link with Nature that David Copperfield does: 'A moon was in the sky[...]she and the stars, visible beside her were no strangers where all else was strange: my childhood knew them' (*V*, 134). Like David, and Silas after her, Lucy finds her family in Nature. Ultimately, like Jane, she finds in Nature a nurturing figure which appears as a

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[164]In what appears as paradoxical, Lucy, in a previous section, *does* define herself as a shadow, but it is important to note that what really matters is not the definition but *who* does the defining. Lucy, while resisting the efforts of others to marginalize or to subdue her, reserves the right (and hence the power) to marginalize or to repress herself. Hence, Lucy resists a situation that will forcibly define her as a shadow while continuing to define herself as such.

[165]Mary Jacobus, 'The Buried Letter: Feminism and Romanticism in *Villette*.' Villette: *Contemporary Critical Essays* ed. Pauline Nestor (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 121-40.

[166]Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, 'The Buried Life of Lucy Snowe,' Villette: *Contemporary Critical Essays,* ed. Pauline Nestor (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 42-58.

mystic vision. This figure consoles Lucy in her torment, but unlike Jane's vision does not speak the message of liberation.

> Then, looking up, have I seen in the sky a head amidst circling stars, of which the midmost and the brightest lent a ray sympathetic and attent. A spirit, softer and better than Human Reason, has descended with quiet flight to the waste-bringing all round her a sphere of air borrowed of eternal summer; bringing perfume of flowers which cannot fade[...]my hunger has this good angel appeased with food, sweet and strange, gathered amongst gleaning angels (*V*, 287-88).

Lucy, like Jane, ensures her independence by actively marginalising herself and deriving power from the margins. Repeatedly, she finds consolation in retreating into a world of her own choosing.

> All within doors was the gayest bustle; neither upstairs nor down could a quiet isolated person find rest for the sole of her foot; accordingly for my part, I took refuge in the garden. The whole day did I wander or sit there alone, finding warmth in the sun, shelter among the trees, and a sort of companionship in my own thoughts. I well remember that I exchanged but two sentences that day with any living being: not that I felt solitary; I was glad to be quiet. For a looker-on, it sufficed to pass through the rooms once or twice, observe what changes were being wrought (*V*, 160).

Like David, Lucy's early role is that of observer, but in a more extreme sense. She does not debate the importance of her role in her own autobiography as David does, rather she establishes from the outset by focusing on the town of Bretton, that she intends, not to be the hero of her own life but rather to be the narrative's agent of surveillance. Thus, her endeavours to nullify herself vie with her efforts at self-realisation from the onset.

Although Lucy often refers to herself as a 'looker-on' (*V*, 160), it is apparent from her early childhood that she is more than the passive observer that David is in early life. Rather, Lucy's active role in her observation defines this action as closer to surveillance than observation: 'I did take notice: I watched Polly rest her small elbow on her small knee, her head on her hand; I observed her draw a square-inch or two of pocket-handkerchief[...]I heard her weep' (*V*, 10). Although Lucy claims that 'it was curious to watch her' (*V*, 11), the fact that she derives an intimate knowledge of Polly's character through this watching indicates that she is actually

keeping Polly under surveillance - perhaps for the acquisition of power which would thereby ensure Lucy a place, not in the margins, but in the power structure. Polly lavishes 'her eccentricities regardlessly before me - for whom she professed scarcely the semblance of affection - she never showed my godmother one glimpse of her inner self' (*V*, 38). Lucy offers the diagnosis derived from knowledge obtained through surveillance that Polly has a 'monomaniac tendency' (*V*, 14)[167]. This knowledge empowers Lucy over Polly. 'I roused myself and started up, to check this scene while it was yet within bounds' (*V*, 12). While her childish study of Polly's character offers Lucy a certain power but moreso amusement (*V*, 35), this studying matures during her time as a companion to Miss Marchmont into the role of 'the watcher of suffering' (*V*, 44), as her professional duty to keep Miss Marchmont under surveillance empowers her.

The fact that Lucy pursues this surveillance at such a young age - an age when David is observing but unable to understand what he sees - indicates not only a more active role for Lucy from the outset, but also the fact that she is already reproducing the techniques of discipline in early life. As Lucy's childhood then is not a Romantic one of innocence, but rather is one influenced quite strongly by social constructions of class and place, the Romantic notion of essential identity has effectively disappeared. Lucy's identity then is, more than David's, a social construct. Sally Shuttleworth in her article '*The Surveillance of a Sleepless Eye*: The Constitution of Neurosis in *Villette*' identifies this social process of identity construction as the 'materialisation of the self'[168]. Like Becky Sharpe, Lucy recognises that she 'must only look to[...her]self' (*V*, 101) for her social aspirations - a point which directly contradicts Terry Eagleton's assertion in 'Myths of Power in *Villette*' that Lucy is 'absolve[d] from a charge of self-interested calculation'[169] by Brontë's narrative stratagem. Yet, simultaneously Lucy remains constrained by an imprisoning awareness of her position as orphan and governess. Indeed, Lucy not

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[167]For an very illuminating study of the use of observation made by the medical establishment for the diagnosis of female hysteria and neurosis see both:

> Sally Shuttleworth, '*The Surveillance of a Sleepless Eye*: the Constitution of Neurosis in *Villette*,' Villette: *Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. Pauline Nestor (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 141-162.
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> and
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> Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, 3 vols. (1978; Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1990) 1.

[168]Shuttleworth, 'The Surveillance of the Sleepless Eye,' 158.

[169]Terry Eagleton, 'Myths of Power in *Villette*.' Villette: *Contemporary Critical Essays* ed. Pauline Nestor (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 109.

only accepts her continuing isolation as 'the result of circumstances, the fiat of fate, a part of my life's lot, and[...]a matter about whose origin no question must ever be asked' (*V*, 333), but Lucy displays a slavish adherence to her social place:

> 'I am a teacher,' I [Lucy] said, and was rather glad of the opportunity of saying this. For a little while I had been feeling as if placed in a false position. Mrs Bretton and her son knew my circumstances; but the Count and his daughter did not. They might choose to vary by some shades their hitherto cordial manner towards me, when aware of my grade in society (*V*, 354).

Whereas Jane Eyre was scornful of social constructions that would seek to repress her, Lucy's full internalisation of the significance of her social identity produces an awareness of social inferiority that is constantly displayed in her narrative.

In the Rue Fossette, Lucy embraces an occupation that is fitting to her perceived social situation yet one that allows her to maintain financial independence. The price of this independence however, is continual vigilance: 'These occupations [governess] involve "living-in" and a twenty-four-hour surveillance tantamount to imprisonment'.[170] The Rue Fossette is the embodiment of a working disciplinary apparatus with its layers of constant surveillance. From Madame Beck's entrance into the novel on 'shoes of silence' (*V*, 79) she is identified as a disciplinary agent: a 'first rate surveillante' (*V*, 177). Madame Beck pursues this role the very first night of Lucy's arrival. 'A white figure stood in the room - Madame in her night-dress[...]she studied me long' (*V*, 84). Initially, the Rue Fossette appears as a pyramid of surveillance, with Madame Beck at the pinnacle. Madame Beck then controls her 'staff of spies' (*V*, 90) and actively keeps all inmates under surveillance 'plotting and counter-plotting, spying and receiving the reports of spies all day' (*V*, 89). But the constant surveillance establishes the Rue Fossette as a virtual Panopticon; 'a strange house, where no corner was sacred from intrusion, where not a tear could be shed, nor a thought pondered, but a spy was at hand to note and to divine' (*V*, 290).

Lucy's awareness of being under surveillance is a necessary element of Bentham's concept of the Panopticon. Yet, Lucy's awareness of Madame Beck's actions is a product of her own surveillance of Madame Beck. When Madame Beck enters the dormitory on Lucy's first night, Lucy 'feign[s] sleep' (*V*, 84) in order that

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[170]Kate Millet, 'Sexual Politics in *Villette*.' Villette: *Contemporary Critical Essays*, ed. Pauline Nestor (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 38.

she may ultimately 'follow[...]her with my [Lucy's] eye' in order to determine what Madame Beck is doing. Lucy's own surveillance of Madame Beck gives her knowledge of Madame Beck's actions and character, the possession of which is empowering. It allows Lucy to remain one step ahead of Madame Beck at most times. Lucy concludes that Madame Beck is 'a little Bonaparte' (*V*, 177) - a term which, linking her with the amoral Becky Sharpe, makes the allusion to Madame Beck as a respectable, mature Becky Sharpe. Besides the similarity in the names of Madame Beck and Becky, both characters are conniving, mercenary, and hide their pragmatism under an appearance of morality. In the latter, Madame Beck is even more subtle than Becky. Lucy's power over Madame Beck rests on that fact that Madame Beck is unaware of Lucy's knowledge:

> I stood, in short, fascinated; but it was necessary to make an effort to break this spell: a retreat must be beaten. The searcher might have turned and caught me; there would have been nothing for it then but a scene, and she and I would have had to come all at once, with a sudden clash, to a thorough knowledge of each other: down would have gone conventionalities, away swept disguises, and *I* should have looked into her eyes, and *she* into mine - we should have known that we could work together no more, and parted in this life for ever (*V*, 145).

'Conventionalities' then act as empowering 'disguises' in the same way that Lucy finds the process of acting as an empowering disguise. Lucy gains knowledge of other people and situations through surveillance as well. Even while acting, she keeps Ginevra under surveillance: 'I observed that she once or twice threw a certain marked fondness[...]I followed her eye, her smile, her gesture, and ere long discovered that she had at least singled out a handsome and distinguished aim for her shafts[...]that of Dr John' (*V*, 173). Lucy uses the information garnered from her observation to fuel her creative aspirations. 'There was language in Dr John's look, though I cannot tell what he said; it animated me: I drew out of it a history; I put my idea into the part I performed;[...]Did I pity him, as erst? No, I hardened my heart, rivalled and out-rivalled him. I knew myself but a fop, but where *he* was outcast *I* could please' (*V*, 173-74). Lucy's linkage of the act of observation, empowerment and creativity reveals that now the artist's creative power, and thus by implication her art, is a product of the same techniques as that of discipline. This linkage is further developed in Lucy's observation of Vashti. 'I longed to see a being of whose powers I had heard reports[...]she was a study of such nature as had not encountered my eyes' (*V*, 321). Lucy's observation of Vashti animates her powerful

emotions even further. 'The strong magnetism of genius drew my heart out of its wonted orbit; the sunflower turned from the south to a fierce light, not solar - a rushing, red, cometary light - hot on vision and to sensation' (*V*, 323). Ultimately, Lucy's surveillance empowers her to such an extent that Lucy usurps the 'little Bonaparte' at the pinnacle of surveillance. Lucy becomes so powerful that Madame Beck grants her freedom by leaving Lucy 'alone with[...her] liberty' (*V*, 372).

But if Madame Beck has granted Lucy her freedom, Lucy remains imprisoned in a prison of her own making. From a very young age Lucy has existed in a state of inner imprisonment - she refers to her 'spirit' possessing 'always-fettered wings' (*V*, 58). Indeed, Lucy moreso, even than David Copperfield, has internalised her social discipline at an early age to such an extent that she is now actively disciplining her own self:

> These struggles with the natural character, the strong native bent of the heart, may seem futile and fruitless, but in the end they do good. They tend, however slightly, to give the actions, the conduct, that turn which Reason approves, and which Feeling, perhaps, too often opposes: they certainly make a difference in the general tenor of a life, and enable it to be better regulated, more equable, quieter on the surface (*V*, 224).

In Lucy, as in David Copperfield and to a certain extent in Jane Eyre, this self-discipline takes the form of a battle of reason *versus* feeling. 'My Sisera lay quiet in the tent[...]Jael, the stern woman, sat apart, relenting somewhat over her captive' (*V*, 135). Reason, then, as a type of Puritan self-denial and emotional repression is Lucy's disciplining master - a direct inheritance from David with his 'undisciplined heart'. This also can be read in terms of Charlotte Brontë's own struggle for freedom through discipline. 'That, indeed, is humiliating - to be unable to control one's own thoughts, to be the slave of a regret, of a memory, the slave of a fixed and dominant idea which lords it over the mind'. [171] This battle between reason and feeling is interesting in light of Marcuse's linkage of 'the necessity of repression, and of the suffering derived from it[...as varying] with the maturity of civilisation, with the extent of the achieved rational mastery of nature and of society'.[172] In other words, the larger social processes (seen under the general term of progress in Victorian

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[171]Charlotte Brontë, Letter of November 18, 1845, *The Brontës, Their Lives, Friendships and Correspondence in Four Volumes*, ed. Thomas J. Wise and J. Alexander Symington (New York: Oxford University Press, 1933), II, 69-70.

[172]Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, 80.

times) increasingly gravitate towards a rational model for existence - privileging it over the emotional, the intuitive and the irrational. Thus, Lucy's struggle to repress her emotional nature mirrors the larger cultural movements. Her actions to imprison her inner self are also reflected in her insistence on a marginalised, and thus solitary position within the Rue Fossette: 'I must not complain. I lived in a house full of robust life; I might have had companions, and I chose solitude' (*V*, 155). Indeed, Lucy's move to the Rue Fossette, with its atmosphere of surveillance and control, can be viewed as a voluntary self-imprisonment. When Lucy agrees to act in the play, she admits that 'it was not the crowd I feared, so much as my own voice' (*V*, 173). Lucy's voice then can be read as equivalent to the emotional aspect of her personality which her reason works to suppress. This same voice then is also an expression of her creative abilities which she tries to suppress:

> I acted to please myself. Yet the next day[...]I took a firm resolution never to be drawn into a similar affair. A keen relish for dramatic expression had revealed itself as part of my nature; to cherish and exercise this new-found faculty might gift me with a world of delight, but it would not do for a mere looker-on at life: the strength and longing must be put by; and I put them by, and fastened them in with the lock of a resolution which neither Time nor Temptation has since picked (*V*, 174).

Thus, Lucy reaffirms her identity as looker-on in her own narrative.

In reinforcing her solitude, Lucy's choice to remain at the Rue Fossette for the vacation can be read as voluntary solitary confinement. As in Jane and David's periods of solitary confinement, Lucy's isolation works inwardly as 'miserable longings' begin to strain the 'chords' (*V*, 193) of her heart. The miserable longings develop into a full emotional tempest only equalled by the raging tempest outside. Her nights are tormented - an echo of Jane's tormented nights under the influence of St John Rivers:

> She [sleep] came once, but in anger. Impatient of my importunity she brought with her an avenging dream[...]sufficing to wring my whole frame with unknown anguish; to confer a nameless experience that had the hue, the mien, the terror, the very tone of a visitation from eternity (*V*, 197).

Lucy's psychological torment during her solitary confinement at Vacation time is akin to Jane's time in the Red Room. She shares a nightmare of alienation, 'Amidst

the horrors of that dream I think the worst lay here. Methought the well-loved dead, who had loved *me* well in life, met me elsewhere alienated' (*V*, 197). Also, like Jane's experience, Lucy's confinement is depicted in terms of a gripping religious experience. Indeed, she takes this experience to be the disciplining endeavours of God: 'I did not, in my heart, arraign the mercy or justice of God for this; I concluded it to be a part of his great plan that some must deeply suffer while they live, and I thrilled in the certainty that of this number, I was one' (*V*, 194). Here, she shares a greater affinity with St John Rivers than with Jane Eyre. Instead of fearing death, like Jane does in the Red Room, Lucy, in her isolation, not only perceives death in her association of the beds with coffins, but wishes for death in a desperate act of self-nullification that places her closer to Helen Burns at this moment: 'I almost wished to be covered in with earth and turf' (*V*, 196). Lucy's affinity with Jane Eyre is most strikingly revealed in her ability to detect and interpret supernatural communications through Nature: 'I conceived an electric chord of sympathy[...] a fine chain of mutual understanding, sustaining union through a separation of a hundred leagues - carrying, across mount and hollow, communication by prayer and wish' (*V*, 196). Whereas Jane could not free herself from the Red Room and can only free herself from St John Rivers after hearing Rochester's cry, Lucy, through freeing herself, repeats a pattern of behaviour which involves repeated self-imprisonment followed by struggles to free herself. 'I felt[...]that the trial God had appointed me was gaining its climax, and must now be turned by my own hands[...]that insufferable thought of being no more loved, no more owned, half-yielded to hope of the contrary - I was sure this hope would shine clearer if I got out from under this house-roof, which was crushing as the slab of a tomb' (*V*, 198). What Lucy absorbs now is the final teaching of the solitary confinement - which is that of her unworthiness, of her repressed desire, and of her guilt. Even Charlotte Brontë considered Lucy as both morbid and weak as a result of her continual self-isolation, for in a letter to W.S. Williams, Brontë declares: 'It was no impetus of healthy feeling which urged her to the confessional[...]it was the semi-delirium of solitary grief and sickness'.[173] Lucy seeks now to integrate herself into the family of God - but in order to do this she must acknowledge her guilt in the confessional and agree to suppress her individual will.

As Foucault argues, the desire to confess (or 'the act by which the accused accepted the charge and recognised its truth'[174]) is not liberating but is in fact

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[173]Charlotte Brontë, 'Letter' found in Mrs. Gaskell, *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* (1908; London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1941), 367.

[174]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 15-16.

constraining; Lucy, in turn, does not achieve liberation from confession but paradoxically increases the constraint around her. The temporary liberation that her soul achieves through the confessional and subsequent fainting is soon over, leaving Lucy with an even stronger sense of imprisonment which she expresses in the discourse of discipline and dominance. Lucy now portrays her physical existence as restrictive and imprisoning in her identification of life as imprisonment:

> Where my soul went during that swoon I cannot tell. Whatever she saw, or wherever she travelled in her trance on that strange night, she kept her own secret[...]an angel may have warned her away from heaven's threshold, and, guiding her weeping down, have bound her, once more, all shuddering and unwilling, to that poor frame, cold and wasted, of whose companionship she was grown more than weary (*V*, 207).

Dr. John identifies Lucy's condition as a product of her self-punitive tendencies. 'My [Dr. John's] art halts at the threshold of Hypochondria: she just looks in and sees a chamber of torture' (*V*, 229). After her solitary confinement and subsequent confession Lucy's efforts of self-discipline are intensified. The battle between the two halves of her psyche - Reason and Imagination - is increasingly expressed in the language of warfare and subjugation:

> Reason would *not* let me look up, or smile, or hope: she could not rest unless I were altogether crushed, cowed, broken-in, and broken-down. According to her, I was born only to work for a piece of bread, to await the pains of death, and steadily through all life to despond. Reason might be right; yet no wonder we are glad at times to defy her[...]and give a truant hour to Imagination - *her* soft, bright foe, *our* sweet Help, *our* divine Hope (*V*, 287).

It is very significant that Lucy clearly identifies her relationship to Reason not only in terms of dominance and discipline but in familial terms as well thus, implicating the family as ideological, disciplinary agent. Lucy's identification then of Reason as a cruel mother figure, 'vindictive as a devil' and 'envenomed as a step-mother' who demands 'obedience' (*V*, 287) anticipates the cruel step-mother figures of Mrs. Clennam and Pip's sister. Significantly, this step-mother figure does not embrace Lucy into her family but re- orphans her by making her an outcast. The family is producing orphans: 'Often has Reason turned me out by night, in mid- winter, on cold snow, flinging for sustenance the gnawed bone dogs had forsaken' (*V*, 287).

This familial production of orphans anticipates Arthur Clennam's treatment by Mrs. Clennam. When she is cast out, Imagination comes to Lucy in a vision - in circumstances, atmosphere and language that recall Jane's vision of a spiritual Mother Nature. This vision seeks to incorporate Lucy into the spiritual family of the nurturing Imagination. Even at this level, then, the connection between the artist's imagination and a spiritual power is being made explicitly:

> Then, looking up, have I seen in the sky a head amidst circling stars, of which the midmost and the brightest lent a ray sympathetic and attent. A spirit, softer and better than Human Reason, has descended with quiet flight to the waste - bringing all round her a sphere of air borrowed of eternal summer; bringing perfume of flowers which cannot fade[...]My hunger has this good angel appeased with food, sweet and strange, gathered amongst gleaning angels (*V*, 287-88).

Lucy's renewed efforts at self-discipline are depicted in the language of religious discipline - she has finished her spiritual wanderings in the 'quarter of the Magi' with its 'three towers' representing 'three mystic sages of a dead and dark art' (*V*, 487) and come through her Slough of Despond: 'My mind, calmer and stronger now than last night, made for itself some imperious rules, prohibiting under deadly penalties all weak retrospect of happiness past; commanding a patient journeying through the wilderness of the present, enjoining a reliance on faith[...]hushing the impulse to fond idolatry' (*V*, 289). The link between Lucy's impulse to self-discipline, the confessional, the discourse of religious discipline, and the penal nature of her narrative make explicit the link between the apparatus of the confessional, solitary confinement, internal discipline and Roman Catholicism. Foucault, in his work *Discipline and Punish*, identifies the root of the apparatus of discipline and the disciplining impulse with Roman Catholicism: *Villette* explores this same link. Not only does the Catholic priest feel that it is his 'Christian duty to watch' (*V*, 231), but Lucy identifies continual active surveillance with the 'discipline of Rome'(*V*, 495). The Catholic Madame Beck then becomes the 'Little Jesuit inquisitress' (*V*, 367) participating in the 'Jesuit-system' (*V*, 458). Indeed, in the figure of Monsieur Paul his obsessive tendency to survey can be read as a legacy of his Catholic lineage: 'My rich father was a good Catholic; and he gave me a priest and a Jesuit for a tutor. I retain his lessons; and to what discoveries, grand Dieu! have they not aided me!' (*V*, 456). After Lucy's 'communication in an ear which was human and sentient, yet consecrated' (*V*, 200), she is targeted by the Catholic church as an object of potential discipline. Père Silas recognises Lucy's divided nature as ripe for further religious disciplinary endeavours - such as the convent:

> A mind so tossed can find repose but in the bosom of retreat, and the punctual practice of piety. The world, it is well known, has no satisfaction for that class of natures. Holy men have bidden penitents like you to hasten their path upward by penance, self-denial, and difficult good works (*V*, 200).

Ultimately, Monsieur Paul continues the surveillance that Madame Beck has ceased because he has identified Lucy as being in need of 'so much checking, regulating, and keeping down' (*V*, 455). Indeed, Monsieur Paul has already been keeping Lucy under surveillance in the classroom, peeping through keyholes, reading her letters, rifling through her desk, and watching her at public events. Thus, Monsieur Paul adds another layer of surveillance to the Rue Fossette - apparently usurping Lucy's position at the top of the hierarchy of surveillance. 'When the English teacher came, I saw her, marked her early preference for this ally, noted her taste for seclusion, watched her well' (*V*, 457). However, the fact that Lucy has 'observed' Monsieur Paul 'in public' and thus gained an insight into his character reveals that the power relations are no longer hierarchical but rather a product of enmeshed social relations.

Lucy finds the power of resistance to these disciplinary endeavours in her Protestant individualism. For Lucy, Romanism is the 'sacrifice of self' (*V*, 496) which she denies as vehemently as Jane Eyre denies Evangelicalism. The rewards of the vigilance that Romanism demands is tempting but she maintains that the price of such knowledge is akin to the price paid by Eve for sexual knowledge: 'Monsieur, I tell you every glance you cast from that lattice is a wrong done to the best part of your own nature. To study the human heart thus, is to banquet secretly and sacrilegiously on Eve's apples. I wish you were a Protestant' (*V*, 459). But unlike Jane, part of Lucy's insistence on self-determination, expressed through her resistance to these disciplinary endeavours, is motivated by a desire not only for the power to express herself but also by the power to discipline herself. Indeed, Lucy recognises that she possesses some of the disciplinary traits that she associates with Catholicism.[175] 'I have realised myself in that condition also; passed under discipline, moulded, trained, inoculated' (*V*, 495). So she finds the power of

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[175]Helen Moglen in 'The Romantic Experience as Psychoanalysis' links the seductive nature of Catholicism with the power of Romanticism. In other words, Moglen links Catholicism with 'excesses of feeling[...]there is that in Catholicism to which she [Lucy] profoundly responds - both in the sublimity of nature and in the mysticism of her own soul; feelings which represent spiritual and erotic transcendence: the dual temptations of the romantic experience'. *Charlotte Brontë: The Self Conceived* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1976), 218-19.

resistance in being determined a criminal or a target of discipline by Monsieur Paul, 'he became graciously pliant as soon as I stood in his presence, a conscious and contrite offender' (*V*, 411), and symbolically destroys his power of seeing, and thus surveillance, by accidentally breaking his glasses rendering him 'blind and helpless' (*V*, 412) (direct echo of Rochester's fate). Yet ultimately, Lucy has fully internalised the impulse of discipline - which she displays in her denial and repression through burial of her feelings for Dr. John. Catholicism then is paradoxically associated with Romanticism and what Helen Moglen describes as the 'excesses of emotion'[176], and the desire to repress such emotion through confession.

Lucy's destruction of her letters of emotion and her burial of Dr. John's letters have interesting implications for her act of writing her narrative. Indeed, the fact that Lucy has, to a certain extent, internalised the teaching of the priest and the Catholic church is extremely revealing. Père Silas, the priest, is inextricably linked to surveillance: 'Nor have I [Père Silas] for a day lost sight of you [Lucy], nor for an hour failed to take in you a rooted interest' (*V*, 495). Recalling the Romantic link between the priest and the artist, the fact that Lucy has taken over the priest's task in the form of self-surveillance and self-discipline has far-reaching implications for her penal narrative. In fact, the role of artist and priest is one to which Charlotte Brontë herself subscribed. In a letter to Elizabeth Gaskell on her proposed ending for *Ruth*, Brontë insists that Gaskell 'must follow the impulse of[...her] own inspiration[...]I [Brontë] hold you a stern priestess in these matters'.[177] Although Lucy initially describes the process of writing her narrative as the ultimate product of resisting the disciplining of the Catholic church and therefore as monument to her liberation, ('Had I visited Numéro 3,[...]I might just now, instead of writing this heretic narrative, be counting my beads in the cell of a certain Carmelite convent' {*V*, 201}), it is quite clear that in her relation to her 'heretic' art she feels herself a prisoner in 'bondage' (*V*, 448). Lucy's art then becomes the disciplining master, a 'tyrant' (*V*, 448) demanding of its 'votary' a 'sacrifice' (*V*, 448):

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[176]Helen Moglen, *Charlotte Brontë: The Self Conceived*, 218.
[177]Brontë, 358.

> I, to whom nature had denied the impromptu faculty; who in public, was by nature a cypher; whose time of mental activity, even when alone, was not under the meridian sun; who needed the fresh silence of morning, or the recluse peace of evening, to win from the Creative Impulse one evidence of his presence, one proof of his force; I, with whom that Impulse was the most intractable, the most capricious, the most maddening of master (*V*, 447-48).

Thus, reduced to the role of transcriber of this penal narrative, Lucy no longer possesses the power of creator and by implication, the power of the creative artist is severely reduced. This relationship echoes that between the other artist, Charlotte Brontë and her art. 'I'm just going to write because I cannot help it[...]There is a voice, there is an impulse that wakens up that dormant power which smites torpidity I sometimes think dead'.[178] In addition, Lucy's creative master has demanded that she seclude herself (solitary confinement) in order to do his bidding. Therefore, what was once liberating to the earlier orphan, the creative impulse, is now confining. Lucy's autobiography is not ultimately creating her identity but rather serves as the confessional, her penal narrative.

Lucy, it seems, has a lot to confess and discipline in herself. Rather than solely insisting on her own individual identity, Lucy starts to nullify herself - firstly by emphasising her passivity: 'With my usual base habit of cowardice, I shrunk into my sloth, like a snail into its shell, and alleged incapacity and impracticability as a pretext to escape action' (*V*, 94). She is unceasing in her continual efforts at self-denigration - - insisting on her self as either marginalised or worse, as a void: 'In beholding this diaphanous and snowy mass, I well remember feeling myself to be a mere shadowy spot on a field of light' (*V*, 161). Indeed, Lucy's efforts do not stop at self-denigration but continue into self-repression. 'Just at that moment, the doors of my heart would shake, bolt and bar would yield, Reason would leap in, vigorous and revengeful, snatch the full sheets [of her letters to Dr. John], read, sneer, erase, tear up, re-write, fold, seal, direct, and send a terse, curt missive of a page' (*V*, 317). Ultimately, Lucy begins to see herself as a prisoner: 'I was visited, I was looked after; once a week I was taken out to La Terrasse' (*V*, 317). Initially, it is Dr. John who is the jailer, 'the sun to the shivering jail-bird' (*V*, 309) and Lucy who is not only the jail-bird but also the 'grovelling, groping, monomaniac' (*V*, 308) that she first

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178Charlotte Brontë, Letter in Gaskell's *The Life of Charlotte Brontë*, 360 See also, Moglen, *The Self Conceived.*

accused Polly of being. But later, it is Lucy who actively imprisons herself. Both she and Monsieur Paul have internalised the discourse of discipline so thoroughly that they both actively reproduce it and become its agents. For example, Monsieur Paul's declaration of love is in the discourse of discipline as he declares that Lucy needs 'watching and watching over' (*V*, 455). Ultimately, they remain constricted by the disciplinary apparatus. 'We were under the surveillance of a sleepless eye: Rome watched jealously her son through that mystic lattice at which I had knelt once, and to which M. Emanuel drew night month by month - the sliding panel of the confessional' (*V*, 513). Lucy's penal narrative then becomes her confessional - her confession of her emotional nature and her endeavours to repress this. Lucy joins the ranks of the police not only on the night of the celebration but in her narrative as she is continually spying and eavesdropping. 'The outer ranks of the crowd were made up of citizens, plebeians and police. In this outer rank I took my place' (*V*, 569). The narrative reveals the gradual increasing imprisonment and disciplining of herself until Lucy has marginalised herself from her own narrative. Mary Jacobus claims that the 'novel's real oddity lies in perversely withholding its true subject, Lucy Snowe, by an act of repression which mimics hers'.[179] The penal narrative then, is not only the vehicle through which the reader can observe Lucy's increasingly self-repressive tendencies but also actively represses Lucy through marginalising her from the reader.

Paradoxically, Lucy's marginalisation in her own narrative can be read as a final act of resistance towards surveillance - namely the surveillance of the reader. Lucy 'resists the autobiographical imperative of total and continuous visibility and gives salience to the spaces where a self in hiding escapes empowered knowledge'.[180] As mentioned in the 'Introduction', one of ramifications of the narrative as confessional is how it empowers the reader. Lucy Snowe is now both the author of her confession and the subject of it. The reader is now the body that requires and judges the confession. The act of reading becomes both the act of receiving the penitent's confession and the act of enslaving Lucy. The reader takes over the role of Monsieur Paul, that of surveyor and disciplinary agent, and Lucy becomes the reader's 'monkey' that is referred to in the opening quotation of this chapter. Through Lucy's gradual revelations of her consistent refusal to disclose everything to the reader, *i.e.*, Dr John's identity and the flowers she receives from Monsieur Paul etc., the reader gradually ascribes to Lucy a 'fund of knowledge' which she is concealing. The reader, implicated in the process of surveillance as the

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179Mary Jacobus, '*Villette*'s Buried Letter,' *Essays in Criticism* 28 (1978): 229.
180Gezari, Janet. *Charlotte Brontë and Defensive Conduct*, 170.

all-seeing eye, then demands full disclosure and Lucy's resistance leads to the reader's judgement of Lucy being not only crafty but criminal.

Ultimately, both Lucy and the reader contribute in the final rendering of Lucy to the state where her 'hand was fettered[...her] ear enchained[...her] thoughts were carried off captive' (*V*, 555). Lucy becomes the 'raging yet silent centre of that inward conflict' (*V*, 556). Ultimately, Lucy's refusal to confess reduces her to silence in her own autobiography. Lucy's refusal to entitle her autobiography after herself is not only an act of concealment but an act of effacement. In the end, Lucy writes herself out of her own narrative in the same way that she ultimately writes her emotions out of her own life. Lucy appears to have achieved financial independence by the end of the novel but she achieves this through the full suppression of her emotions. Her final focus on the Catholic characters and Villette is significant in that it gives the last word to the disciplinary apparatus of the Panopticon. Lucy's individualism has been reformed and marginalised - and as such she bids farewell to the reader.

4.1 *Little Dorrit* and the World of the Marshalsea

Like *Villette*, *Little Dorrit* displays the aspects of the Panopticon, initially located in the structure of the Roman Catholic church. Similarly, *Little Dorrit* makes the same linkages between artist and prisoner, and narrative and confession. But in *Little Dorrit*, the Panopticon structure is even more pervasive than in *Villette* as it is now not solely the agent of the Catholic church but rather is the structuring principle of all ideological apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses from the Marshalsea to the Circumlocution Office to society itself. This section then will first consider the presence of the Panopticon in the fabric of society and the extent to which it confines the individual, in the form of Little Dorrit. The next section will then offer a detailed consideration of three self-tormenting orphans - Arthur Clennam, Miss Wade and Tattycoram. In this final section, the focus will move from the individual self-disciplining of Arthur Clennam to Miss Wade's reproduction of the penal narrative in an endeavour to dominate Tattycoram.

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There is a significant parallel between the Marshalsea prison, indeed prisons in general, and the Roman Catholic Church[181]. For example, the prisoners contained in these prisons are very suggestive of religious persona. The novel opens in the Marseilles prison which contains a prisoner named John Baptist. In the Marshalsea, William Dorrit, through his length of stay and his insistence on preserving his own notion of gentility, becomes the Father of the Marshalsea - and the use of the upper case F in Father is significant. It signifies the initial association between Dorrit and a Roman Catholic priest, an association which later will be developed by further allusions to a final association of William Dorrit with the Pope himself[182]. Like the Pope, Dorrit wears a ring (similar to the Papal ring), holds privileged audiences, blesses people out of windows, accepts offerings (testimonials), is venerated by other prisoners, and finally, dies in Rome. William Dorrit is always present at 'the occasions of ceremony, in the observance whereof he was very punctual, and at which times he laid his hand upon the heads of their infants, and blessed those young insolvents with a benignity that was highly edifying'[183]. However, the significance Dickens attributes to the Marshalsea, as Trilling has argued, is larger than that of a Debtor's Prison or of the Catholic Church: the Marshalsea embodies several different societal attitudes and institutions.

Little Dorrit opens in a Marseilles prison the most distinctive quality of which is its dark and damp atmosphere due to the inability of the sun to penetrate its interior[184]. The novel then moves through the quarantine area (another type of prison) to the Marshalsea prison. From the Marshalsea, in whatever form it is discerned, neither the reader nor the characters will escape until the end. William Dorrit's release from the Marshalsea does not bring a resulting sense of freedom, because the prison of the novel's vision extends beyond the walls of the Marshalsea. Dickens meticulously establishes that the prison is a metaphor for society. The introduction to London is reminiscent of the dark, dank atmosphere of the prison. Furthermore, Dickens depicts London in the same language used to describe the prison.

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[181]Dickens's aversion to the Roman Catholic Church is well documented in his *Pictures From Italy*.

[182]I am indebted to F.T. Flahiff for originally pointing this out to me. An allusion to this can be found in his article '"Mysteriously Come Together": Dickens, Chaucer and *Little Dorrit*,' *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 61 (Winter 1991/92): 260.

[183]Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953), 221. All further references will be from this edition and will be noted in the text in parentheses, denoted by *LD*.

[184]Significantly, this is the same qualities that Dickens also attributes to churches.

> Everything was bolted and barred that could by possibility furnish relief to an overworked people. No pictures, no unfamiliar animals, no rare plants or flowers, no natural or artificial wonders of the ancient world - all taboo with that enlightened strictness, that the ugly South Sea gods in the British Museum might have supposed themselves at home again[...]Miles of close wells and pits of houses, where the inhabitants gasped for air, stretched far away towards every point of the compass (*LD*, 28).

The walls of the Marshalsea may 'be down' but the prison taint pervades everywhere.

Actually, the notion that the world may be a prison is introduced in the opening paragraph of the first chapter entitled 'Sun and Shadow'.

> Everything in Marseilles, and about Marseilles, stared at the fervid sky, and had been stared at in return, until a staring habit had become universal there. Strangers were stared out of countenance by staring white houses, staring white walls, staring white streets, staring tracts of arid road, staring hills from which verdure was burnt away' (*LD*, 1).

Characteristic of modern imprisonment is not only confinement, but also surveillance. Through this description the reader finds herself immediately transported to the world of *Villette*: on the Continent moving in a world of 'Sun and Shadow' that evokes strong memories of Lucy Snowe who with her shadowy dress is 'a shadowy spot on a field of light' (*V*, 161). But more specifically, the fact that once again the reader is in a world that is permeated by surveillance transports her back to the world of Rue Fossette. But if this is Rue Fossette, then Rue Fossette has certainly expanded. The surveillance depicted here is not undertaken by Madame Beck, Père Silas, Monsieur Paul or even Lucy Snowe, but rather, the world exists under the surveillance of the sun. By implication then the world exists as a prison, under the surveillance of the sun, which the opening paragraphs depict as a relentless, unblinking eye. The world, in turn, reflects this staring habit until everyone, indeed everything, is watching everyone and everything else constantly. Indeed, as readers we will take an active part in watching everyone as the narrator, the lens through which the reader surveys the action, is no longer within the single persona of Lucy Snowe, but has become the wide-angle lens of the omniscient narrator, through whom we keep the events of the novel under surveillance. Any notion of personal freedom disappears.

In addition to the surveillance of the sun, most of the characters in the novel find themselves under some sort of surveillance. For example, Affrey has a strong sense of being constantly under surveillance by 'them two' (*LD*, 40) - namely Mrs. Clennam and Flintwinch. In conjunction with visual surveillance is the same aural surveillance practised by Monsieur Paul in *Villette* - eavesdropping. Society hails Merdle as the New Messiah on the basis of rumour and gossip - which are more elaborate forms of eavesdropping. Merdle's immense reputation, based on rumour creates a disjunction between the real Merdle and the perceived Merdle, which imprisons Merdle himself. Indeed, as Lionel Trilling has pointed out forty years ago, Dickens portrays Merdle as a prisoner in his own house, under the constant visual surveillance of the Chief Butler, who, in this case, is a glorified turnkey. Whenever Merdle manages to escape the surveillance of the Chief Butler, he proceeds to hold himself by the cuffs - as if he has taken himself into custody. In a sense, Merdle is serving his prison sentence for being a forger and a thief. Unable to bear his confinement, Merdle commits suicide.

Social institutions, as seen in the Marshalsea, are now actively producing 'prisoners'. William Dorrit remains imprisoned even after his release by his will to status[185] which is first manifested in the Marshalsea where Dorrit was careful only to walk on the aristocratic or Pump side, 'for the Father made it a point of his state to be chary of going among his children on the Poor side, except on Sunday mornings, Christmas Days, and other occasions of ceremony' (*LD*, 221). Dorrit's reaction to John Chivery's visit reinforces this awareness of his own status. Instead of accepting the spontaneity of feeling that motivates Chivery's visit, Dorrit instead regards the visit as an insult to his position. Significantly, as Chivery leaves, Dorrit does not hesitate to become a type of warden as he spies on Chivery to ensure that he departs: 'Mr Dorrit was not too proud and honourable to listen at the door that he might ascertain for himself whether John really went straight out, or lingered to have any talk with any one' (*LD*, 634). Thus, the confines of Dorrit's mind replace the actual Marshalsea prison walls. Similar to Mrs. Clennam's mind, Dorrit's mind becomes the criminal, victim, police, judge and will later become, the executioner.[186]

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[185]Trilling applies this term to Blandois in his 'Introduction,' x.

[186]Trilling, 'Introduction,' 284.

If in the figure of Becky, Thackeray furthers the individual power of the orphan Jane to an amoral extreme, then in Little Dorrit Dickens pursues the religious and redeemer aspects of Jane's character - creating, what Hillis Miller describes as a 'human incarnation of divine goodness'[187]. Although Amy Dorrit is not literally orphaned in early childhood like Jane, Oliver or even Pip, she is a symbolic orphan - since birth she is known as the child of the Marshalsea because her father is incapable, owing both to his imprisonment and his psychological state, of acting as a father to her. 'There was no instruction for any of them at home; but she knew well - no one better - that a man so broken as to be the Father of the Marshalsea, could be no father to his own children' (*LD*, 72). Therefore, Little Dorrit can be read as an orphan produced by the SAs, who will work as an agent of the ideology of the family attempting to reinterpellate other outsiders and hence neutralise difference.

In Amy Dorrit we see not only echoes of Jane, but also a direct line of inheritance from Little Nell in *The Old Curiosity Shop*. Amy has some of the power of both Jane and Little Nell, functioning strongly as a redeemer, not only to her future husband (as Jane does), but also to other characters and even the readers at large (as Little Nell does). Also in Amy Dorrit exists the simultaneous embodiment of a Romantic sense of the innocent childhood state (the prefix little in Little Nell and Little Dorrit serves to emphasise their child-like status) and the Victorian ideal of a dutiful, disciplined child.

Arthur Adrian's seminal comment on *The Old Curiosity Shop* applies equally to *Little Dorrit* thus highlighting the shared lineage of Nell, and Amy:

> Materialist man, fumbling and acquisitive, can be redeemed only through love, such pure and unworldly love as that of a child. For Dickens, like Wordsworth, held the romantic notion that children in their innocence are endowed with benevolent insight before their environment taints them.[188]

Part of Little Dorrit's character is strongly linked to the past, to a Romantic notion that only through the child's blessed state, cultivation of it, or contact with it, can one be redeemed:

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[187]J.Hillis Miller, quotation found in Richard Barickman, 'The Spiritual Journey of Amy Dorrit and Arthur Clennam,' *Dickens Studies Annual* 7 (November 1977): 176.

[188]Arthur Adrian, 'Dickens and Inverted Parenthood.' *The Dickensian*, 67 (January 1971): 3.

> And blind Authority, beating with his staff
> The Child that might have led him. (*The Prelude*, III, 640-41).

In the previous chapters, the meaning perceived in this quote would focus on the ability of the child to lead, while in the later chapters, which deal with the later novels, the focus shifts to the reluctance, or the inability of the 'blind Authority' to be lead. What the blind Authority actually signifies can range anywhere from another person to ideological apparatuses. What is important here is that the shift in focus allows the loss of redemptive power to be traced in the blind Authority's increasing hostility to being led. Increasingly, the Romantic solution is no longer viable in a society similar to Marcuse's concept of 'mature civilisation', mentioned earlier in the chapter, that aims to achieve 'rational mastery of nature and of society'.[189] Or as Moglen states, 'the Victorians experienced the full effects of industrialisation. The Romantics simply felt the first waves of instability and reacted to them by attempting to assert the ascendancy of the individual and the primacy of feeling'.[190] But, as has been documented in this study, the individual, and subsequently the 'primacy of feeling', have been disempowered by the drive to rationality and labour performance. The actual historical demands of governing an empire, which required the active self-repression of many individuals, entail the rejection of the Romantic ethos in favour of a rational and disciplinary bureaucracy. The orphan, 'adopted' by the Victorians as a child figure with especial powers and freedoms, is losing its Romantically aesthetic powers in the face of the increasing power of the bureaucracy, necessary for the transmission of ideology and spawned by the empire.

Starting from the scene of Little Dorrit's birth, Dickens explores the Romantic notion of the inherent innocence of the child and the extent of this power of innocence in a Victorian society. The earliest descriptions of Little Dorrit's birth in a fly-laden room delivered by a drunken doctor, establish the atmosphere of corruption surrounding Little Dorrit. Amy's parentage is so commonly associated with the Marshalsea that she is referred to as 'the child of the Marshalsea'(*LD*, 69). This orphan state is highlighted by the fact that her nursing and upbringing fall to the collegians and the turnkey:

189Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, 80.
190Moglen, *The Self Conceived*, 29.

> The baby whose first draught of air had been tinctured with Doctor Haggage's brandy, was handed down among the generations of Collegians like the tradition of their common parent. In the earlier stages of her existence, she was handed down in a literal and prosaic sense; it being almost a part of the entrance footing of every new Collegian to nurse the child who had been born in the college (*LD*, 68).

Like Little Nell then, Amy remains distinct from her surroundings and is different from the other children depicted - even her own siblings. Clennam constantly thinks of Little Dorrit as 'removed from[...]the common and coarse things surrounding her' (*LD*, 100). Amy's uniqueness, like Little Nell, can be traced to her Romantic roots and subsequent possession of an inherent innocence:

> The first half of that space of life was only just accomplished, when her pitiful and plaintive look saw her father a widower. From that time the protection that her wandering eyes had expressed towards him, became embodied in action, and the Child of the Marshalsea took upon herself a new relation towards the Father (*LD*, 71).

The fact that Amy Dorrit, as the Child of the Marshalsea, is the first fictional offspring of an institution[191] emphasises not only the fact that the Institution has actually become a parent, but also the power of the bourgeois ideology which now seeks to produce orphans. The popular orphan fiction of the time reveals the same perception of the Institution as parent as Dickens himself held (Letter to Forster, 15 March 1842 - quoted in Chapter 1).

Amy embraces the self-sacrifice demanded by the same religious ethos which Jane rejects in order to pursue her own self-development. But whereas Jane's inspiration and creativity are inextricably linked to the development of her self, Amy's religious inspiration (which is strongly linked to the same source as artistic inspiration) is inseparable from her self-effacing devotion and sense of duty:

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[191]Although in Dickens's earlier work he refers to the 'Parish' Boy and the 'Workhouse' boy, Little Dorrit is different because she is not only an offspring of the Marshalsea but she remains within the institution for most of her life - in fact, it could be argued that, metaphorically, she never leaves it.

> How much, or how little of the wretched truth it pleased God to make visible to her;[192] lies hidden with many mysteries. It is enough that she was inspired to be something which was not what the rest were, and to be that something, different and laborious, for the sake of the rest. Inspired? Yes. Shall we speak of the inspiration of a poet or priest, and not of the heart impelled by love and self-devotion to the lowliest work in the lowliest way of life (*LD*, 71).

However, Dickens is careful to distinguish Little Dorrit from the garbed Romantic heroines in defining her both as 'unheroic' (like David Copperfield) and as distinctly 'modern':

> There was a classical daughter once - perhaps - who ministered to her father in his prison as her mother ministered to her. Little Dorrit, though of the unheroic modern stock, and mere English, did much more, in comforting her father's wasted heart upon her innocent breast, and turning to it a fountain of love and fidelity that never ran dry or waned, through all his years of famine (*LD*, 229).

The classical daughter Dickens refers to is Euphrasia, the mythical daughter of King Evander of Syracuse, whom she feed when he was in prison with the milk of her own breasts. Dickens then combines the classical (pagan) allusion with a religious one by likening Little Dorrit's inspiration to that of a priest or poet's whose inspiration comes from God. Thus, Little Dorrit's devotion becomes religious in nature. In fact, the whole ethos surrounding Little Dorrit, in the physical form of the Marshalsea prison, contributes to the overall religious atmosphere and the appropriation of both religious and classical myth by the ideology of the family.

Significantly, in the parallel developed between the Church and prison, it is useful to remember that Little Dorrit is the child of the Marshalsea and thus, by allusion, the daughter of the Church. Little Dorrit can then be read as a type of Christ figure, or at the very least, a Saint (she is known as Little Mother - perhaps Mary?) who displays selfless virtue and exhibits love to all. Throughout her life, Little Dorrit, like Little Nell, remains one of the Church's 'curiosities' for whom the

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[192]One explanation as to why God would inspire a child, according to John Carey is that, 'plainly it was important to the Victorians to believe that God still showed himself to someone, and children, with their legendary purity, seemed the obvious candidates'. *The Violent Effigy: A Study of Dickens' Imagination* (Faber and Faber: London, 1973), 139.

Marshalsea becomes a shrine (Dickens refers to it as an 'Insolvent shrine') to which people pilgrim to seek the blessing , not of the Father but of the Little Mother:

> In her joy and gratitude she kissed his hand.
> 'I don't like that my dear,' said Mr. Meagles. 'It goes against my feeling of what's right, that *you* should do homage to *me* - at the Marshalsea Gate' (*LD*, 813-14).

Again like Little Nell, Little Dorrit and her deeds are quietly venerated and posited as an ideal to attain:

> You see that young lady who was here just now - that little quiet, fragile figure passing along there, Tatty? Look. The people stand out of the way to let her go by. The men - see the poor, shabby fellows - pull of their hats to her quite politely, and now she glides in at that doorway[...]she was born here, and lived here many years. I can't breathe here. A doleful place to be born and bred in, Tattycoram?[...]Yet I have heard tell, Tattycoram, that her young life has been one of active resignation, goodness, and noble service (*LD*, 812).

Little Dorrit is able to redeem others through her ability to restore partial freedom, by sharing her love and her life, to all those with whom she has contact. Little Dorrit establishes Fanny outside the prison; through Little Dorrit's association with Clennam, Tip is freed; and most importantly, Little Dorrit restores Clennam himself to freedom. This self-effacing love is the message of the New Testament and is also the method of Christ, who gives his life so that others may live.

However, Little Dorrit lacks the absolute power of Jane or even the qualified power of Becky. Despite her selfless devotion to her father, 'She spoke of nothing but him, thought of nothing but him. Kneeling down and pouring out her thankfulness with uplifted hands, her thanks were for her father' (*LD*, 416), Little Dorrit is unable to redeem her father from his materialistic and social pretensions. She is unable to cleanse William Dorrit of the prison taint of his own psychological habits, (even though the discovery of William Dorrit's fortune, which results in his freedom, is discovered primarily through an interest in Little Dorrit). Instead, Dorrit casts off Amy in his new-found wealth, thus marginalising Little Dorrit's power and leaving her in passive quiet endurance by his side before his death.

In fact, being the 'child of the Marshalsea' has another legacy. Little Dorrit's continuous observation of prison life, quoted above, instructs her in the notion of

duty that will become Little Dorrit's own prison. Ultimately, Little Dorrit remains constrained by the self-effacing demands of this duty. Ironically, this duty is also now inextricably linked to art as Dickens has made explicit that both arise from the same inspiration. Thus, what was once the vehicle for liberation (art) is now closely linked to the vehicle for self-denial and imprisonment (duty). This reflects Dickens's own view that English art in general lacked fire, purpose and original character:

> It is of no use disguising the fact that what we know to be wanting in the men is wanting in their works - character, fire, purpose, and the power of using the vehicle and the model as mere means to an end. There is a horrid respectability about most of the best of them - a little, finite, systematic routine in them, strangely expressive to me of the state of England itself[...]Don't think it a part of my despondency about public affairs, and my fear that our national glory is on the decline, when I say that mere form and conventionalities usurp, in English art, as in English government and social relations, the place of living force and truth.[193]

Little Dorrit refuses to consider the pursuit of her individual happiness with Clennam while her father remains alive. After her father's death, Amy immediately embraces the yoke of duty to Arthur, as saviour and as wife. To a certain extent then, Little Dorrit's individual identity disappears under the weight of the demands of duty, associated religious allusion and her own *penal narrative*. *Like Nell*, Little Dorrit remains imprisoned (albeit self-imprisoned) as an allegorical figure.

By the end of the novel her individual identity remains undeveloped, although she functions as a saviour to Arthur Clennam:

> Looking back upon his own poor story, she was its vanishing point. Everything in its perspective led to her innocent figure. He had travelled thousands of miles towards it; previous unquiet hopes and doubts had worked themselves out before it; it was the centre of the interest of his life; it was the termination of everything that was good and pleasant in it; beyond there was nothing but mere waste and darkened sky (*LD*, 733).

Their relationship, which has very spiritual overtones, recalls the relationship between Jane and Rochester. Just as Jane nurses Rochester, Little Dorrit not only

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[193]Charles Dickens, Letter to Forster, October 1855, *Nonesuch Edition of* The Letters, ed. W. Dexter, 3 vols. 1938. II: 700.

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nurses Arthur back to physical health, but helps to redeem him from his spiritual angst. There is a significant parallel between Rochester regaining his partial sight and Clennam being released from prison - both of which occur as a direct result of the belief that Jane and Amy represent. Both Jane and Amy's marriages can be seen as consummating 'a spiritual rather than an erotic development[...which] is sanctified by Christian symbolism'[194]. *Jane Eyre* and *Little Dorrit* incorporate the Romantic view of nature as a spiritual force. Both the main orphan figures are firmly linked - either physically through setting in Jane's case, or metaphorically through language in Little Dorrit's case with this spiritualism. In Arthur's spiritual development, Little Dorrit actually becomes transformed into both the symbolic heavenly light of the Saviour and the voice of Truth:

> Yet Clennam, listening to the voice as it read to him, heard in it all that great Nature was doing, heard in it all the soothing songs she sings to man. At no mother's knee but hers had he ever dwelt in his youth on hopeful promises, on playful fancies, on the harvests of tenderness and humility that lie hidden in the early-fostered seeds of the imagination; on the oaks of retreat from blighting winds, that have the germs of their strong roots in nursery acorns. But, in the tones of the voice that read to him, there were memories of an old feeling of such things, and echoes of every merciful and loving whisper that had ever stolen to him in his life.
>
> When the voice stopp'd, he put his hand over his eyes, murmuring that the light was strong upon them.
>
> Little Dorrit put the book by (*LD*, 815).

Hence Little Dorrit's own interpellation consists of developing from a child of the Marshalsea, to Little Mother, to orphan, to Mother Nature, and finally to Saviour.

Throughout the novel, Little Dorrit exists as the true light (*cf.* title page reprinted here). Little Dorrit derives a certain amount of personal freedom by remaining outside the dictates of Society however, Little Dorrit does not have the mutability in the upper classes of society that Becky displays. In fact, the newly gained freedom and social acceptance of her family serves to alienate Little Dorrit. Little Dorrit cannot adopt a cultivated surface, such as society demands. Most importantly, in leaving the Marshalsea, Little Dorrit both loses her place and is no longer free to serve her father. Little Dorrit was defined by her duty. Now it is Little Dorrit who is internalising the effects of her imprisonment and writing letters (her

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[194]Barickman, 'The Spiritual Journey of Amy Dorrit and Arthur Clennam ,' *Dickens Studies Annual*, 7 (November 1977): 163.

penal narratives) to Arthur which act as confessions - but more of this later. The power of the redemptive orphan figure, Little Dorrit, is waning compared to the increasing power of ideological state apparatuses, as signified by the Marshalsea. Although Little Dorrit assumes a new place and a new duty with Arthur in the Marshalsea, and by burning the papers Little Dorrit ensures Clennam's mental freedom, she cannot free herself. In fact, through her observation of the Marshalsea, Little Dorrit has internalised the prison taint. Significantly, her observation of the prison bars brands these bars on her eyes, causing her actually to see the prison bars everywhere she looks:

> Many combinations did those spikes upon the wall assume, many light shapes did the strong iron weave itself into, many golden touches fell upon the rust, while Little Dorrit sat there musing. New zig-zags sprung into the cruel pattern sometimes, when she saw it through a burst of tears; but beautiful or hardened still, always over it and under it and through it, she was fain to look in her solitude, seeing everything with that ineffaceable brand (*LD*, 291).

In fact, Little Dorrit continues, even after she leaves the Marshalsea to perceive everything with the prison brand:

> It appeared on the whole , to Little Dorrit herself, that this same society in which they lived, greatly resembled a superior sort of Marshalsea. Numbers of people seemed to come abroad, pretty much as people had come into the prison; through debt, through idleness, relationship, curiosity, and general unfitness for getting on at home. They were brought into these foreign towns in the custody of couriers and local followers, just as the debtors had been brought into the prison. They prowled about the churches and picture-galleries, much in the old, dreary, prison-yard manner. They were usually going away again tomorrow or next week, and rarely knew their own minds, and seldom did what they said they would do, or went where they said they would go: in all this again, very like the prison debtors. They paid high for poor accommodation, and disparaged a place while they pretended to like it: which was exactly the Marshalsea custom. They were envied when they went away, by people left behind feigning not to want to go: and that again was the Marshalsea habit invariably. A certain set of words and phrases, as much belonging to tourists as the College and the Snuggery belonged to the jail, was always in their mouths. They had precisely the same incapacity for settling down to anything, as the prisoners used to have; they rather

> deteriorated one another, as the prisoners used to do; and they wore untidy dresses, and fell into a slouching way of life: still, always like the people in the Marshalsea (*LD*, 511).

Although here Dickens is using Little Dorrit to put forward his own vision of a certain specific level of society (Society), simultaneously the quotation reveals that Little Dorrit's own vision is permeated by the prison taint - everywhere she looks she sees the Marshalsea, hence, everywhere she goes she remains imprisoned. Little Dorrit remains imprisoned because she is inspired in that particular class; she is not free to experience other social levels. In what Dickens denotes as Society (with an upper case 'S') all is a form of conventionality, the nature of which is ultimately imprisoning. But elsewhere in the society which Dickens denotes with a lower case 's', there is a sense of community or extended family. For example, Bleeding Heart Yard is a part of society that is freer - more happy-go-lucky. Thus, within her class and level of society Little Dorrit has a redemptive power and an element of personal freedom, while outside that class she has no place and hence, is marginalised.

4.2 The Histories Of Three Self-Tormentors

In this section I will argue that ultimately in *Little Dorrit*, as discussed in the Introduction of the thesis, the orphan and the criminal occupy the same margins and are the targets of the same penal narrative. The criminal and the orphan are both alienated figures: the criminal, as a punishment, is removed from society (marginalised), while the orphan is born in a state that is outside society, having no family, and therefore no social place, she has the same discursive terms applied to them. Thus, the criminal and the orphan both become targets for disciplinary endeavours. These disciplinary endeavours seek to reform these alienated figures - suppressing their individuality by forcing them to conform to a newly created set of norms. I will try to determine the extent of the influence of these disciplinary endeavours on three orphan figures in the novel - Arthur Clennam, Miss Wade and Tattycoram. I will also briefly consider Estella from Dickens's *Great Expectations* in conjunction with Miss Wade. Then I will trace how these orphans, like William Dorrit, actively begin to reproduce these techniques of domination. In fact, not only do these orphans reproduce the dominant discourse, but in Miss Wade's case she actually begins to apply the standards of normalisation to another orphan figure, Tattycoram, who falls outside the now dominant group of normalised orphan figures. Ultimately then, I am tracing a process of double marginalisation, where the

orphan is not only dominated but becomes the jailer of another orphan figure. In other words, the orphan under surveillance takes responsibility for the continuation of reform in her own psyche and becomes the agent of the bourgeois ideology.

As seen in the case of Lucy Snowe, surveillance, and the subsequent process of internalisation to which it gives rise, has tremendous ramifications for the notions of the production of truth, the confession, the fictional autobiographical narrative (fragments of which I will deal with in this section) - all of which compose the penal narrative. Crucially, the Panopticon and the associated technology of discipline give rise to power, which in turn produces both reality and truth. With the mind becoming the 'surface inscription for power with semiology as its tool'[195], or in other words the site for the imposition of power, the carceral objects of disciplining and conformity are complete when the effects are internalised and actively reproduced. The final proof of the active reproduction of the internalisation of the dominant discourse is not only in the idea of keeping oneself under surveillance, but in the idea of confessing of a 'truth' - which is actually a perpetuation of bourgeois ideology. Both of these points - the idea that one keeps oneself under surveillance and that one confesses the 'truth' of one's nature - have important ramifications for the concept of narrative. The requirement to confess the truth has become a way of engulfing them in the discourse. The penal narrative ultimately becomes the external result of the process of having kept oneself under surveillance.

The direct relevance of this to the narrative impulse is perhaps obvious. The process that was once empowering - the ability to recreate identity - now becomes the final stage in the absorption and active reproduction of bourgeois ideology. The fictional autobiographical narrative is now not only the product of self-surveillance, but is a form of psychological confession (a shift away from the spiritual emphasis of confession in earlier literature, yet simultaneously keeping some of the terms of the spiritual confession). The orphan's identity therefore becomes a construct of the very society within which, as an orphan, s/he is marginalised. This identity then becomes a matter of ideological control.

As argued with *Villette*, the crucial significance of the fictional autobiography as confession is its relationship to the reader and how it ultimately empowers the reader. This will become especially relevant in the relationships between Miss Wade and Arthur, and between Little Dorrit and Arthur. Both women empower

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[195]Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 102.

Arthur by giving him their narratives. The reader, (in this case Arthur Clennam and ourselves) becomes the authority who requires and judges the confession. In fact, discourse in the end serves to support the accumulation of knowledge which is then used for the discipline and suppression of the individual. 'Our society is one not of spectacle, but of surveillance;[...]the circuits of communication are the supports of an accumulation and a centralization of knowledge'.[196]

In *Dombey and Son*, Dickens wrote, 'Not an orphan in this wide world can be so deserted as the child who is an outcast from a living parent's love'[197]. Arthur Clennam is one of Dickens's orphans, albeit slightly older, whose father was an orphan (*LD*, 772). The knowledge Arthur possesses is not specifically that of his orphanhood, but rather of his alienation and his guilt. Arthur's childhood training in discipline and deprivation was instilled so thoroughly that it now shapes the language of Arthur's memory (in a direct echo of David Copperfield's Sundays), which Dickens describes as 'The sleepy Sunday of his boyhood, when, like a military deserter, he was marched to chapel by a piquet of teachers three times a day, morally handcuffed to another boy' (*LD*, 29). For Arthur, his childhood experience was in fact his 'days of punishment' (*LD*, 33), which involved not only emotional deprivation and alienation, but also repeated solitary confinement in 'the old dark closet[...]of which he had been many a time the sole contents' (*LD*, 33). The result of this childhood is, as Arthur states in his autobiographical penal narrative fragment, that he has 'no will' (hence not only individual but also legitimate familial identity) - his has been 'broken, not bent; heavily ironed with an object[...]which was never mine; shipped away to the other end of the world[...]and exiled there[...]Will, purpose, hope? All those lights were extinguished before I could sound the words' (*LD*, 20). The use of the term 'ironed' simultaneously refers to the discipline to which Arthur's will was subjected and identifies him as a criminal, rather like Magwitch, in leg irons. Arthur's exile (an extreme form of solitary confinement) not only robs him of his place in his society but also his identity thus making him 'a waif and a stray everywhere' (*LD*, 20) - an identity which is collectively that of all the orphan figures in Victorian fiction.

On one hand, although Arthur claims that the 'fierce dark teaching of his childhood had never sunk into his heart' (*LD*, 319), it is apparent that Arthur has internalised the punitive discourse of his childhood and now manifests it in his perpetual feeling of guilt. Arthur frequently thinks in the discourses both of guilt

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[196]N.H. Julius, *Leçons sur les prisons*, I, 1831. See also, Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 217.
[197]Charles Dickens, *Dombey and Son* ed. Alan Horsman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), 337.

and of criminality. Arthur thinks that there must be 'someone with an unsatisfied claim on his justice' (*LD*, 187); that he must 'atone' (*LD*, 155) for the 'half-hidden shadow in his own breast' (*LD*, 658). In fact the first question that Arthur asks of Pancks when Pancks reveals Dorrit's fortune is if it 'implicates anyone' (*LD*, 387). Eventually, Arthur's torturing sense of guilt metamorphoses his portrayal into that of a criminal:

> As though a criminal should be chained in a stationary boat on a deep clear river, condemned, always to see the body of the fellow-creature he had drowned lying at the bottom, immovable, and unchangeable[...]so Arthur, below the shifting current of transparent thoughts and fancies[...]saw, steady and dark, and not to be stirred from its place, the one subject that he endeavoured with all his might to rid himself of, and that he could not fly from (*LD*, 679).

Arthur's choice of Little Dorrit as a focus for this sense of guilt allows him to act - and his actions are revealing. In order to find out the 'truth' about Little Dorrit's history, Arthur automatically begins to reproduce the techniques of domination. Arthur discovers Little Dorrit's home by keeping her under surveillance by 'observ[ing her] at a distance' (*LD*, 78). Arthur will repeat this surveillance once again at the Meagles's to gain knowledge of Tattycoram. Arthur observes Tattycoram's eavesdropping and her subsequent rising temper 'by the reflection of the mirror'. Arthur watches Tattycoram 'stop in passing outside the door, listen to what was going on, and pass away with an angry and contemptuous frown upon her face that changed its beauty into ugliness' (*LD*, 194). Once Arthur has followed Little Dorrit to the Marshalsea, he then acts as 'an interrogator' (*LD*, 80) first towards Frederick Dorrit and then towards Little Dorrit herself (*LD*, 96) in order to determine the truth (her case history). Gaining the full knowledge of Little Dorrit's case history empowers Arthur. Yet at the same time, Arthur's entrance into the prison forces him to conform to new codes and to keep secrets. 'If you keep within our bounds, you cannot well be wrong' (*LD*, 81).

Arthur then repeats this role of interrogator at the Circumlocution Office by his insistence that he 'want[s] to know' (*LD*, 113). Arthur's insistence that he 'want[s] to know' gains him the criminal status within the Circumlocution Office that his sense of guilt merits, as he is ushered into the Circumlocution Office's waiting rooms 'much as a pickpocket might be shown into a police-office' (*LD*, 517).

On the other hand, Arthur's conscious devotion of himself to 'the storming of the Circumlocution Office' (*LD*, 113-14) is not the language of discipline but that of freedom - recalling the language of the French Revolution and the storming of the Bastille. The analogy between the Circumlocution Office and the Bastille is important in that the Circumlocution Office not only functions as the prison of old social order, with its Barnacles and Stiltstockings, but more importantly serves to repress the creative mind. Arthur by becoming the stormer of the Bastille by analogy becomes, momentarily at least, the liberator of the individual by expressing his individual will - he 'want[s] to know'.

Obviously this contradicts Arthur's initial assertions that he has no will. This will plays on its many possibilities of signification: Arthur in lacking a legal will hence, lacks any legitimacy in the familial ideology; and Arthur lacks the will to self-preservation. In fact, Arthur is a curious mixture of his Romantic inheritance and his socially constructed identity. On one hand, Arthur's attempts to nullify his self ('Nobody's Weakness', 'Nobody's Rival', 'Nobody's State of Mind') seek to undercut his will through active self-denial and repression. On the other hand, the 'dark teaching of his childhood', has not been able to eradicate his inherent sense of self which he manifests in his 'unreasonable temper' (*LD*, 546): 'He was a dreamer in such wise, because he was a man who had, deep-rooted in his nature, a belief in all the gentle and good things in his life had been without' (*LD*, 165). Arthur's inherent Romantic individualism empowers him to act, superficially at least, like Little Dorrit as an agent of freedom in the novel. Arthur manages, directly and indirectly, to bring about the release of most of the prisoners in the novel. Arthur pays Tip's debts thus bringing about his release; Arthur hires Pancks to uncover the truth about Dorrit's case which brings about his release; and significantly, it is Arthur who carries Little Dorrit out of the Marshalsea.

While Clennam actively works to 'free' others he is working just as actively to confine his 'criminal will' and thus to further the self-nullifying process, the penal narrative, by bringing about his own imprisonment. Arthur's imprisonment represents both the physical manifestation of his self-imprisoning endeavours and the final stage of his process of inner reform - a reform started initially in the discipline of his childhood, but now continued by Arthur himself. His reckless speculation which almost ruins Doyce (the artist/individual) finally objectifies Clennam's sense of guilt. He then confesses this guilt and repents: 'I must work out as much of my fault - or crime - as is susceptible of being worked out, in the rest of my days' (*LD*, 713). Once in prison Arthur insists on a self-imposed solitary

confinement which facilitates his process of self-examination resulting in his becoming 'afraid of himself' (*LD*, 735) (in a way similar to Tattycoram's fear of Miss Wade whom she sees as akin to her own 'malice' {*LD*, 26}). Arthur's imprisonment immediately nullifies his power of liberation: 'He had been trying to read and had not been able to release even the imaginary people of the book from the Marshalsea' (*LD*, 735). Then his imprisonment destroys any sense of self that he still possesses leaving him feeling 'helpless', 'miserable' and 'fallen' - on the verge, in fact, of a spiritual crisis (or in Foucault's terms a spiritual 'conversion'). Arthur becomes a 'broken prisoner' (*LD*, 757) in the final stage of a reformation process that first broke his will. However, through communing both with himself and the idea of Little Dorrit in solitary confinement (*LD*, 740-41), Arthur completes his internal process of reform. In Little Dorrit, Arthur finds his ultimate nullification of self; he finds his 'vanishing point' (*LD*, 733). Arthur's reform is expressed both in his physical change (*LD*, 756) and 'the change in his perception' (*LD*, 757). Once Arthur's internal process of reformation is complete the papers are burnt an act which symbolises the burning of his guilt (*LD*, 826).

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Another orphan, who actually has a fragment entitled 'The History of a Self-Tormentor' is Miss Wade. When Miss Wade gives Arthur Clennam 'something I have written and put by for your perusal' (*LD*, 660), she is not only empowering herself through narrative but she is also establishing Arthur as an authority figure - an action later repeated by Little Dorrit. Despite Miss Wade's disclaimer that she 'set[s] no value on [her narrative]', she not only feels 'inclined to tell' her narrative to Arthur but, crucially, she asks permission to give it to Arthur, 'Shall I give you something[...]or shall I hold my hand?'(*LD*, 660). Miss Wade feels a need to explain herself (or her hatred) to Arthur, whom she holds both as a figure of authority - disregarding Arthur's claim that he has 'no authority or influence' (*LD*, 660) - and a figure of kind because there exists a kinship of marginalisation between Arthur and Miss Wade, arising from their orphanhood. Thus, they share the same temper - Arthur's is an 'unreasonable temper' (*LD*, 546), while Miss Wade's is a 'violent' temper (*LD*, 328) full of 'anger and ill-blood'. If Little Dorrit shares a genealogy with Little Nell and Jane Eyre, then Miss Wade's shares a genealogy with Rosa Dartle and with Bertha Mason.

Miss Wade's penal narrative, 'The History of a Self-Tormentor', reveals the effect of the internalisation of this temper and orphanhood. Miss Wade's narrative is

her case history - the language of which is the discourse of discipline. From an early age Miss Wade has 'detected'(*LD*, 663) things about herself and the people around her - in fact, she first subjected herself to the same microscopic examination to which she later subjects Tattycoram. Miss Wade's revelation of the care with which she has 'studied' (*LD*, 659) herself and people about her implies the compilation of her case history. This observation then is a method of gaining both knowledge and power over an individual by learning their true nature. This is a perverse extension of De Cerjat's *Knowledge is Power* that Dickens read in 1854. Miss Wade's self-scrutiny finds an immediate cause for her sense of marginalisation: the patronage she detects is a direct result of her orphanhood. 'There was no other orphan among us; and I perceived[...]that they conciliated me in an insolent pity, and in a sense of superiority' (*LD*, 663). Miss Wade repeatedly 'tries' (*LD*, 663) her hypothesis and interprets the results as supporting her conclusion. The additional discovery that she does not, in fact, have any living relations - that she is a true orphan - is knowledge that reinforces both her feeling of alienation and her determination to alienate herself: 'I carried the light of that information both into my past and into my future' (*LD*, 665).

Miss Wade is actively alienated by her orphan identity as outsider and as 'Other', 'I saw, in the children's shrinking away, a vague impression that I was not like other people'(*LD*, 667). Later Mr. Meagles reinforces this 'Otherness', 'you were a mystery to all of us, and had nothing in common with any of us[...]I don't know what, but you don't hide, can't hide, what a dark spirit you have' (*LD*, 329-30). But Miss Wade also actively emphasises this 'Otherness' by reinforcing her alienation. Our initial introduction to Miss Wade establishes her as 'a handsome young Englishwoman, travelling quite alone, who had a proud observant face, and had either withdrawn herself from the rest or been avoided by the rest - nobody, herself excepted perhaps, could have decided which' (*LD*, 22). Miss Wade defines her individual independence by refusing all endeavours that she feels are patronising in nature. 'These disappointments of her patronage were a sharp retort, and made me feel independent' (*LD*, 665). Miss Wade's entire narrative is a continuous assertion of her independence through the rejection of patronage which always ultimately results in her departure and consequently her alienation.

Miss Wade's account of her experience as 'correcting...[her] belief in many respects' (*LD*, 23) unknowingly describes both an Althusserian process of interpellation and a Foucauldian process of internal reformation. In a novel dominated by the metaphor of a prison, it is not coincidental that Dickens takes the

opportunity to depict Miss Wade in the shadow - which is her internal prison. 'The solitary young lady[...]silently withdrew to a remote corner of the great room, where she sat[...]seeming to watch the reflection of the water, as it made a silver quivering on the bars of the lattice' (*LD*, 23). By showing that Miss Wade is a self-imprisoned figure Dickens reveals the extent to which Miss Wade has internalised her sense of oppression - her orphanhood has become her prison. So Miss Wade's declaration that 'If I had been shut up in any place to pine and suffer, I should always hate that place and wish to burn it down, or raze it to the ground' (*LD*, 23) actually signifies to the reader what she is doing to herself. Miss Wade is 'shut up' - in a form of self-imprisonment and self-torment - and all her destructive efforts are ultimately directed towards herself, in an effort to 'burn' herself down. Miss Wade is an extreme form of Rosa Dartle who had ground herself on the grindstone. Miss Wade then is 'devouring her own heart' (*LD*, 656). In the same way, Bertha Mason ultimately devours her own heart and mind - which results in her burning down her prison (Thornfield).

This has special relevance for Miss Wade's treatment of Tattycoram, in whom Miss Wade discovers 'a singular likeness' (*LD*, 671). Mr. Meagles, for once, displays true perception in his warning, 'I warn her against you, and I warn you against yourself' (*LD*, 330). Miss Wade's meaning is very Foucauldian when she asks of Tattycoram 'Is that your truth to me?' (*LD*, 661). The truth Miss Wade refers to is, of course, one of her own construction which has arisen from her experience. Miss Wade sees herself as Tattycoram's liberator but in reality she is another of Tattycoram's jailers. In Tattycoram, Miss Wade simultaneously sees both herself and a figure to be reformed and dominated. The reader is left in no doubt about the power relationship when Miss Wade likens Tattycoram to 'a spaniel' (*LD*, 661). The relationship between Miss Wade and Tattycoram then, is one in which Miss Wade seeks to reproduce the external and internal oppression and alienation that she has experienced. In other words, having internalised the oppression Miss Wade now seeks to actively reproduce it through the interpellation and hence domination of another orphan figure.

Indeed, in this novel structured on the notion of the Panopticon - with its emphasis on surveillance, confession and reform - Miss Wade uses these same techniques of domination to gain power over Tattycoram. By observing Tattycoram, or in other words by keeping Tattycoram under surveillance, Miss Wade gains the knowledge of Tattycoram's true nature. Indeed, the scene in the Chapter entitled 'Fellow Travellers' makes Miss Wade's visual and aural surveillance of Tattycoram

explicit. 'She [Miss Wade] heard an angry sound of muttering and sobbing. A door stood open, and within she saw the attendant upon the girl she had just left; the maid with the curious name. She stood still, to look at this maid. A sullen passionate girl!' (*LD*, 25). Miss Wade has kept Tattycoram under constant surveillance. Indeed, Tattycoram's surroundings - first in quarantine and later abandoned in her hotel room - are forms of solitary confinement. The knowledge of Tattycoram's case history, which Miss Wade inherently knows as her own by simultaneously observing and living it, allows Miss Wade to gain influence over her. Miss Wade uses this subsequent influence to 'liberate' Tattycoram - but in reality this liberation takes the form of a more intense isolation through which she can exercise her domination.

Miss Wade's first action is to unname Tattycoram by reverting back to her foundling name Harriet. Miss Wade views this unnaming process as a method of nullifying the Meagles's power. But, significantly, Miss Wade chooses to revert to the name that re-emphasises Tattycoram's foundling identity even moreso than the 'coram' in Tattycoram. In the interview with Miss Wade after Tattycoram's departure from the Meagleses, the reader can see that Miss Wade's gestures towards Tattycoram are those of domination: leading Tattycoram by the hand; holding Tattycoram's neck 'protectingly' (*LD*, 329); and putting her arm about Tattycoram's waist 'as if she [Miss Wade] took possession of her [Tattycoram] for evermore' (*LD*, 330).

Similarly, Miss Wade's language is the discourse of ideological domination which serves to reinforce Tattycoram's marginalisation - a state which becomes a tool for Miss Wade's oppressive endeavours. Miss Wade continually reinforces Tattycoram's 'Otherness' by reminding her not to forget her 'birth' (*LD*, 328). Miss Wade emphasises that the Meagles's renaming Tattycoram was a method of isolation to 'set [Tattycoram] apart' (*LD*, 328), for the change in name from Harriet, with its fairly genteel class associations to Tattycoram also implies a social decline. Indeed, in describing Tattycoram's life with the Meagles as a 'foil', a 'slave' and a 'toy' (*LD*, 328) Miss Wade endeavours to convince Tattycoram of her new found freedom. In short, Miss Wade is trying to reform Tattycoram by instilling in Tattycoram a truth of Miss Wade's construction - a truth which is a tool in the power relations of Miss Wade's ideological agency.

The reader is able to witness the success of Miss Wade's oppressive endeavours when she offers Tattycoram the choice between her truth or the

Meagles'. Tattycoram's rejection of the Meagleses and her choice 'Miss Wade, take me away please' (*LD*, 329) is an embrace of Miss Wade's truth. So Miss Wade's identification with Tattycoram, 'The foundation of my influence here,[...]is founded in a common cause[...]She has no name, I have no name. Her wrong is my wrong' (*LD*, 330) reveals that Miss Wade's treatment of Tattycoram is on one level an external manifestation of her own self-tormenting. However, on another level, Miss Wade's motivating desire is really to project her wrong onto Tattycoram's wrong - and thus to draw Tattycoram into her own shadowy margin in order to oppress Tattycoram. Then Miss Wade will finally possess the superiority she so desires, and by achieving this, will have reproduced the same bourgeois ideology.

Another female self-tormenting figure in Dickens's works in whom can be found interesting echoes of Miss Wade is the figure of Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations*. Both women suffer inordinately by their sense of rejection from men and both women seek to control a prodigy who they can construct as an agent of revenge. Miss Havisham exists as an extreme form of Miss Wade and her agent of revenge is an even more extreme product. Miss Havisham chooses Estella who is the offspring of two criminals - a criminalised father and a murderous mother - to be her avenger and subjects her to an intensive disciplinary regime. The goal of this discipline, which includes intensive solitary confinement in Manor House, is to destroy all human emotion in Estella - an extreme form of the battle against emotion which Lucy Snowe undergoes. While in solitary confinement, Estella's observation of Miss Havisham's warped persona is ultimately internalised and reproduced. In one of her rare narrative fragments, Estella succinctly describes her childhood and its effects:

> You had not your little wits sharpened by their intriguing against you, suppressed and defenceless, under the mask of sympathy and pity and what not that is soft and soothing - I had. You did not gradually open your round childish eyes wider and wider to the discovery of that impostor of a woman who calculates her stores of peace of mind for when she wakes up in the night - I did (*GE*, 287).

Estella becomes the agent of Miss Havisham's sense of justice in her role as male-tormentor. 'It was impossible for me [Pip] to avoid seeing that she cared to attract me; that she made herself winning; and would have won me even if the task had need pains' (*GE*, 287). In fact, Estella repeatedly acknowledges that her identity is a total construct of Miss Havisham's disciplinary endeavour, 'I must be taken as I have

been made' (*GE*, 323). As such, Estella lacks any power of self-determination: rather, slave-like, she gives all control to Miss Havisham. 'I am what you have made me[...]in short, take me[...]I owe everything to you' (*GE*, 322). Even when Miss Havisham, aghast like Frankenstein at what she has created, begs for an emotional response from Estella, Estella can only reproduce the discourse she has internalised which now takes the place of her emotions. 'All that you have given me, is at your command to have again. Beyond that, I have nothing. And if you ask me to give you what you never gave me my gratitude and duty cannot do impossibilities' (*GE*, 323).

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If what Arthur and Miss Wade have in common, besides their marginalisation, is their temper (even if Arthur's is now deeply repressed), then Tattycoram is defined, not only by her names but, by her temper. Tattycoram's possession of a temper full of 'passion and protest' (*LD*, 197), 'chafing and fire' (*LD*, 321) empowers her to such an extent that Mr. Meagles declares 'The bolts and bars of the old Bastille couldn't keep her' (*LD*, 320). Meagles's reference to the Bastille (and the old social order that it represents) in a novel exploring the effect of imprisonment on the individual is significant in its illumination of the situation at the Meagleses'. In *Little Dorrit* then, the temper shared by the three marginalised orphans becomes a metaphor for individual will. Indeed Tattycoram's declarations throughout the novel of 'I will' (*LD*, 26) and 'I won't' (*LD*, 329, 330, 661) emphasise this individual will.

Simultaneously, Tattycoram's unknown origins and her temper also serve to identify her as a potential target for reformation and thus interpellation - an individual who needs to be controlled and whose power needs to be appropriated. The Meagleses are willing to overlook her temper (her individuality) as a flaw resulting from the lack of a family - the basic ISA:

> If we should find her temper a little defective, or any of her ways a little wide of ours, we shall know what we have to take into account. We shall know what an immense deduction must be made from all the influences and experiences that have formed us - no parents, no child-brother or sister, no individuality of home, no Glass Slipper, or Fairy Godmother (*LD*, 18).

But more importantly, by not having a family, Tattycoram loses out on the associated myths of childhood, *i.e.*, the 'Glass Slipper' and 'Fairy Godmother'. In this quotation these myths symbolise the last vestige of Romantic childhood. By missing these myths, Tattycoram appears to lose her inherent childhood identity. Identity, then, is now considered as a social construct.

Through knowledge of Tattycoram's case history the Meagleses feel they know the 'truth' about Tattycoram (even though they do not even know her name). This truth then, enables the Meagleses to endeavour to reform Tattycoram - a process which is actually a set of ideological power relations in which the Meagleses are the dominant power. These relations are manifested on a social level by Tattycoram's position in the household as Pet's maid. Indeed, Mr. Meagles's introduction of Tattycoram into the novel, as a servile appendage to Pet, is in the discourse of domination. 'Tattycoram, stick close to your young mistress' (*LD*, 17). This mode of introduction is further developed - Tattycoram is seen, not as an individual, but as an appendage to the Meagles family, rather like Miss Wade in her 'family'. 'There was even the later addition of a conservatory sheltering itself against it [the Meagles], uncertain of hue in its deep-stained glass, and in its more transparent portions flashing to the sun's rays, now like fire and now like harmless water drops; which might have stood for Tattycoram' (*LD*, 191). Indeed, more is made of the portrait of Pet's dead sister than of Tattycoram.

Mr Meagles's formulaic 'Five-and-twenty, Tattycoram, five-and-twenty' (*LD*, 321) is a microcosm of his larger efforts to neutralise and reform her temper (individual will) through indoctrination. Even the process of renaming her, from a jumble of old names as if she were the spaniel that Miss Wade refers to, illustrates their domination - and this naming process is not too far removed from the naming of slaves. By choosing to adopt the surname Coram, which is the surname of the man who established the Foundling Hospital, the Meagleses reinforce her orphan genealogy. After Tattycoram's outburst, the prelude to her departure, Mr Meagles admits that perhaps they have inadvertently marginalised Tattycoram, but as one who 'looks on' as a 'mere outsider', Tattycoram should have 'borne' it (*LD*, 321). Indeed, Mr Meagles's response to Tattycoram's outburst is that of domination. Mr Meagles 'gave her [his...]hand and took her to her room, and locked the house doors' (*LD*, 323). He gives her another chance to reform in the isolation (the solitary confinement) of her room - rather like Jane Eyre's Red Room experience. Through these images, it becomes apparent that the Meagleses act both as Tattycoram's jailers

and as agents of reform who are furthering the endeavours first initiated by the ideological apparatus, the Foundling Hospital.

When Tattycoram explodes, asserts her will, and demands that her narrative be told, the reader thinks that perhaps the Meagleses have been unsuccessful in their efforts to subdue Tattycoram. Indeed, even five-and-twenty fails to suppress Tattycoram. 'Such a picture of passion as you never saw, she stopped short, looked me full in the face, and counted (as I made out) to eight. But she couldn't control herself to go any further. There she broke down, poor thing, and gave the other seventeen to the four winds. Then it all burst out' (*LD*, 322). Tattycoram's narrative, that she *will* tell, constructs her identity as 'miserable', unloved, 'exulted over', 'shamed' - which is both the identity of the other orphans in the novel and the archetypal identity of the Victorian literary orphan. Tattycoram feels that her lack of family disempowers her. She also feels constantly reminded of her place on the margins of society. In fact, she feels dehumanised in being named and treated like a dog. Indeed, the Meagles do treat her as if she were somehow subhuman: when first at the Foundling Hospital, Mrs Meagles refers to the orphan children with the pronoun 'it', and when describing Tattycoram's narrative Mr Meagles refers to its narrator as a 'vehement panting creature' (*LD*, 323). This dehumanising of the orphan figures by considering them virtually as members of a subspecies is the common fate of not only the orphan figure, but also the criminal and the colonised (particularly the slave).

Although Tattycoram's outburst gives vent to her temper and her subsequent flight appears as an act of self-liberation, the Meagles's reforming efforts have been more successful than they realise. Tattycoram's first action in the novel - a gesture of submission (the 'half curtsey') in response to Mr Meagles's command to 'stick close to your mistress' (*LD*, 17) - foreshadows her final display of submission. In addition to Miss Wade, the reader is able to observe Tattycoram's initial display of temper in her first narrative fragment. But this same display is unsettling in that it reveals Tattycoram's 'tearing' hand busy in an effort of self-mutilation which is strongly self-punitive, '[plucking] her lips' and 'pinching her neck, [which was] freshly disfigured with great scarlet blots' (*LD*, 26). Tattycoram's narrative fragments reveal her acute awareness that she does not 'signify to any one' (*LD*, 26); the knowledge of being unloved tortures her - a torture which she then reproduces in her self-punitive gestures. This fragment culminates in Tattycoram's assertion of her individual will, 'I don't care for that. I'll run away. I'll do some mischief. I won't bear it; I can't bear it; I shall die if I try to bear it!' (*LD*, 26). But her actions parallel the progressive

diffusion of her will in the movement of her language from the assertion of her will to the nullification of this will through death. Her assertion of her individual will (in the form of her temper) is gradually repressed by her punitive (and reforming) gestures. Her narrative dwindles to 'broken murmurs' (*LD*, 27) and her physical gestures move from defiance, to punishment to submission: 'She sank[...]upon her knees[...]upon the ground beside the bed, drawing to coverlet with her, half to hide her shamed head[...]and half[...]to embrace it, rather than have nothing to take to her repentant breast' (*LD*, 27). This pattern of assertion of will followed by gradual submission will be repeated by Tattycoram throughout the novel. Indeed, this scene is a miniature of the larger process of domination which exists in the penal narrative - namely, disciplinary endeavours are first internalised and then actively reproduced. In this scene, Tattycoram gradually applies disciplinary techniques for the repression of her temper (individuality) which she has learned from the Meagleses to herself. Her final submissive, 'broken' posture, wanting only to 'pray' (*LD*, 27), is the successful end product of this disciplinary endeavour. The use of the word 'broken' recalls Arthur's self-portrait as the product of a similar familial and religious disciplinary endeavour.

When Tattycoram puts this same 'unsparing hand' (*LD*, 26) (a hand also seen by Miss Wade as 'repressing' {*LD*, 330}) in Miss Wade's and demands her to 'take me away' (*LD*, 328) the reader witnesses not only Tattycoram's submission, to a woman of whom she is afraid (and to a woman who, she knows, continually keeps her under surveillance), but also the reproduction of the same structure of dominance from which she fled. Miss Wade, then, as mentioned above, acts as a vehicle for the continuance of Tattycoram's oppression and reformation. Tattycoram's time with Miss Wade is akin to solitary confinement - a time when Tattycoram can meditate simultaneously upon herself and on the figure of Miss Wade her other self. As a result of her vulnerability during this confinement Tattycoram is receptive to Miss Wade's suggestions. Miss Wade then becomes her jailer leading her in and out by the hand. Ironically, it is Miss Wade who, albeit unknowing, furthers the disciplinary process: her words have in fact an insidious agenda: 'You can have your droll name again, playfully pointing you out and setting you apart, as it is right you should be pointed out and set apart (Your birth, you know; you must not forget your birth)' (*LD*, 328). Miss Wade reinforces Tattycoram's marginalisation first by actively removing her from others and then constantly reinforcing Tattycoram's dependant position as an orphan. It is Miss Wade who reveals to Tattycoram that what she must do to return to the Meagleses is to confess her guilt, '[You must demonstrate] how humble and penitent you are[...]by going back to them to be

forgiven' (*LD*, 328). Both of these endeavours initially serve to bind Tattycoram more tightly to Miss Wade thus giving Miss Wade someone to dominate. As Tattycoram has not yet fully internalised this disciplinary process and accepted her place, she remains with Miss Wade for further instruction. Their departure is for Tattycoram a return to solitary confinement. Dickens entitles this departure 'Nobody's Disappearance', with Tattycoram becoming the 'ingrate'. Tattycoram and Miss Wade take with them their 'waifs and strays of furniture' (*LD*, 331): this language is the same that Arthur applies to himself (he refers to himself as 'a waif and a stray' (*LD*, 20). Arthur's continual endeavours to nullify himself take the form of his self reference 'nobody', while his mother thinks that he is ungrateful. The language then unites these three orphans - in the same way that the plot will.

Tattycoram, then, undergoes a disciplinary process - first initiated at the Foundling Hospital (ISA), continued at the Meagleses' (family - another ISA), and finally completed by Miss Wade (ideological agent). Tattycoram's individuality is forced into conformity as she learns her true place. In Tattycoram's final outburst before her submission - her final attempt to assert her own individuality - she makes explicit the fact that what Miss Wade offers is really the same domination offered by the Meagleses. 'Because I have nobody but you to look to, you think you are to make me do, or not do, everything you please, and are to put any affront upon me. You are as bad as they were, every bit. But I will not be quite tamed, and made submissive' (*LD*, 661). However, crucially, in the same, breath Tattycoram also admits that she 'went to look at the house, because I had often thought that I should like to see it once more. I will ask again how they are, because I once liked them, and at times thought they were kind to me' (*LD*, 662). Tattycoram, then, is not only, in Meagles's terms 'the prisoner [who] begins to relent towards[...her] prison after[...she] is let out' (*LD*, 22), but she is beginning to reproduce the techniques of domination, by going back to observe the Meagleses. The very sad irony of this scene is that the knowledge that Tattycoram has gained is in fact that of her dependence and inferior position '[Miss Wade] has made me her dependant. And I know I am so; and I know she is overjoyed when she can bring it to my mind' (*LD*, 662). Whereas the earlier orphan figures in the century have been empowered by their orphanhood which allows them to construct their own identity, Tattycoram has had her identity constructed for her and her resistance to this imposed identity has been gradually overcome (in the same way that the colonised and/or slaves had their identities constructed). Tattycoram's final gestures in this chapter are those of gradual submission. 'Harriet, with the assumed humiliation of an abject dependant

and serf (but not without defiance for all that), made as if she were too low to notice or be noticed' (*LD*, 662).

So Tattycoram's final actions, those of freeing herself from Miss Wade are no more than a return, and indeed an embrace of her confinement with the Meagleses. Tattycoram's return to the Meagleses is accompanied by gestures of complete submission as she falls to her knees before Mr. and Mrs. Meagles and beats her hands on the ground. There is no further need to direct these hands towards herself because Tattycoram has been disciplined. Tattycoram's confession of her guilt and announcement of her repentance illustrates how completely the disciplinary process has been internalised as she now reproduces the dominant discourse. Tattycoram has come to view her temper as 'a madness' (*LD*, 811). Begging for her old name back, Tattycoram's language reveals the extent of her reformation:

> I am bad enough, but not so bad as I was indeed. I have had Miss Wade before me all this time, as if it was my own self grown ripe - turning everything the wrong way, and twisting all good into evil. I have had her before me all this time, finding no pleasure in anything but keeping me as miserable, suspicious, and tormenting as herself[...]I only mean to say, that, after what I have gone through, I hope I shall never be quite so bad again, and that I shall get better by very slow degrees (*LD*, 811).

Tattycoram not only begs for her old name back, but is now actively repressing herself by furthering Meagles's indoctrination, 'I won't stop at five-and-twenty, sir, I'll count five-and-twenty hundred, five-and-twenty thousand!' (*LD*, 811). Thus, in Tattycoram exists another 'disciplined heart'. The only glimmer that Dickens gives the reader that this scene is not a happy reunion is his description of Tattycoram's tears at the Meagles' feet 'half in exultation and half in despair' (*LD*, 810). Indeed, there should be despair as Dickens is somehow implicated in all this by not giving Tattycoram any option - where else could she go? Where is Tattycoram's long lost legacy? In summary, I will recall the closing scene, partially quoted earlier, in which Meagles instructs Tattycoram on her place. This quotation has relevance for all the orphans discussed in this chapter. It establishes Little Dorrit as the ideal of self-effacing duty, yet simultaneously this self-effacement recalls the self-repression which Lucy Snowe, Miss Wade, Miss Havisham, Estella, and Arthur Clennam pursue. It also identifies Tattycoram as a 'penitent' and, as willing convert to/subject of the penal narrative, eager to discipline her hitherto undisciplined heart.

'[Little Dorrit's] young life has been one of active resignation, goodness and noble service. Shall I tell you what I consider those eyes of hers that were just here now, to always have looked at, to get that expression?'

'Yes, if you please sir.'

'Duty, Tattycoram. Begin it early and do it well.' (*LD*, 812-813).

Chapter Five: The Mythologising of the Family

Language lends itself to myth in another way: it is very rare that it imposes at the outset a full meaning which it is impossible to destroy. This comes from the abstractness of its concept[...]the meaning can almost always be interpreted[...]Myth can easily insinuate itself into it, and swell there: it is a robbery by colonization.[198]

In the previous chapters the paradigm that has been unfolded is that of the orphan's marginalisation which leads to criminalisation, disciplining, the construction of identity and ultimately the orphan's reproduction of this discipline in the penal narrative. In the figures of Tattycoram and Estella, the power of the ideological apparatuses to interpellate the orphan figure and to construct this penal narrative has been fully realised. This final chapter will read the narratives of the family and the orphan as tropes mediating the larger discourses of family and nation-state: discourses in which the orphan is representative of marginalised groups and difference within the heart of Victorian England. To do so, this chapter will examine, in George Eliot's *Silas Marner*, the production of the family and the metaphoric orphan as part of the attempt to mythologise the concept of family in high art - a move which parallels the attempt to mythologise the family in popular orphan literature. This analysis will seek to unveil the workings of myth within *Silas Marner* and the use of myth as a bourgeois strategy by examining Roland Barthes's concept of myth in his essay 'Myth Today'. This chapter will attempt to argue that this cultural production of the family as myth marks a new phase in the penal narrative which reflects the powerful ideological authority that the bourgeois had achieved by mid-century.

5.1 Silas Marner and Eppie: A Family of Orphans

> In the old days, there were angels who came and took men by the hand and led them away from the city of destruction. We see no white-winged angels now. But yet men are led away from threatening destruction: a hand is put into theirs, which leads them forth gently towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward; and the hand may be a little child's.[199]

198Roland Barthes, 'Myth Today,' *Mythologies* (London: Verso, 1993), 132.

199George Eliot, *Silas Marner*, ed. Q.D. Leavis (1944. London: Penguin, 1985.), 190-91. All further references to this text will be from this edition and will be indicated in parentheses in the text, denoted by *SM*.

This chapter will read the two protagonists of *Silas Marner*, Eppie and Marner, as orphans: Eppie because in her illegitimacy she is unacknowledged by her father and hence remains throughout her childhood unaware of her true parentage; and Silas as a representative orphan produced by the action of the enforced exile that is insisted on by the larger familial community. During the course of the narrative of *Silas Marner*, Eppie and Silas come to form a family of orphans (in a way not unlike Magwitch, Pip and Estella in *Great Expectations*) in which the one orphan figure, Eppie, functions as an agent for the family seeking to draw Silas back into the community of the family. On the other hand, Silas is 'orphaned': forcibly exiled from the community of the family as a disciplinary measure. Silas is re-interpellated into the community, after a period of enforced isolation, through the endeavours of Eppie, the ideological agent. As can be seen in the passage quoted above, the bourgeois discourse of the family draws heavily on the Christian discourse in seeking not only a spiritual validation of its authority to enforce its ideology but also to construct Eppie as spiritually redemptive. In this, the construction of Eppie is similar to that of the orphan figure in earlier Victorian fiction, *e.g. Oliver Twist* and *The Old Curiosity Shop*, in that the orphan, drawing on his/her aesthetic genealogy as a very special child, assumes the role of angelic redeemer. This passage with its reference to the city of destruction is a very particular reference to Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* which seeks to draw authority from not only New Testament sources but from an aesthetic genealogy in which literary and religious discourses have intersected in a very deliberate fashion - the allegorical tale. The narrative's emphasis on inner spirituality, divine truth and redemption, echoes the earlier fiction considered in this thesis. However, careful examination of *Silas Marner* will reveal that ultimately it is not Eppie who is the redeemer. Rather, Eppie exists as mode of signification that ultimately is constructing bourgeois ideology, and its specific manifestation of the family, as redemptive. On the other hand, Silas is a fairly straightforward example of the orphan being subjected to the workings of the penal narrative: Silas's isolation (in the form of banishment from Lantern Yard) is a simultaneous form of punishment and reformation; and the narrative implicitly scapegoats Silas through its linkage of Silas's marginal status with a notion of criminality. This isolation works to instil in Silas an abjectness which makes him ripe for the redemption and the re-interpellation into the community that Eppie seeks to accomplish.

On first entry into the narrative this abjectness is manifested in Silas's occupation: as a weaver, Silas is one of 'certain pallid undersized men, who, by the side of the brawny country-folk, looked like the remnants of a disinherited race'

(*SM*, 51). It is Silas's occupation as weaver rather than outdoor labourer that emphasises his difference: a difference which is manifested in his physical appearance. Silas's appearance, in sharp contrast to the healthy outdoor labourers of Raveloe, identifies him as an 'alien' (*SM*, 52). In general, the narrative very clearly establishes that weavers were distrusted both because they were thought to belong to another race, and because of the unnaturalness of the weaver's rhythms, 'The questionable sound of Silas's loom, [which was] so unlike the natural cheerful trotting of the winnowing-machine, or the simpler rhythm of the flail' (*SM*, 52). The use of a racialised discourse to emphasise Silas's difference, *i.e.*, he belongs to the 'remnants of a disinherited race', identifies Silas as an orientalised orphan, a scapegoat, whose race has been orphaned in a punitive fashion through disinheritance while also being subjected by the replication of colonial discourse within England. What this racialised discourse also suggests is that Silas can be read as signifying a larger community of disinherited or marginalised people.

The racialised discourse in conjunction with Silas's scapegoated orphanhood increases his alienation from the family of the community by establishing an untraceable genealogy which is more threatening then Eppie's illegitimacy in that the orientalising of Silas very quickly lends itself to a demonisation of Silas. Silas's situation is the archetypal situation of the orphan throughout the century. The Romantic aesthetic inheritance establishes the orphan's unknown earthly genealogy as a spiritual one (*cf.* Rose Maylie and Little Nell). But conversely in the scapegoat paradox, the unknown nature of the orphan's origins can also point to another, more sinister, genealogy which is distrusted and casts doubt on the orphan's nature. The introduction of the notion of a disinherited race introduces a punitive nature to this orphaning process and can be seen to hint at the Jewish Diaspora. Fagin, in *Oliver Twist*, was represented through a highly racialised discourse which sought to demonise his genealogical origins in a way which has parallels to the representation of Silas. The discourse is represented in the narrative in an unambiguous fashion: 'No one knew where wandering men had their homes or their origin; and how was a man to be explained unless you at least knew somebody who knew his father and mother' (*SM*, 51). Without the ability to trace one's parents one's own nature becomes suspect - doubly so when, as in Silas's case the lack of parents is seen as a punitive measure. Hence, in the representation of Silas, his occupation and his knowledge are both seen as manifestations of his demonised difference: '[They were] not quite sure that this trade of weaving[...]could be carried on entirely without the help of the Evil One' (*SM*, 51); and 'When a weaver, who came from

nobody knew where, worked wonders with a brown water, the occult character of the process was evident' (*SM*, 66).

The publication of *Silas Marner* two years after Darwin's *The Origins of the Species* could point to the bourgeois discourses of the family and Evangelical religion intersecting with the evolutionary discourse which eventually lead to the social Darwinist narrative. The representation of Silas as member of the 'disinherited race' (which is akin to the 'bastardised race' discourse used to describe criminals), not only reinforces Silas's alienation, and Silas as scapegoat, but also challenges Silas's membership in the human race. The confinement arising from Silas's 'unnatural' occupation removes him from all human relationships and causes Silas to become animal-like in his focus: 'Marner[...]lived in this solitude[...]his life narrowing and hardening itself more and more into a mere pulsation of desire and satisfaction that had no relation to any other being' (*SM*, 68). Silas's appearance is represented as being unlike any other earthly being - an analogy strengthened by his ghost-like entrance at the Rainbow neatly framed by a prior discussion about ghosts. 'If ghos'es want me to believe in 'em, let'em leave off skulking i'the dark and i'lone places - let 'em come where there's company and candles' (*SM*, 105). This framing strengthens the eeriness of Marner's arrival:

> Yet the next moment there seemed to be some evidence that ghosts had a mere condescending disposition that Mr. Macey attributed to them; for the pale thin figure of Silas Marner was suddenly seen standing in the warm light, uttering no word, but looking round at the company with his strange unearthly eyes (*SM*, 106).

The emphasis on Silas's unearthly characteristics develops the discursive demonisation to which he has already been subjected. However, the revelation of Silas's loss - a double disinheritance - and his subsequent human suffering destroys Silas's mysticism, by reverting back to the original notion of his abjectness: 'Instead of a man who had more cunning than honest folks could come by[...]it was now apparent that Silas was not cunning enough to keep his own. He was generally spoken of as a "poor mushed creature"' (*SM*, 130). However, this sympathy does not result in integration or acceptance. Silas still remains alienated from the 'family' of the community.

Silas's continuing isolation is symptomatic of something larger than ostracisation: it is here that the intersection of the bourgeois discourses of the family and Evangelical Christian religion constructs a process of fundamental orphaning

through the narrative's adoption of an allegorical framework. *Ut supra*, the direct reference to 'city of destruction' (*SM*, 190) suggests a link to Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the specifics of which have been detailed most succinctly by Q.D. Leavis in her 'Introduction'[200]. This allegorical framework gives Silas's isolation as an orphan and a weaver greater resonance beyond the community of Raveloe. Silas's disinheritance, as the notion of the Jewish Diaspora suggests, is from the larger spiritual family. Hence, Silas's move to Raveloe can be read not only as criminal ostracisation, but also as a process of spiritual exile. Thoroughly disillusioned, Marner leaves, not only Lantern Yard, but his faith. He is, as Q.D. Leavis argues, 'A poor nineteenth-century Christian whose burden is not Original Sin but loss of faith and of a community - in fact what the City had given him in the way of a religion and a community was not recognisable as such by the traditions of the countryside'[201]. In losing his faith Silas flees the 'city of destruction' (*SM*, 190-91) and exiles himself in Nature: '[In] this low, wooded region, where he felt hidden from the heavens by the screening trees and hedgerows' (*SM*, 63). Silas's identity as scapegoat manifests itself as an isolation which imprisons him on many levels. The images created by his continuous weaving, his stooping under his heavy burdens, and his myopic vision, all contribute to the construction of Silas as prisoner. This image of Silas as prisoner is doubly suggestive in the linkage of alienation/difference to criminality, and the loss of religious faith to imprisonment. By implication, individual freedom is linked not only to religious belief but also to membership in the larger spiritual family.

Following the analogy of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Silas, in his isolation falls victim to a double despair caused by the loss of his faith and the loss of his gold. The loss of faith translates into the loss of hope of eternal reward, 'the future was all dark, for there was no Unseen Love that cared for him' (*SM*, 65). In losing his faith Silas is left emotionally bereft - a spiritual orphan. As a compensation, Silas attempts to fill his chasm of loneliness with money, 'The light of his faith quite put out, and his affections made desolate, he had clung with all the force of his nature to his work and his money' (*SM*, 92). The interlinking of money and faith through the notion of compensation highlights the intersection of the bourgeois and religious discourses. As would be the case in the larger capitalist society, the loss of the gold leaves Silas totally bereft. The repetition of the word darkness in connection with Silas reveals that it is not only his myopic vision that leaves him in darkness but rather, his despair also leaves him in darkness.

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[200]Q.D. Leavis, 'Introduction'. *Silas Marner* by George Eliot. (1944. London: Penguin, 1985).
[201]*Ibid.*, 14.

> Formerly, his heart had been as a locked casket with its treasure inside, but now the casket was empty, and the lock was broken. Left groping in darkness, with his prop utterly gone, Silas had inevitably a sense, though a dull and half-despairing one, that if any help came to him it must come from without (*SM*, 134-35).

Thus, alienated without family, belief or gold, Silas is, in allegorical terms, dead. In fact, Silas's own 'death' has been rehearsed many times in his cataleptic fits which are mistaken for death: he is known as 'a dead man come to life again' (*SM*, 54) by physical resurrection. 'His limbs were stiff, and his hands clutched the bag as if they'd been made of iron; but just as he had made up his mind that the weaver was dead, he came all right again' (*SM*, 54). This resurrection is a prelude to his spiritual resurrection - something necessary to yoke his wandering soul to his body in faith.

Thus, Silas, spiritually impotent, groping in the darkness of despair, is ready to receive his spiritual redeemer - or, in other words, Silas is ready to be re-interpellated into the family of the community and into bourgeois ideology.

> There was really something on the road coming towards him then, but he caught no sign of it[...]he was arrested, as he had been already since his loss, by the invisible wand of catalepsy, and stood like a graven image, with wide but sightless eyes, holding open his door, powerless to resist either the good or evil that might enter there (*SM*, 167).

Thus, heralded with biblical images (the scene in Marner's cottage parallels the scene of the Nativity), arrives Marner's spiritual redeemer, the other orphan, Eppie. Significantly, it is during the Christmas holidays in a humble setting. Both Mollie and Eppie are drawn to Marner's cottage by a 'quickly-veiled star' (*SM*, 165) whose light is replaced by the light from Marner's cottage. Paradoxically, Eppie's arrival on a cold dark night, led by Silas's 'bright glancing light' (*SM*, 165) heralds the arrival of light in that Eppie's arrival at Silas's cottage signifies her birth as his spiritual redeemer. Eppie experiences the spiritual veneration given to an orphan on the basis of the carefully constructed, and explicitly identified, heavenly genealogy. Even Silas assumes immediately that she must have supernatural origins.

> He had a dreamy feeling that this child was somehow a message come to him from that far-off life: it stirred fibres[...]old quiverings of tenderness - old impressions of awe at the presentiment of some Power presiding over his life; for his imagination had not yet extricated itself from the sense of mystery in the child's sudden presence (*SM*, 168).

Marner's discovery of Eppie and his immediate adoption of a posture of worship further encourages the reading of this scene as the Nativity. 'Silas fell on his knees[...]to examine the marvel: it was a sleeping child' (*SM*, 167). The association of Eppie with Silas's gold both emphasises her own aura of light and makes an explicit connection between the bourgeois capitalist and religious discourses. This aura is constructed by constant references to her fair features and her hair, with its 'rippling radiance' (*SM*, 201). This aura, in combination with her heavenly origins, transforms Eppie, in the eyes of Silas and the community of Raveloe into 'the blessed angil' (*SM*, 183). As one who is fresh from the Creator, Eppie is vested immediately with a tremendous spiritual power. She appears in circumstances that echo the scene of the Nativity - the birth of the earth's redeemer. Her specific spiritual purpose is to restore Silas's faith and thus save Silas from despair. Finally, the direct identification of Eppie with Silas's gold helps to construct the bourgeois ideology as both spiritually authenticated and ultimately redemptive.

As a perceived orphan (orphaned by her father's denial of her and hence her initial disinheritance), Eppie displays all the liberation resulting from her special status as one having a heavenly genealogy. From the moment she arrives, Eppie cannot be restrained but insists on leading. 'It was clear that Eppie, with her short toddling steps must lead father Silas' (*SM*, 186). The reference to Silas as Goliath on the same page, allows the identification of Eppie with David, God's chosen one - an allusion which invests Eppie with tremendous personal power.

Eppie, as ideological agent, uses this power to 'redeem' Silas on all levels of the allegory - social, natural, spiritual and emotional. Eppie brings Silas membership in the family of the community. 'The child created fresher and fresher links between his life and the lives from which he had hitherto shrunk continually into narrower isolation' (*SM*, 184). It is Eppie who brings Silas back into the Christian family - in fact, he is baptised with her. In what can be read as an attempt to construct a spiritual capitalism Eppie offers another gold of greater value. Whereas the gold alone was associated with a state of living death, Eppie is associated with life:

> [Eppie loved] sunshine, and living sounds, and living moments[...]The gold had kept his thoughts in an ever-repeated circle, leading to nothing beyond itself; but Eppie[...]made him look for images of that time in the ties and charities that bound together the families of his neighbours[....]Eppie called him away from his weaving, and made him think all its pauses a holiday, re-awakening his senses with her fresh life (*SM*, 184).

With resurrection, Eppie brings a restoration of the memory and knowledge that Silas had abandoned on his spiritual exile. 'As the child's mind was growing into knowledge, his mind was growing into memory: as her life unfolded, his soul, long stupefied in a cold narrow prison, was unfolding too, and trembling gradually into full consciousness' (*SM*, 185). Eppie restores Silas's links with Nature enabling him once again to enjoy a special communion with Nature. By restoring his memory, Eppie manages to liberate Silas from his psychological prison of loneliness: Eppie's redemptive youth challenges Silas's crabbed age. In other words, as with Scrooge, the redemptive power of the past - the memory of childhood that Eppie embodies - works to transform Silas. 'A child, more than all other gifts/That earth can offer to declining man,/Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts'[202]. With this spiritual transformation comes emotional redemption with Eppie acting as an emotional link between Silas and the world.

> No child was afraid of approaching Silas when Eppie was near him: there was no repulsion around him now, either for young or old; for the little child had come to link him once more with the whole world. There was love between him and the child that blent them into one, and there was love between the child and the world - from men and women with parental looks and tones, to the red lady-birds and the round pebbles (*SM*, 190).

Eppie is successful in her role as redeemer to Silas because she is constructed as a direct agent of the Divine. It is Eppie's arrival, and all other subsequent actions, that are depicted in religiously symbolic terms. Not only does Eppie manage to 'resurrect' Silas back to life, but she also initiates his rebirth of self, 'that new self which had been developed in him since he had found Eppie on his hearth' (*SM*, 201). Through Eppie and the recovery of his memory, Silas regains the sense of unity between past and present. Silas is able to admit that 'his soul was utterly

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[202]William Wordsworth, 'Michael,' *Wordsworth: Poetical Works*, ed. Thomas Hutchinson, revised by Ernest De Selincourt (1904. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 145.

desolate till she was sent to him' (*SM*, 226). As a result of his redemption, Silas is apparently given the revelatory voice of truth that is indirectly Divine in origin. This voice is seen as a manifestation of his spiritual power: 'God gave her to me because you turned your back upon her, and He looks upon her as mine: you've no right to her! When a man turns a blessing from his door, it falls to them as take it in' (*SM*, 231). The last journey that Silas takes is to return to Lantern Yard which has significantly disappeared, having been replaced by a factory. Once again the intersection of religious and capitalist discourses can be identified a process of supplanting in which they both become associated with the same space. Eppie comments on the darkness of the place, which contrasts with her own true light, divine in origin - the very light that Silas acknowledges as true spirituality. 'Since the time the child was sent to me and I've come to love her as myself, I've had light enough to trusten by; and now she says she'll never leave me, I think I shall trusten till I die' (*SM*, 241).

Thus, one orphan (Eppie) has redeemed another orphan from alienation and despair, while the other orphan (Silas) is represented as instinctively willing to form a family with Eppie and thus in the paradoxical role as scapegoat, 'had brought a blessing on himself by acting like a father to a lone motherless child' (*SM*, 243). Although, Eppie does manage to redeem Silas from his own inner alienation from his faith, it is significant that Eppie's redemption of Silas is primarily social - she manages to reintegrate Silas into the family of the community and thus overcome his alienation.

5.2 The Power of Myth

The reading followed in the previous section is one which has been put forward in the earlier sections as well. However, there are elements of *Silas Marner* which are working on another level to mythologise the bourgeois ideology of the family. This mythologising is occurring in the narrative precisely where the constant doubling of the signification occurs. What happens during this doubling is what Barthes would term as the systematic emptying of the signifier in order to fill it on a more complex level. This section will seek to show how *Silas Marner* attempts to construct both the family as myth and bourgeois ideology as redemptive.

The use of the fairy tale motif lends itself to mythification. Although the book was published in 1861, the setting for *Silas Marner* is supposedly that of rural

England during the Napoleonic wars. However, despite the specific references to place and the general allusions to the time of the setting, the narrative works to incorporate other references which if not lending themselves to a general ahistoricity certainly build upon notions of the natural and of the eternal. The rural setting of *Silas Marner* works to give the narrative and its characters a certain naturalness which is the product of several deliberate strategies. The setting, during the Napoleonic wars, can be viewed as a pastoral retreat from the manifestation of capitalism in the 1860's. This rural society is structured as a pre-capitalist society with the emphasis on its lingering feudal familial configuration - with the Squire as the paternal figure. However, this is not a romantic invoking of a feudal society: the aristocracy, in the form of the Squire and his two sons, are represented as corrupt and degenerate. It is the labouring classes that are constructed as natural: they live in direct contact, and in harmony, with the countryside; and their labouring occupations identify them as natural producers. This notion of producers is a pre-capitalist one in which the naturalness of their production is characterised by their occupation as labourers in direct contact with nature. It is precisely this naturalness that allows the inhabitants of Raveloe to identify Silas as an alien - he works from product rather than direct contact with nature; this gives his loom the unnatural rhythm creating a distrust of him in the other inhabitants. This notion of the rural labourer as natural producer is one which Barthes argues allows the labourer to speak in a language which is 'not mythical'[203]. But what I want to argue is that the deliberate narrative use of the labouring man as natural producer and therefore speaking the true, authentic language is a strategy to hide the Metalanguage of the narrative itself as it seeks to transform what are very particular bourgeois ideological assumptions into myth. What the narrative is hiding is the very process of its own construction and the modes of production which have constructed this ideology. This can be shown most clearly in the borrowing from the Christian myth of the Nativity as signifier for Eppie's birth and Silas's redemption.

Before I deal with the actual borrowing from the Nativity, I want to deal the continual doubling process that informs the narrative. Silas's alienation can always be read on two levels: the physical and the spiritual. Silas's difference displays a double quality: demon and orientalised subject. Silas experiences a double punishment in the form of his double disinheritance: a member of the disinherited race; and the loss of his gold. Finally, Silas's redemption takes the form of a double re-interpellation: into the family of the community and into the spiritual family. The process of doubling is a strategy for the creation of myth. In *Silas Marner*, the literal

[203]Barthes, 'Myth Today', 146.

signification is emptied of its first level meaning - the literal and the physical - and is instead used to form the signified for the process of creating the final myth. Hence, Silas's alienation and difference, manifested through his physical appearance is used in conjunction with other strategies, *i.e.,* colonial and/or racialised discourse, the notion of disinheritance and Diaspora, and the evocation of exile, to signify an absolute alienation, a rootlessness which is attributed to his position outside the Family. As such, this process of signification is fulfilling an ideological agenda which seeks both to establish the family as the necessary form of belonging and to authenticate a specific notion of the family which is a product of bourgeois ideology. To do the latter, the narrative retreats to the pastoral in order to construct a pre-capitalist moment peopled with 'natural' labourers in order to give an authenticity to its own Metalanguage and the resulting myth of the family. What the narrative seeks to hide is the fact that it is a product of a specific cultural moment and its move to pastoral realism is a product of the anxiety of the rampant capitalism and the burgeoning urban problems of the 1860's. Such a pastoral retreat runs parallel to the ahistorical retreat of *The Orphan's Isle* and other popular orphan tales considered in the first chapter.

Roland Barthes identifies this pastoralism as something more that a retreat from the urban, the first level in the production of myth.

> What the world supplies to myth is an historical reality, defined, even if this goes back quite a while, by the way in which men have produced or used it; and what myth gives in return is a ***natural*** image of this reality. And just as bourgeois ideology is defined by the abandonment of the name 'bourgeois', myth is constituted by the loss of the historical quality of things: in it, things lose the memory that they once were made. The world enters language as a dialectical relation between activities, between human actions; it comes out of myth as a harmonious display of essences. A conjuring trick has taken place; it has turned reality inside out, it has emptied it of history and has filled it with nature, it has removed from things their human meaning so as to make them signify a human insignificance. The function of myth is to empty reality: it is, literally, a ceaseless flowing out, a haemorrhage, or perhaps an evaporation, in short a perceptible absence.[204]

[204]*Ibid.,* 142-3.

In fact, if the narrative of *Silas Marner* does not claim ahistoricity it can certainly be argued to borrow from the Christian myth of the Nativity in order to give it a sense of the profoundly spiritual and eternal. *Ut supra*, the whole process of the arrival of Eppie is a deliberate parallel to Christ's nativity and if Eppie is not to be read as a redemptive Christ figure then she certainly is to be read as a heavenly angel. Through the agency of this orphan figure, Silas is redeemed through a process which: re-establishes his communion with nature; nullifies his difference; and re-integrates him within the family structure. This family structure works on the levels of the literal, the social and the spiritual. What Eppie does therefore, is bring about a process of re-interpellation in which Silas is brought back into the ideological apparatus of the family. The narrative is quite explicit that, once re-instated within the apparatus of the family, Silas is content. However, what is most interesting is that in the figure of Silas is the clearest example of the cultural production of an orphan in order that the narrative may work to re-interpellate him and thus perpetuate bourgeois ideology. It is from the community of Lantern Yard that Silas is first exiled and this exile doubles as both a literal and spiritual exile. As an exiled person, Silas is disinherited from the family and hence his punishment is not only literal but borrows from religious and racialised discourses in order to signify a punitive Diasporic figure whose outsiderness manifests itself in a demonised orientalised difference. The narrative borrowing from the highly spiritualised tradition of allegory allows it to signify this process of exile as that of necessary redemption and simultaneously borrows from the eternal myth of the Fall, the loss of Paradise, and the necessity of Christ as a redeemer for the fallen race in order to sanitise the narrative from a specific historical positioning. *Silas Marner* then seeks to reconstruct the myth of the Fall and man's subsequent redemption in order to borrow from the spiritual authenticity of the ahistorical eternal Creation. In doing so, it naturalises the bourgeois notions of the family as not only true but spiritually authenticated. Eppie's redemption of Silas is a process of ideological re-interpellation into a notion of family that is the product of the intersection of bourgeois and religious (Christian) narratives. As such, it is no longer the orphan figure who is empowered as the redeemer, rather this narrative works to establish bourgeois ideology and its configurations as redemptive.

This notion of bourgeois ideology as redemptive is another strategy by which the specificities of a particular construct are obfuscated in the interests of universality. Barthes argues:

> Bourgeois morality will essentially be a weighing operation, the essences will be placed in scales of which bourgeois man will remain the motionless beam. For the very end of myths is to immobilize the world: they must suggest and mimic a universal order which has fixated once and for all the hierarchy of possessions. Thus, every day and everywhere, man is stopped by myths, referred by them to this motionless prototype which lives in his place, stifles him in the manner of a huge internal parasite and assigns to his activity the narrow limits within which he is allowed to suffer without upsetting the world: bourgeois pseudo-physis is in the fullest sense a prohibition for man against inventing himself.[205]

Hence, the family (in all its manifestations - literal, social and spiritual) is seen as the natural and true social configuration without having to reveal the implicit power relations of which this family consists (*e.g.*, paternal authority, hierarchical relationships, and the family as a device for consolidating power and wealth). In this form, the family is mythologised by bourgeois ideological apparatuses and membership in, or interpellation by, this ideology is seen as redemptive. Silas's orphaning was absolute: he was orphaned from family, community and God the Father. However, Silas as an orphan was produced by the ideology in order that the ideology may self-perpetuate and consolidate its claims to spiritual authority. As Barthes, Althusser and Davidoff and Hall all argue at various moments in the context of Victorian England, nation is a bourgeois colonial concept, built from the bourgeois notion of family, which seeks to challenge the aristocratic social configuration.

> Politically, the haemorrhage of the name 'bourgeois' is effected through the idea of *nation*. This was once a progressive idea, which has served to get rid of the aristocracy; today, the bourgeoisie merges into the nation, even if it has, in order to do so, to exclude from it the elements which it decides are allogenous.[206]

However, this discourse of the nation is then used as a colonial power structure both within Victorian England to neutralise difference and throughout the empire. It becomes the facilitator of the extension of colonial discourse:

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[205]*Ibid.*, 155.
[206]*Ibid.*, 138.

> The bourgeoisie is constantly absorbing into its ideology a whole section of humanity which does not have its basic status and cannot live up to it except in imagination, that is, at the cost of an immobilization and an impoverishment of consciousness.[207]

5.3 CONCLUSIONS: Retrospective and Prospective

The previous chapters have traced the paradigm of the reformation process undergone by the Victorian literary orphan. This last chapter has attempted to explore how the notion of family and orphanhood work on a mythic level and the power inherent within this system. In this concluding section, I want to develop the linkages of the use of the orphan with the Christian nativity myth, offering the myth of the Creation as a possible paradigm on which the construction of the orphan as myth can be seen to originate. Finally, *ut supra*, I will propose a tentative linkage with the process of orphaning, the myth of the family and the colonial practice of Victorian bourgeoisie.

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> [In Magwitch] Dickens knotted several strands in the English perceptions of convicts of Australia at the end of transportation. They could succeed, but they could hardly, in the real sense, return. They could expiate their crimes in a technical, legal sense, but what they suffered there warped them into permanent outsiders. And yet they were capable of redemption - as long as they stayed in Australia.[208]
>
> - Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore.*

In what appears as a contradiction to Robert Hughes's claim, the ultimate aim of the penal narrative that this thesis traces is not only reformation but reintegration of the self-monitoring penitent into society. The initial chapters of this thesis reinforced this aim and in most cases the penitent, *i.e.*, the reformed orphan, is reintegrated into some kind of social community. Part of this integration involves the orphan finding a place with a family. Oliver Twist and Rose Maylie form quasi-

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[207] *Ibid.*, 141.

[208] Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore: The Epic of Australia's Founding* (New York: Knopf, 1987), 586.

spiritual families. Oliver and Rose are united in the pastoral village as brother and sister. Rose and Eppie each marry, thus extending and eventually regenerating their families. Little Nell is welcomed into an angelic family. Jane Eyre redeems Rochester but they choose to remain in the Edenic conditions outside society. David Copperfield marries Agnes and appears to live in domestic bliss. However, increasingly over the course of this study the reunification of the orphan with a family unit, and ultimately society, becomes problematic. It remains ambiguous whether Becky Sharpe is a reformed penitent or whether this is an identity she adopts to gain a place in Vanity Fair. Rosa Dartle forms an aberrant surrogate family member acting as both mother and companion to Mrs. Steerforth. These two form a family on the basis of their mutual loss and then live in the margins of society, as caricatures of their former selves. Lucy Snowe achieves neither a union through marriage nor reintegration into society, instead she remains an enchained captive. Arthur Clennam and Little Dorrit marry, but Arthur comes to this union a broken man and Little Dorrit is enslaved by her notion of duty. The society they are eventually reintegrated into is the chaos of the 'roaring streets' (*LD*, 826). Miss Wade, and later Estella in *Great Expectations*, disappear entirely into the shadowy margins of the narrative. Tattycoram achieves reintegration at the expense of her individuality. But with Magwitch (originally an orphan), and to a certain extent Pip, the full implications of Robert Hughes's argument are realised. The suffering that each has experienced has made them permanent outsiders. Each is capable of redemption only in exile. Emily becomes a ministering angel in Australia, but cannot erase the memory (both literally and its external manifestation in the form of Rosa Dartle) of her former disgrace and thus, can never return to England. Pip achieves redemption, of sorts, in his new life in the East but he remains isolated and an outsider to the world of the forge. Finally, Magwitch, the example Hughes analyses is able to expiate his 'crimes', undergo reformation (for capitalistic self-help endeavours), and achieve redemption, but when he tries to cross back across the boundary between Victorian society and its marginalised outsider penal colonies, he pays with his life.

This process of marginalisation (either socially enforced or psychologically self-generated) itself is an orphaning one: the targeted individual effectively loses his/her family, home and identity. The additional association of the orphan as criminal helps to justify the isolating devices of solitary confinement and, in its extreme form transportation: the 'guilty' were deported in order that they may 'expiate their crimes', be reformed and thus redeemed. Hence, the larger processes of the Victorian SAs and ISAs, *i.e.*, the Law, subject the individual orphan' to the

penal narrative. Other social institutions work in the same fashion, Dickens's efforts at the reform of fallen women in his Home for Fallen Women, always translated into these women being sent to Australia, a penal colony, for a new start.

The pattern of this judgement of guilt and subsequent orphaning can be first identified in the Creation myth of Adam and Eve. As a punishment for their sin of disobedience, which can also be interpreted as an expression of their individual wills, Adam and Eve are cast out of paradise. Interpreted in familial terms, the two children are cast out of their paradisal home (their birth-place and their society), by their Father. Although this disciplinary model is absolutely hierarchical it does form a pattern of punishment which is adopted by Victorian ISAs and SAs. The Victorian ISAs and SAs, as seen in Chapter One, were encouraged to adopt a parental role to their inmates or 'children'. It is no coincidence that Foucault identifies the roots of the modern disciplinary ethos, with it strategies of surveillance and solitary confinement, in the Christian religion. Foucault specifically examines the Catholic tradition of the confessional and monastic cells, but until the resistance of Martin Luther there was only one Christian church - the Catholic church. The confessional and the cell arise from Original sin and the religious authority's need to control the behaviour of its members. Through these devices, the individual member starts to take responsibility for his/her own disciplining. In Luther's protests against the Catholic church can be found the seeds of resistance - the expression of individual will in the face of institutional domination.

The use of the fictional autobiographical narrative by Victorian literary orphans, who are either explicitly or implicitly Protestant, to construct their own identity can, in the first instance, be read in this tradition of resistance. Initially, the orphan resists the endeavours of the bourgeois penal narrative to construct his/her identity as marginal, criminal, or 'Other'. This mode of narrating the orphan and the penal narrative, rooted in the paradigm of the fall and the Catholic institutions to which it gives rise seek to target the marginalised and repress their individuality. This repression is labelled, fittingly, redemption - implying a process of spiritual salvation. Once the individual (criminal) accepts not only his/her guilt but begins actively to reproduce this penal narrative - not unlike the minister preaching repentance and salvation - s/he has been interpellated into an agent of bourgeois ideology and Evangelical discourse (which can be read as a similar disciplinary discourse). What can be identified in the texts analysed is a battle between competing narratives for the power to construct identity: the power for self-determination *versus* the power to dominate. The paradigm of the original

expulsion is continually rewritten, but at this historical point, as Foucault argues, the power relations are no longer simply hierarchical with a Divine sovereign at the pinnacle, but are interwoven into society, depending on the position of the individual. In this study, the bourgeois Evangelical penal narrative appears victorious: over the course of the fiction analysed, the orphan first internalises and then reproduces bourgeois ideology of the family. This discourse is reproduced first in the language s/he chooses to use in order to describe her/himself in the narrative fragments and ultimately in her/his fictional autobiographical penal narrative.

As argued early in this chapter, the orphan had a dual identity - both individual and mythic. With the latter identity, the orphan came to represent all the marginalised or alienated sections of Victorian society. The bourgeois narrative of the family must be read against the narrative of the alienation felt by the burgeoning lower classes. And the efforts of the family to include must be read against the colonial motivation of the neutralisation of difference. In Oliver Twist, and David Copperfield can be read the narratives of the exploited children - the street savages, child slave labourers, waifs and strays, that Hugh Cunningham has written of so compellingly in *The Children of the Poor.* Through its abandonment, exploitation and neglect of these children the Victorian bourgeois society writes their penal narrative at the expense of these children, and acutual families, who, through illiteracy, starvation and disease were denied the power to write their own narrative. In doing so, the bourgeois construct a familial notion of society. Society's failure to provide for its less fortunate members was indicted in the terms of an incompetent parent. Arthur Adrian in speaking of failed families and parent-child inversions in Dickens's novels extends his analogy to Victorian society:

> Victorian England is to be viewed as one vast family with incompetent and indifferent leadership. In short the defaulting parent and the neglected child are to be considered as the domestic equivalents of the bungling statesmen and their abandoned constituents.[209]

By describing the dispossessed groups in Victorian society as 'abandoned constituents' Adrian unknowingly identifies them as foundlings, or even orphans, who have absentee or uninterested parents. The larger intellectual and geological developments occurring throughout the century - which culminate in Nietzsche's declaration that God is dead - intensify this feeling of abandonment. Hence, the Victorian Age has effectively orphaned the Victorian people - making them all

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[209]Arthur Adrian, 'Dickens and Inverted Parenthood.' *The Dickensian* 67 (January 1971): 11.

targets for reform. The popularity of the orphan figure with Victorian authors rests in its power to speak on behalf of most, and to all, sections of society.

5.4 The Orphan as Cultural Agent

The process of reformation that I have documented was not only directed towards the marginalised orphans but also was used to further the imperial objectives of Victorian society. In other words what was happening to individual figures and groups within Victorian society was occurring on a cultural level throughout the Empire. Colonial cultures and peoples became the ultimate marginalised groups who need to be reformed into submissive but productive subjects of the Empire. The process of reformation and construction of the identity of the 'Other' (now the colonial subject) has been succinctly argued by Edward Said in *Orientalism* in which he traces the 'synchronic panoptical vision of domination'[210] - the process whereby the Victorian bourgeoisie exported their ideology and other imperial European countries constructed identities for those colonial cultures which are inherently restrictive. The colonial people came to be considered as children or noble savages; their homelands were considered as paradisal, and compared to the European race, the development of the indigenous races was placed in the infancy stage. All of these constructions were ultimately used to justify colonial expansion and domination. The effect of this colonial construction of identity is similar, or even identical, to the one I have traced in the Victorian literary orphan. The indigenous peoples are targeted for reform because of a perception that they are somehow deficient and in need of disciplining into the ways of 'civilization'. Increasingly, the dominant cultural discourse is internalised and ultimately reproduced in the ISAs of these colonies. This bourgeois ideology produces, as Macaulay was arguing, 'a class of interpreters between us [Imperial England] and the millions whom we govern - a class of person Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and intellect'[211]. In other words, the process of colonisation was seen as a process of education, disciplining, and reforming, in order to produce subjects who would actively promote the empire. The one difference between the process of reformation undergone by the orphan and that of the colonial subject is that in the process of mimicry[212] Bhabha locates a

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210Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 240.

211Macaulay, T.B., 'Minute on Education,' *Sources of Indian Tradition*. See also Homi K. Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Men,' October 28 (Spring 1984): 130.

212Bhabha, 'Of Mimicry and Men': 128.

level of irony and ambivalence which enables the colonial subject to resist this colonial endeavour. This irony and ambivalence is rooted in the indigenous culture of the subject and provides for an alternative viewpoint. The Victorian literary orphan cannot ultimately resist the larger disciplinary endeavours of his/her own culture. It is true that in the margins subcultures are born but, in this particular case, they are not enough to withstand the power of the disciplinary endeavours.

In his new work, *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said accuses most 'professional humanists' of being:

> Unable to make the connection between the prolonged and sordid cruelty of such practices as slavery, colonialist and racial oppression, and imperial subjection on the one hand, and the poetry, fiction, and philosophy of the society that engages these practices on the other.[213]

I do not think that, in a study of this nature, how the Victorian bourgeoisie replicated colonial discourse in their mode of narrating the Victorian literary orphan: a discourse which worked to subject the colonised. Both were marginalised and then targeted for reform in order that they would reproduce the dominant discourse. It is not surprising that the Victorian society which was actively expanding its empire throughout the world exhibits the same tendencies towards its own marginalised groups. The figure of the orphan, in addition to being a fictional device, spoke to a social reality: its metaphoric implications spoke to the feelings of alienation, loss, and marginalisation experienced, though seldom acknowledged, by countless Victorians. The binary power relationship between domination and resistance can be seen, as argued earlier, as the battle between narratives - either to assert identity or to suppress it. Said identifies this same narrative battle as existing between the colonial subject and the colonising power:

> Narrative[...]become[s] the method colonised people use to assert their own identity and the existence of their history (xiii).
>
> The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them (xiii).

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[213]Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chattus & Windus, 1993), xiv. All further references will be from this edition and will be noted in the text in parentheses.

In the increasing tendency of the literary orphan's fictional autobiographical narrative to become confessional in nature it is possible to identify the success of the penal narrative. What was once a vehicle for the creation of individual identity and thus liberation, has become the vehicle for confession and hence repression. The orphan begins to reproduce this penal narrative in his/her own narrative and towards other orphans. Ultimately, the orphan has not only been colonised but has become a colonial agent.

APPENDIX A

The following poems are reprinted from the anonymous tale, *The Orphan's Friend* (1842).

The Orphan's Hymn

O Lord, the helpless orphan's hope,
To whom alone my eyes look up
In each distressing day;
Father, (for that's the sweetest name
That e'er my lips were taught to frame,)
Instruct this heart to pray.

To heaven my earthly friends are gone,
And thither are my comforts flown,
But I continue here:
Be thou my refuge, thou my Guide;
This friendless heart from sorrow hide,
Reposing on thy care.

If I am spared throughout the span
That makes the narrow life of man,
And reach to hoary age,
Instruct me in thy holy will,
Teach me the duties to fulfil
Of each successive stage.

But, if thy wisdom should decree
An early sepulchre for me,
Father, thy will be done:
On thy rich mercy I rely,
And if I live, or if I die,
O, leave me not alone. (19-20).

The Orphan's Lament

Wither but to thee, O Lord,
Shall a little orphan go?
Thou alone canst speak the word,
Thou canst dry my tears of woe.
Father! may my lips once more
Whisper that beloved name?
Helpless, guilty, friendless, poor,
Let me thy protection claim.

O Father, may I tell
All my wants and woes to thee?
Every want thou knowest well,
Every woe thine eye can see.
'Twas thy hand that took away
Father, mother, from my sight;
Him that was my infant stay,
Her that watched me day and night.

Yet I bless thee, for I know
Thou hast wounded me in love;
Weaned my heart from things below,
That it might aspire above.
Here I tarry for a while;
Saviour, Keep me near thy side;
Cheer my journey with thy smile,
Be my Father, Friend, and Guide.

The Orphan's Prayer

O Gracious Lord, whose mercies rise,
Above our utmost need;
Incline thine ear unto my cries,
And hear an orphan plead.

To thee I flee - to Thee I pray;
Thou shalt my Father be:
More than the fondest parents' care
I find, O Lord, in thee.

Already thou hast heard my cry,
And wiped away my tears;
Thy mercy is a refuge found,
To guard my helpless years.

O, let thy love descend on those
Who pity to me show;
Nor let THEIR children ever taste
The orphan's cup of woe.

The Contented Orphan

Thy gracious hand to different ranks
Has different tasks assign'd;
'Tis mine to tread the lowly path,
And bear an humble mind.

'Tis mind with industry and care
To earn my daily food;
I am not likely to be great,
But Thou canst make me good.

Labour will sweeten plain repast,
And peace will give me rest;
But 'tis thy favour crowns the whole,
And makes my station blest.

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