BODY AND TEXT IN
APULEIUS'S THE GOLDEN ASS AND RICHARDSON'S PAMELA

by

Diane Monique Harris

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Comparative Literature
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Diane Monique Harris, 1998
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.
Body and Text in Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* and Richardson's *Pamela*

This thesis looks at two works which, though widely separated in time and space, share a fascination with the complex inter-relationships which can exist between body and text. *The Golden Ass* and *Pamela* both have protagonists with striking bodies. Lucius suffers because he is imprisoned in a grotesque ass-body which subjects him to a series of misadventures. Pamela suffers because she is trapped in a seductive body which subjects her to her master's unsavoury designs. In both works, the protagonist is intimately associated with text, and eventually finds happiness by resorting to a substitution of literary corpus for physical body.

Composed of two chapters on *The Golden Ass*, one on *Pamela* and one on *Pamela*, Part II, this study does not systematically follow any one critical school, but draws upon the insights of Barthes, Derrida, Genette, Foucault, and psychoanalytic theory in general. The first chapter examines the way the metamorphosis turns Lucius's body into a kind of text, and looks at the formal similarities between Lucius's textual and physical bodies. The second chapter explores Lucius's decision, when faced with a life-threatening prostitution of his asinine body, to offer up his textual body to the public instead. The third chapter shows that a similar sleight-of-hand replaces carnal knowledge with textual knowledge in *Pamela*: Mr. B. "knows" Pamela by textually raping her. The chapter on *Pamela's* sequel explores the fact that the natural consequence of this textual rape is textual insemination.

Both *The Golden Ass* and *Pamela* revolve around metaphors suggestive of the physicality of text. The former envisages the text as a corpus which, like the human body, can be an object of desire and a source of pleasure. The latter focusses on the word textus, which suggests that the text is as concrete and tangible as a piece of fabric enclosing the body. These metaphors confirm the inextricable linking of body and text in these two works.
For Marguerite and Paul
Acknowledgements

I wish to express my thanks for the patience and feedback of my supervisor, Peter Nesselroth, and the members of my committee, Patricia Brückmann, John Fleming and Hugh Mason. I am also deeply grateful for the help given me by Fernando Nuñez, Gottskálk Jensson, and Dawn Henwood. This thesis benefitted from the suggestions of Peter Sabor.

No words are adequate to describe my debt to my parents, Drs. Paul and Marguerite Harris.

I thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for financial support.
# Table of Contents

Abbreviations ............................................................... vi

Introduction ................................................................. 1

Chapter One: Physical Form/Textual Form: Structure in *The Golden Ass* ............... 36

Chapter Two: Book for Body: The Eroticization of the Text in *The Golden Ass* .......... 82

Chapter Three: Breaking the Seal: Textual Rape in *Pamela* ................................. 124

Chapter Four: "Pleasant Fruits": Textual Insemination in *Pamela, Part 2* ............... 169

Conclusion ................................................................. 223

Works Cited .............................................................. 230
Abbreviations

A&A = Auctor & Actor

PT = Le Plaisir du texte

Grandison = The History of Sir Charles Grandison

Fonction et champ = Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage en psychanalyse
Introduction

Apuleius's *The Golden Ass* and Richardson's *Pamela*, separated by sixteen centuries, at first glance seem radically dissimilar. Nonetheless, more unites these two works than the fact that both have been claimed as a pioneering example of the form we call the novel. The history of their reception suggests a point of contact, for they share the rather dubious distinction of having been condemned as pornographic at one time or another. *The Golden Ass* has a long history of being shunned as a shocking, offensive work, and while the general response was to see *Pamela* as an uplifting and moral text, a minority denounced it as dangerously inflaming because of its scenes of seduction and attempted rape. These critics were right to see *Pamela* as an extremely erotic piece of literature, though its eroticism is manifested in a different form from *The Golden Ass*'s. The former's sensuality is subterranean, the latter's, overt. However, one misses patterns in both these texts by looking at their depiction of physical sexuality in isolation, for in each case the eroticism of the body is indissociable from a kind of textual eroticism.

The broad outline of plot suggests further similarities between *The Golden Ass* and *Pamela*. Both novels deal with metamorphoses: one the tale of a remarkably imprudent young man who gets turned into an ass, the other the story of a remarkably prudent young servant-girl who gets turned into an upper-class wife. Yet beneath the obvious metamorphosis which structures the plot, these novels explore a transformation of a subtler kind. *Pamela* and *The Golden Ass* look at the ways in which the human body can be transmuted into a textual body, and this metamorphosis plays a key role in each novel. Apuleius and Richardson recognize that text—itself a *corpus*—is apt to enter into different relations with the human body. Both works
establish an intricate and shifting web of connections between physical body and textual body. Finally, both show their protagonists substituting text for body in an erotic context in order to escape grievous bodily harm: rape in Pamela's case, sexual ignominy and death in Lucius's.

This introductory chapter, divided into three sections, will set the stage for the discussion of Apuleius and Richardson by looking at a variety of other authors. The first section outlines the way in which logocentrism denigrates text for being, unlike the spoken word, a concrete, material body detached from its source. The next section looks at the way Richardson and Sterne implicitly challenge two logocentric assumptions. First, they suggest that the spoken word is not as immaterial as might first appear, and thus not radically opposed to the written word on these grounds. Second, they suggest through expresssive manipulations of the mise en page that the bodily nature of text is cause for celebration rather than scorn. The third section moves away from form to examine the way the bodily nature of text can be an asset on the level of content. Itself a physical body, the text is apt to function as a substitute for the human body, and this interchangeability is crucial in Rousseau, Edmond Rostand and Fanny Burney. A look at the text-for-body substitutions practised by Rostand's Cyrano and Burney's Eugenia will lay the groundwork for examining the more complex body-text relationships in The Golden Ass and Pamela.

* 

In one of the Quart Livre's most delightful passages, Rabelais has Pantagruel's ship come across some paroles gelées on the high seas. These are words which, pronounced in a frigid climate, have frozen into solid bodies:

Lors [Pantagruel] nous jecta sus le tillac plenes mains de parolles gelées, et
semblaient dragée perlée de diverses couleurs. Nous y veismes des motz de gueule, des motz de sinople, des motz de azur, des motz de sable, des motz dorez. Lesquelz, estre quelque peu eschauffez entre nos mains, fondoient comme neiges, et les oyons réalement [...] (Le Quart Livre 56.732²)

It is tempting to see the paroles gelées as an image of the written word, for the text too is the word solidified into a physical body. Walter Ong reminds us that the Hebrew term dabar means both "word" and "event" (Orality and Literacy 32). The spoken word is by nature an event: it lives a dynamic but ephemeral life, dying on the lips of the speaker even as it is pronounced. Transcribed into writing, this dynamic event becomes a concrete thing. With writing, the word enters the world of extension, and can be separated from its creator in space. It enters too the world of duration, and can be separated from its creator in time. Like the parole gelée, the text is an autonomous thing which can travel into the world on its own, be given or sold—though Pantagruel refuses to give or sell the paroles gelées, since only lovers give their word, and only lawyers sell theirs (Le Quart Livre 56.732).

The text can be emancipated from the body of its creator because it is itself a body: "Le signe, unité du corps signifiant et de l'idéalité signifiée, devient une sorte d'incarnation" (Marges de la philosophie 94), says Derrida in his commentary on Hegel. The text can transcend its author in space and time only because it is the word incarnate. Yet from the logocentric perspective, the bodily nature of text has a dark side:

Hegel savait que ce corps propre et animé du signifiant était aussi un tombeau. L'association sôma/sêma est aussi à l'oeuvre dans cette sémiologie et cela n'a rien d'étonnant. Le tombeau, c'est la vie du corps comme signe de mort, le corps comme autre de l'âme, de la psyché animée, du souffle vivant. Mais le tombeau, c'est aussi ce qui abrite, garde en réserve, thésaurise la vie en marquant qu'elle continue

1 In the terminology of heraldry, "gueule" is red, and "sinople," green.

2 References to Rabelais will be given as chapter number followed by page number in the L'Intégrale/Seuil edition.
ailleurs. (Marges de la philosophie 95)

The written signifier is like Clarissa's coffin—richly inscribed with meaning, yet ineluctably linked to death. This coffin is peculiarly appropriate as an emblem for the written word, for Clarissa shocks her entourage by using it as a writing-desk.

In the logocentric tradition explored by Derrida, the written word is devalued as a poor cousin of the spoken word. Speech is seen as the intimate, irrepressible expression of thought or idea, the spoken word seeming to well up spontaneously from within. If the spoken word is a sign, it seems a transparent one which lets us perceive thought directly:

Ce n'est pas un hasard si la pensée de l'être, comme pensée de ce signifié transcendantal, se manifeste par excellence dans la voix: c'est-à-dire dans une langue de mots. La voix s'entend—c'est sans doute ce qu'on appelle la conscience—au plus proche de soi comme l'effacement absolu du signifiant: auto-affection pure qui a nécessairement la forme du temps et qui n'emprunte hors de soi, dans le monde ou dans la 'réalité', aucun signifiant accessoire, aucune substance d'expression étrangère à sa propre spontanéité. C'est l'expérience unique du signifié se produisant spontanément, du dedans de soi, et néanmoins, en tant que concept signifié, dans l'élément de l'idéalité ou de l'universalité.

(De la Grammatologie 33)

Speech-act theory, which sees the spoken word as functioning in a specific context of human interaction, would take exception to the claim that the spoken word is utterly immaterial. From the logocentric perspective, however, the spoken word is almost as ephemeral and ethereal as thought itself, while the written word is a physical thing, the concrete residue of thought. This purported immateriality of the spoken word contributes to the privileging of speech over writing:

Le caractère non-mondain de cette substance d'expression est constitutif de cette idéalité. Cette expérience de l'effacement du signifiant dans la voix n'est pas une

3 Sandy Petrey notes that speech-act theory shifts attention from "what words say as words" to "what they do as a component of human interaction" (Speech Acts and Literary Theory 13). Petrey shows that even the most banal sentence can have radically different meanings according to its context: "'The window's open' could warn you to be careful not to fall out, request you to close it, inform you of a state of affairs, guess about a state of affairs, contradict your idea of a state of affairs, and on and on" (14).
illusion parmi d'autres—puisqu'elle est la condition de l'idée même de vérité...
(De la Grammatologie 33)

Logocentrism's scorn for the written word is linked to the fact that the spoken word/written word dichotomy is seen as an instance of the soul/body dichotomy so pervasive in the Western tradition: "l'écriture, la lettre, l'inscription sensible ont toujours été considérées par la tradition occidentale comme le corps et la matière extérieure à l'esprit, au souffle, au verbe et au logos" (De la Grammatologie 52).

From the logocentric perspective, the spoken word is indissolubly linked to truth and presence. The written word—a transcription of the dynamic spoken word—is vaguely unsettling because it operates in the absence of the human being who wishes to communicate. Rabelais's myth of the paroles gelées captures the disquieting quality of the word which functions autonomously. As Pantagruel and crew sail along, they are troubled to hear words and noises which do not emanate from any visible source:

Plus persévérions escoutans, plus discernions les voix, jusques à entendre motz entiers. Ce que nous effraya grandement, et non sans cause, personne ne voyans et entendens voix et sons tant divers, d'home, de femmes, d'enfans, de chevaulx, si bien que Panurge s'escraw: « Ventre bieu! Est-ce mocque? Nous sommes perdus. Fuyons! [...] » (Le Quart Livre 55.729).

Panurge is so perturbed by the bodiless voices that he wishes to flee. The spectre of the voice severed from the body of the speaker has long been a source of disquiet. Apuleius's The Golden Ass (2nd c. A.D.) gives us a chilling example of what can happen when word is separated from speaker. A wife becomes jealous of a young woman her husband treats kindly, not realizing that this woman is in fact her husband's sister. The jealous wife lays a trap for her supposed rival which hinges on appropriating her husband's voice. She sends a slave to the young woman to tell her that her benefactor wishes to see her, alone, at his country house. In order to make the message
convincing, she must link the words to her husband's person. She has the slave show the young woman a ring stolen from her husband, thus deflecting her attention from the immaterial word allegedly spoken by this man to a concrete thing definitely associated with him. The girl arrives at the country house to find not her brother, but rather his infuriated wife. The wife strips her and whips her. Although the girl screams out her innocence, the wife savagely murders her by thrusting a white-hot firebrand between her thighs (X.24).

This novel of the Latin Decadence underscores the dangers of severing the spoken word from the speaker. A later Decadent novel similarly associates the severed voice with monstrosity, perversion and fear. Des Esseintes, the hero of J.-K. Huysmans's *A Rebours* (1884), is a great admirer of Apuleius: "Cet Africain le réjouissait" (115). Like *The Golden Ass, A Rebours* contains a troubling episode in which the human voice is detached from its normal source. Palled by years of debauchery, the wealthy Des Esseintes is driven to seek out ever more exotic means of finding pleasure. He begins an affair with a woman who sows unease because of her ability to detach her voice from her body. She makes inanimate objects speak, "[à] la stupeur d'une foule que ces exercices mettaient mal à l'aise" (209). This uncanny gift is precisely what attracts Des Esseintes. When they are having sex, Des Esseintes has the ventriloquist imitate her husband's voice as though he were furiously trying to break into the room: "*[Des Esseintes] recourut à l'adjuvant le plus efficace des vieux et inconstants prurits, à la peur" (211).

The ventriloquist is portrayed as monstrous because of her ability to create disembodied voices; Des Esseintes calls her "la femme dont la monstruosité l'avait tant satisfait pendant des mois" (209). In *The Golden Ass*, the jealous wife who severs voice from body is similarly a monstrous figure (*scelesta femina* X.34). She is able to murder and "rape" her sister-in-law only because she has appropriated her husband's voice. The stealing of this voice marks the beginning of a long
career in monstrosity; after more heinous crimes, she will be condemned to copulate with the ass in the public arena (X.23). According to M.H. Abrams, the Decadent writer "sets out to violate what is 'natural' in human experience" (3). Apuleius and Huysmans both violate the natural link between the spoken word and the body of the speaker.

The spoken word inspires uneasiness when severed from the body of its speaker; the written word, autonomous by nature, is foreseeably disturbing. Eighteenth-century novelists exploit the dramatic possibilities which result from the fact that the written word, separable from its creator in a way that the spoken word cannot be, lends itself to interception, forgery and suppression. In Richardson's Clarissa, textual manipulation precedes sexual manipulation: Lovelace intercepts a warning letter which Anna Howe has written to Clarissa, and replaces it with a self-serving forgery. The spiritual son of Lovelace, Laclos's Valmont is passé maître in all manner of textual trickery. In Burney's Evelina, Willoughby devastates Evelina when he intercepts a note she has written to Orville, and forges an offensive reply to her.

Worse than the forgery is the text which turns against its own creator. In Marivaux's La Vie de Marianne, a young woman is tricked into writing a trivial note: "Vous savez que je vous attendez ce soir; ne me manquez pas" (417). Later this note will be used to suggest that she has taken a lover. Predictably, the Gothic novel seizes upon the horror of the text which becomes the enemy of its author. In Radcliffe's The Mysteries of Udolpho, Emily St. Aubert finds herself threatened by a text which, though her own creation, has won a frightening autonomy. She writes a note acknowledging reluctant acquiescence in a business matter. Her unscrupulous guardian will use this text as proof that she has agreed to marry a man she despises: "your own hand will bear testimony against you" (199), he tells Emily.

It is Mary Shelley who explores the full horror of the text which, monster-like, turns against
its own creator. If the body of Frankenstein's creature is made up of fragments of corpses, his inner self is formed from fragments of text—Volney's *Ruins of Empires*, Plutarch's *Lives*, Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* and, most notably, *Paradise Lost* and his creator's lab notes. The creature-made-of-text will of course become Frankenstein's bitter enemy. Shelley's tale is a parable about the dangerous autonomy of the text: independent of its creator once it has come into being, the text can in the most extreme cases become a threat to its author's well-being. The real-life story of Salman Rushdie is only an updating of Shelley's classic tale.

In exploring the dangers of the creature-made-of-text, Mary Shelley is perpetuating a theme of her mother's. Mary Wollstonecraft's *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman* tells the story of a woman confined to a madhouse by her tyrannical husband. Maria's keeper lends her books—*Paradise Lost*, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, Dryden's *Fables*—owned by Darnford, a gentleman locked in another chamber of the madhouse. Maria finds herself irresistibly drawn to Darnford when she discovers that the marginal notes he has pencilled in his books are "perfectly in unison" (34) with her own mode of thinking. Having only glimpses of Darnford through his marginalia, Maria turns to another text to complete the picture: she endows Darnford with "all St. Preux's sentiments and feelings, culled to gratify her own" (38), and falls in love with him. But like Victor Frankenstein, Maria discovers that there are dangers in creating new beings from texts. Although *Maria* was never finished, Wollstonecraft's notes suggest that Darnford would have betrayed the heroine's trust. Victor Frankenstein's textual creature proves an enemy to his life, Maria's, an enemy to her happiness.

The text which turns on its own creator—the extreme case of the written word's divorce from its author—dramatizes a long-standing concern with writing. In the *Phaedrus*, Plato notes the complications and entanglements caused by the physical autonomy of the written word:
once a thing is committed to writing it circulates equally among those who understand the subject and those who have no business with it; a writing cannot distinguish between suitable and unsuitable readers. And if it is ill-treated or unfairly abused it always needs its parent to come to its rescue; it is quite incapable of defending or helping itself. (Phaedrus 275e)

The dissociation of the text from the communicating human being is a key aspect of logocentrism's denigration of the written word. The spoken word replaces the thought, yet the two are so intimately connected that signifier and signified are almost one. Derrida finds confirmation of this perceived intimacy in the phrase s'entendre parler, which suggests that to intend, to understand and to hear are quasi-indissociable. But if the spoken word replaces thought, the written word, as transcription of the spoken word, is at two removes from the original meaning:

\[
\text{Si la supplémentarité est un procès nécessairement indéfini, l'écriture est le supplément par excellence puisqu'elle marque le point où le supplément se donne comme supplément de supplément, signe de signe, tenant lieu d'une parole déjà signifiante: elle déplace le lieu propre de la phrase, l'unique fois de la phrase prononcée hic et nunc par un sujet irremplaçable, et en retour énerve la voix.} \\
(De la Grammatologie 398)
\]

Writing is condemned to a second-rate status if seen as the cold rendering of the dynamic spoken word. However, the analogy of the paroles gelées challenges this conception of the written word. At first Pantagruel's crew is frightened by the spectre of the chilly word divorced from the warm human body. But once they have mastered their initial unease, they become fascinated with the paroles gelées in their own right, for these dragées do more than represent the spoken word of long-disappeared individuals. They are in and of themselves delightful objects which please by their variety of size and colour. Finally, from being a horror which Pantagruel's men want to flee, the paroles gelées become a treasure which they wish to preserve forever: "Croyez que nous y eusmez du passetemps beaucoup. Je vouloys quelques motz de gueule mettre en réserve dedans de
In the image of Pantagruel and his crew, a number of eighteenth-century authors take delight in the corporeality of text. They see the written word not as an inferior substitute, but rather as an entity which has unique expressive possibilities in its own right. If the paroles gelées please through their varying shapes and colours, so too does the text have the power to delight and communicate through visual means. Authors like Richardson and Sterne exploit the fact that the written word can be much more than simple transcription, and turn the text's corporeality—that very quality which logocentrism scorns—into a cause for celebration and delight. But before looking at this valorization of the bodily nature of text, we will examine the way these novelists undermine another logocentric position, namely the assumption that the spoken word has a transparent signifier.

In the logocentric tradition, the spoken word is seen as the natural purveyor of dynamic human thought. Hegel applauds the spoken signifier for its self-effacing nature: "le son (Ton), est une extériorité qui, dans son surgissement, s'anéantit par le fait même de son être-là et s'évanouit d'elle-même" (Marges de la philosophie 107). Laurence Sterne devises ways of prolonging the être-là of the spoken signifier—of reminding us that the sounded word, like the written, has a material existence. Tristram Shandy understands the importance of what Foucault calls the "substance sonore" (Ceci n'est pas une pipe 22) of language, reminding us that the word fiddlestick may be pronounced with "an infinitude of notes, tunes, cants, chants, airs, looks, and accents," each of
these pronunciations "impressing a sense and meaning as different from the other, as dirt from cleanliness" (Tristram Shandy 9.25.487).

Tristram Shandy's Yorick recognizes the importance of the precise sound texture of a word. He glosses the cadences of his sermons as though they were musical compositions: "What Yorick could mean by the words lentamente,—tenutè—grave, and sometimes adagio,—as applied to theological compositions, and with which he has characterized some of these sermons, I dare not venture to guess" (Tristram Shandy 6.11.325). Tristram's puzzlement is suspect, for he himself has recourse to "musical terms" when transcribing his parents' speculations about the future sex life of Uncle Toby and the Widow Wadman. As Tristram's parents discuss the possibility of the Widow Wadman persuading Toby to beget her a child, the same word is repeated three times, but with differing cadences:

———Though if it comes to persuasion—said my father—Lord have mercy upon them.
   Amen: said my mother, piano.
   Amen: cried my father, fortissimè.
   Amen: said my mother again—but with such a sighing cadence of personal pity at the end of it, as discomfited every fibre about my father— (9.11.471)

The application of cadence marks to speech suggests that there is no impenetrable cloison between language and music. Sterne's ideal reader is, like Corporal Trim, exquisitely sensitive to the way melody modulates meaning: "———Poo—poo! said my uncle Toby—but with accents of such sweet encouragement did he utter it, that the corporal went on with his story with more alacrity than ever" (8.19.433).

It is perhaps when faced with a foreign tongue that we are most aware of the substance sonore of language. Sterne takes pains to make the charm of a foreign idiom accessible to the English

\(^5\) References to Tristram Shandy are given as volume, chapter, and page (in the Houghton Mifflin edition).
reader. When reporting the speech of Frenchmen, *A Sentimental Journey*'s Yorick often remains faithful to the syntax and vocabulary of the original French. In the following passage, framed by two French phrases, we hear behind the English words the cadence and music of the French language:

*C'est bien vrai*, said he. But in this case I should only exchange one disquietude for another, and with loss: figure to yourself, my dear Sir, that in giving you a chaise which would fall to pieces before you had got half way to Paris—figure to yourself how much I should suffer, in giving an ill impression of myself to a man of honour, and lying at the mercy, as I must do, *d'un homme d'esprit*. (15)

Sterne's precise rendering of French phraseology permits one to hazard a guess at the French passage which underlies this English "translation":

*C'est bien vrai, dit-il. Mais dans ce cas, je ne ferais que changer une inquiétude pour une autre, et en pure perte: figurez-vous, mon cher Monsieur, qu'en vous donnant une chaise qui risquerait de tomber en morceaux avant que vous ne soyez arrivé à mi-chemin de Paris—figurez-vous, vous dis-je, à quel point je souffrirais, en donnant une piètre impression de moi-même à un homme d'honneur, et en me mettant de la sorte à la merci d'un homme d'esprit."

*Tristram Shandy*'s Yorick had used cadence marks to capture in print the music of his English sermons. The Yorick of *A Sentimental Journey* extends this ambition to the music of a foreign idiom, exploiting *mot à mot* translation to give his readers a taste of the melody of the French language.

Sterne edges us towards an awareness of what Roland Barthes calls the utopia of the "bruissement de la langue":

*Quelle utopie? Celle d'une musique du sens; j'entends par là que dans son état utopique la langue serait élargie, je dirais même dénaturée, jusqu'à former un immense tissu sonore dans lequel l'appareil sémantique se trouverait irréalisé; le signifiant phonique, métrique, vocal, se déploierait dans toute sa somptuosité, sans que jamais un signe s'en détache... ("Le Bruissement de la langue" 94)

This utopia is difficult to reach, for our awareness of the meaning of language prevents us from
appreciating it as a purely sonorous phenomenon: "il reste toujours trop de sens pour que le langage accomplisse une jouissance qui serait propre à sa matière" (94). Barthes's point is well taken—when we read a phrase like Max Jacob's "le marchand de gants de Gand" (Matorel 228) or Rabelais's "femme folle à la messe, femme molle à la fesse" (Pantagruel 16.282), our pleasure derives from a mixture of sense and sound. But if anyone realizes the goal of turning language into pure music, it is surely Sterne's nuns. In Book VII of Tristram Shandy, the abbess of Andoüillets sets out to turn meaningful language into a pure tissu sonore—not in order to reach Barthes's utopia, but rather to avoid the dystopia of eternal damnation. The nuns can goad their sluggish mules into action only by pronouncing two horribly sinful words. The abbess's solution is deliberately to divorce sound from sense, turning the two words into a kind of abstract music:

Now I see no sin in saying, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, a hundred times together; nor is there any turpitude in pronouncing the syllable ger, ger, ger, ger, ger,1 were it from our matins to our vespers: Therefore, my dear daughter, continued the abbess of Andoüillets—I will say bou, and thou shalt say ger; and then alternately, as there is no more sin in fou then in bou—Thou shalt say fou—and I will come in (like fa, sol, la, re, mi, ut, at our complines) with ter. And accordingly the abbess, giving the pitch note, set off thus:

Abbess, } Bou - - bou - - bou - -
Margarita. | - - ger, - - ger, - - ger
Margarita. | Fou - - fou - - fou - -
Abbess, } - - ter, - - ter, - - ter.

The two mules acknowledged the notes by a mutual lash of their tails; but it went no further.——"Twill answer by an' by," said the novice.

Abbess, } Bou- bou- bou- bou- bou- bou- bou- bou-
Margarita. | - - ger, ger, ger, ger, ger, ger,
Quicker still, cried Margarita.
Fou, fou, fou, fou, fou, fou, fou, fou, fou, fou.
Quicker still, cried Margarita.
Bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou.
Quicker still—God preserve me! said the abbess—They do not understand us, cried Margarita—But the Devil does, said the abbess of Andoüillets.

(7.25.388-9)
This passage is conceivably a glance at the *paroles gelées* episode, for Rabelais too startles us by breaking language down into units of pure sound. Encountering the frozen words, Pantagruel and crew have no choice but to pay attention to the signifier in its materiality, for the signified is unknown to them: "Lesquelles [paroles gelées] ensemblement fondues, ouysmes : hin, hin, hin, hin, his, ticque, torche, lorgne, brededin, brededac, frr, frrr, frrr, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, bou, traccc, trac, trrr, trrr, trrrr, trrrrr, on, on, on, ououououon, goth, magoth et ne scay quelz aultres motz barbares" (Le Quart Livre 56.732).

In bringing attention to language as a tissu sonore (to use Barthes's term) or substance sonore (to use Foucault's), Sterne combats the logocentric myth of the transparency of the spoken signifier. Richardson too is sensitive to the way sound texture affects meaning, and occasionally enriches the meaning of a word by capturing its pronunciation in print. When the ill-educated Mrs. Hodges writes a letter, she calls our attention to the pronunciation of Lovelace's name: "Squire Luveless is the devil" (984). Once we have read Mrs. Hodges's phonetic rendering of Lovelace's name, we cannot read in the same way such statements as "My name is Lovelace, madam—" (793). If Lovelace claims to have "the name of Love" (144), Mrs. Hodges's letter opens up the subversive possibility that he has the name of "without Love."6

Richardson does not always invoke the alibi of phonetic spelling. Anna Howe deliberately grafts new meaning onto a familiar word when she reproaches Clarissa for her "PRUDE-encies," adding in parentheses, "mind how I spell the word" (174). The word "PRUDE-encies" uses the properly visual resources of the written word to layer meaning in a way impossible with the spoken word—just as the meaning of a given parole gelée is enriched by the visual resources of colour and

---

6 Hodges's spelling is a particular revelation for the North American reader, who would tend to pronounce the vowel sound in *Lovelace* as [æ] rather than [e].
shape.

Such expressive subversions of conventional spelling call to mind Derrida's assertion that writing—even of the phonetic-alphabetic type—cannot be reduced to the simple transcription of voice: "Jamais une écriture ne peut se laisser de part en part transir par la voix" (Marges de la philosophie 112). Sterne's meticulous attention to the dash—varying in length from 3 mm to 3 cm in Tristram Shandy (De Voogd 387)—does not always spring from a desire to represent with precision the pauses of speech. In his seasickness paragraph, Sterne conveys the chopiness of the water by long dashes which chop up the sentences:

Sick! sick! sick! sick! ——
—When shall we get to land? captain—they have hearts like stones—O I am deadly sick!—reach me that thing, boy ——'tis the most discomfiting sickness—I wish I was at the bottom—Madam! how is it with you? Undone! Undone! un—O! undone! sir,—What the first time?—No, 'tis the second, third, sixth, tenth time, sir,—hey-day——what a trampling over head!—hollo! cabin boy! what's the matter—
The wind chopp'd about! s'Death!—then I shall meet him full in the face.
What Luck!—'tis chopp'd about again, master—O the devil chop it——

Sterne plays with the visuals of the page as much to convey a displeasing motion as to make us hear the voice of the text.

Hegel disdains the written word for belonging to the realm of the body—yet like any other body, the text is rich in expressive possibilities. Richardson is at pains to give us information about the materiality of the letters which compose his novels. In Sir Charles Grandison, Harriet's suitor Greville wants to scratch out certain passages of his description of Harriet before the text is passed on to her. Lucy Selby cunningly furnishes him with ink "happening to be paler than his" (1.8). Grandison's "editor" marks the passages which Greville had tried to scratch out with the paler ink,
but which proved legible "by holding up the letter to the light" (1.10). Like Harriet, we know which parts of the encomium Greville had sought to keep from her eyes.

Richardson regularly enriches his letters by giving us information about the handwriting of the letter-writers. An accomplished forger, Lovelace understands that handwriting reveals character:

[Clarissa]'s delicate and even mind is seen in the very cut of her letters. Miss Howe's hand is no bad one; but is not so equal and regular. That little devil's natural impatience hurrying on her fingers gave, I suppose, from the beginning, her handwriting, as well as the rest of her, its fits and starts, and those peculiarities which, like strong muscular lines in a face, neither the pen nor the pencil can miss. (Clarissa 811)

Clarissa's exquisite handwriting will deterioration as Lovelace's persecutions take their toll on her.

Richardson himself has his own distinctive "handwriting" in his novels. If it is banal to use italics to indicate the emphases of a voice, rare are the authors who indicate precisely which syllable should bear the accent, as when Clarissa speaks of man's prerogative to be "so posi-tive, so unper-suade-able" (82), or when Charlotte Grandison declares that Lord G. is "Ut-ter-ly ruined for a husband" (2.498). Yet Richardson does not use italics only to capture the nuances of voice. Pamela transcribes Mr. B.'s rules of behaviour for a wife—but glosses them with her personal, sometimes rebellious reactions:

30. That if the Husband be set upon a wrong Thing, she must not dispute with him, but do it, and expostulate afterwards. —Good-sirs! I don't know what to say to this! —It looks a little hard, methinks! —This would bear a smart Debate, I fansy, in a Parliament of Women. (371)

Italics mark the difference between a dominant male discourse, and a subversive female one.

Rabelais helps us understand another way in which Richardson plays with the materiality of words to make his page expressive. Rabelais knows that the silhouette of a text can be as
expressive as its words. The *Quint Livre* brings us the astonishing Dive Bouteille.\(^7\)

---

\(^7\) Page 782 in the L’Intégrale/Seuil edition, which reproduces the Bouteille of the 1565 edition.
Like Rabelais, Richardson is sensitive to the expressive power of a text's silhouette. The following dialogue takes place between Clarissa and the supposed female relatives of Lovelace whom she has discovered to be whores. Richardson pares away almost all narrative elements so that only the bare spoken word remains, and he returns to the left margin with each new statement. Even before reading the dialogue, a glance at the page makes us feel its clipped, staccato rhythm:

They have orders to be civil to you.
It is very kind.
But we two will bail you, miss, if you will go back with us to Mrs. Sinclair's.
Not for the world!
Hers are very handsome apartments.
The fitter for those who own them!
These are very sad ones.
The fitter for me!
You may be very happy yet, miss, if you will.
I hope I shall.
[...]
We came to offer our service to you.
It is out of your power to serve me.
Perhaps not.
It is not in my inclination to trouble you.
You may be worse offered.
Perhaps I may.
You are mighty short, miss.
As I wish your visit to be, ladies.
They owned to me, that they cracked their fans and laughed.
Adieu, perverse beauty!
Your servant, ladies.
Adieu, Haughty-airs!
You see me humbled——
As you deserve, Miss Harlowe. Pride will have a fall.
Better fall with what you call pride, than stand with meanness.
Who does? (1056-7)

We need hardly be told that Clarissa is "mighty short," for the appearance of the page has already informed us of this. The signifier has become in itself significant, the shortness of the lines conveying the short, crisp rhythm of the conversation.

Richardson's best known experiment in manipulating the visuals of the page occurs after Clarissa's rape. The famous "mad page" has a haunting acoustic quality, for it suggests that Clarissa's unique, coherent voice has been splintered into a multiplicity of voices coming from
different directions. Yet the mad page is not exclusively an appeal to the reader's ear. By disrupting the habitual horizontal alignment of the page, Richardson suggests the degree to which Clarissa's mental equilibrium has been shattered:

**PAPER X.**

Lead me, where my own thoughts themselves may lose me;
Where I may do out what I've left of Life,
Forgive myself, and that day's guilt—
Cruel Remembrance!—how shall I appease thee?

—Obl! you have done an act
That bleats the face and blushing of modesty;
Takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent Love,
And makes a blister there!

Then down I laid my head,
Down on cold earth, and for a while was dead:
And my freed Soul to a strange Somewhere fled!
And spurned Soul said I,
When back to its cage again I saw it fly;
Fool! to resume her broken chain,
And row the galley here again
Fool! to that Body to return,
Where it condemns'd and destin'd is to mourn!

O my fair Howel! thou hast misfortune, help me,
And speak the word of peace to my divided Soul,
That was within me,
And raises every sense to my confusion.
I'm rotting on the brink
Of peace; and thou art all the hold I've left
Assist me—in the pangs of my affliction!

When Honour's lost, 'tis a relief to die:
Death's but a sure retreat from infancy.

Then farewell, Youth,
And all the joys that dwell
With Youth and Life.
And Life itself, farewell

For Life can never be sincerely blest.
Heav'n punishes the Bad, and proves the Best.
According to the definition Foucault gives in *Ceci n’est pas une pipe*, the mad page is almost a calligramme:

*Signe, la lettre permet de fixer les mots; ligne, elle permet de figurer la chose. Ainsi, le calligramme prétend-il effacer ludiquement les plus vieilles oppositions de notre civilisation alphabétique: montrer et nommer; figurer et dire; reproduire et articuler; imiter et signifier; regarder et lire. Traquant deux fois la chose dont il parle, il lui tend le piège le plus parfait. (22)*

Since Clarissa is artist as well as writer—among her artistic pursuits are painting, drawing, embroidery and elaborate coffin design—it should surprise us little that the visual and material aspects of her text contribute to its meaning. In Rabelais, the colour of a *parole gelée* gives information about its content, and this is precisely the case with the will Clarissa stitches with black silk (1412). The will’s black border corresponds to the dark content of the text—and the border encloses as does the coffin.

Like Clarissa, *Grandison*’s Harriet Byron reinforces meaning by manipulating the visuals of the page. Harriet uses a split page to compare her fate with Clementina’s (2.158). The parallel columns of text juxtapose parallel life experiences:
Shall I run a parallel between our two cases?

Clementina’s relations were all solicitous for her marrying the Count of Belvedere, a man of unexceptionable character, of family, of fortune; and who is said to be a gallant and an handsome man, and who adores her, and is of her own faith and country. What difficulties had Clementina to contend with! It was great in her to endeavour to conquer a Love, that she could not, either in duty, or with her judgment and conscience, acknowledge.

No wonder, then, that so excellent a young Lady suffered Concealment, like a worm in the bud, to feed on her damask cheek.

Harriet’s relations were all solicitous, from the first, for an alliance with their child’s deliverer. They never had encouraged any man’s address; nor had she: And all his nearest and dearest friends were partial to her, and soon grew ardent in her favour. Harriet, not knowing of any engagement he had, could have no difficulties to contend with; except inferiority of fortune were one. She had therefore no reason to endeavour to conquer a passion not ignobly founded; and of which duty, judgment, and conscience, approved. Suspense therefore, only, and not concealment (since every one called upon Harriet to acknowledge her Love) could feed on her cheek.

Spatial metaphors enrich the meaning. The left-right opposition of the columns is relevant, for Clementina (the Catholic Italian) is on the left, and Harriet (the Protestant Englishwoman, and thus the "right" choice for Sir Charles) is on the right. After Grandison marries Harriet, Lucy asks rhetorically, "How could Sir Charles, so thorough an Englishman, have been happy with an Italian wife?" (3.263).

*Grandison* offers another example of Richardson exploiting the spatial dimension of the text. As her love for Sir Charles takes shape, Harriet begins to mark paragraphs which she does not want Lucy to share with the rest of the family: "Pray, my dear, attend for the future to those indexes or hands; and forbear to read out the passages inclosed by them, if you can—" (1.290). We can fancy that the hands of the abridger are represented on the page:
Let me ask you, Lucy: You have passed the fiery ordeal—Did you ever find in yourself a kind of impatience, next to petulance; and in your heart (only for fear of exposing yourself) that you were ready to quarrel, or to be short with any—body that came upon you of a sudden; yet have no business of consequence to engage either your fingers or your thoughts?—Of late, my dear, I have been very often troubled with this odd sensation. But my whole temper is altering, I believe. I shall grow peevish, perverse, and gloomy, I doubt. O this wicked Sir Hargrave!~

This extract reminds us that the written word is not solely concerned with voice, and has an existence independent of the spoken word. Harriet uses hands—an interesting reminder of the bodily nature of text—to indicate the parts of the text which are not to be read aloud, are not to be transformed into the spoken word. The example has metaphoric status: there is a part of the text which is not subordinated to the task of representing the spoken word, but which is destined to function in other ways.

*  

Authors like Richardson, Rabelais and Sterne show that the materiality of text, far from being a drawback as in the logocentric tradition, holds rich possibilities for making the text more expressive and delightful. Thus far we have looked at authors who explore the bodily nature of texts on the level of form, enriching their texts by manipulating the disposition of words on a page. We will now consider three writers who celebrate the bodily nature of text in a different fashion. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Edmond Rostand and Fanny Burney turn the corporeality of text into a theme in their works. Though writing's association with body in the soul/body split has traditionally had negative connotations, characters like Edmond Rostand's Cyrano and Fanny Burney's Eugenia suggest that the magic of writing lies precisely in the fact that the textual body can take the place of the physical body of the individual who wishes to communicate.

Rousseau's Confessions suggests paradoxically that the written word is of value because it
implies the absence of the communicator. In *De la Grammatologie*, Derrida examines various reasons which lead to Rousseau's provocative claim that he can be known only through the medium of the written word: "Le parti que j'ai pris d'écrire et de me cacher est précisément celui qui me convenait. Moi présent, on n'aurait jamais su ce que je valais, on ne l'aurait pas soupçonné même" (1.154). Yet Derrida does not quote a passage which suggests that Rousseau's inhibition in conversation might be linked to his perception of his own body. In Book II of the *Confessions*, Rousseau draws a charming portrait of himself in his sixteenth year:

Sans être ce qu'on appelle un beau garçon, j'étais bien pris dans ma petite taille; j'avais un joli pied, la jambe fine, l'air dégagé, la physionomie animée, la bouche mignonne, les sourcils et les cheveux noirs, les yeux petits et même enfoncés, mais qui lançaient avec force le feu dont mon sang était embrasé. (1.86)

Rousseau suggests that a malaise concerning the body may have aggravated his debilitating lack of confidence during oral communication, for he follows his self-description with this comment:

"Malheureusement je ne savais rien de tout cela, et de ma vie il ne m'est arrivé de songer à ma figure, que lorsqu'il n'était plus temps d'en tirer parti" (1.86).

Rousseau's claim that he can be known only in his absence has the status of an epigram. Yet the continuation of the passage, less dramatic and quotable, suggests that at times Rousseau's true self is accessible through the oral mode: "Au reste, tout ceci souffre de certaines exceptions" (1.154). At least some of the exceptions occur when circumstances conspire to give him a favourable opinion of his physical presence, freeing him from the usual constraint he experiences in face-to-face communication.

A couple of luminous moments in the *Confessions* show Rousseau completely at ease in conversation. One is the day which he unexpectedly spends with two lovely girls, Mlle de Graffenried and Mlle Galley are sweetly flirtatious with him:
La gaieté du voyage et le babil de ces filles aiguisèrent tellement le mien, que jusqu'au soir, et tant que nous fûmes ensemble, nous ne déparlâmes pas un moment. Elles m'avaient mis si bien à mon aise, que ma langue parlait autant que mes yeux, quoiqu'elle ne dit pas les mêmes choses. (1.175)

This paragraph casts into doubt the logocentric belief that speech uses "aucun signifiant accessoire" (De la Grammatologie 33), for Rousseau shows the spoken word to be rooted in a rich environment of body language and eye contact.

Book VI brings us another interlude—again involving members of the opposite sex—in which Rousseau's conversation flows freely. Travelling to Montpellier for his health, Rousseau encounters two attractive women who are following the same route, Mme du Colombier and Mme de Lamage. Rousseau avoids them as much as possible until an overheard fragment of conversation gives him confidence: "J'entendis une fois Mme du Colombier dire à son amie: Il manque de monde, mais il est aimable. Ce mot me rassura beaucoup, et fit que je le devins en effet" (1.288). Here the word has a quasi-magic power, creating what it seems only to describe.

Rousseau's discomfort in oral communication reappears before long, for he hopes to become Mme de Lamage's lover. To all the world but Rousseau, it is clear that this worldly woman is labouring mightily to seduce him. When she arranges an intimate tête-à-tête, he is insecure and tongue-tied:

\[ \text{J'étais au supplice: j'avais déjà quitté mes propos de Céladon, dont je sentais tout le ridicule en si beau chemin: ne sachant plus quelle contenance tenir ni que dire, je me taisais; j'avais l'air boudeur, enfin je faisais tout ce qu'il fallait pour m'attirer le traitement que j'avais redouté. (1.290)} \]

Rousseau is eternally grateful to Mme de Lamage for breaking the unbearable silence by kissing him on the lips: "Elle m'avait donné cette confiance dont le défaut m'a presque toujours empêché d'être moi. Je le fus alors" (1.290). Again the spoken word, far from being the immaterial entity of logocentrism, is shown to inhere in a context of body language and physicality.
Thus among the many factors which explain Rousseau's preference for the written word is his uneasy relationship to his own body; he loses his inhibition in speech only on the rare occasions when female body language suffuses him with confidence. If the logocentric tradition denigrates writing because it operates in the absence of the person who wishes to communicate, Rousseau values it for precisely the same reason: "J'aimerais la société comme un autre, si je n'étais sûr de m'y montrer non seulement à mon désavantage, mais tout autre que je ne suis" (1.154). Certain authors of fiction take up the theme of the possible transcendence of the body offered by the written medium, and often push the case to its limit. It is perhaps Edmond Rostand who treats in the clearest and most stylized form the topos of writing as a salvation which permits an individual to slough off a body he sees as grotesque.

There is a curious anticipation of Cyrano de Bergerac in Book V of the Confessions, where Rousseau recalls Mme de Luxembourg telling him laughingly of a man who would leave his mistress in order to write to her. Rousseau comments, "Je lui dis que j'aurais bien été cet homme-là, et j'aurais pu ajouter que je l'avais été quelquefois" (1.220). In the nineteenth century, Rostand creates in Cyrano de Bergerac the prototype of the man who leaves his beloved in order to write to her.

Paralyzed by consciousness of his physical deformity, Cyrano cannot speak his love when confronted with the beautiful Roxane. The play explores various solutions. Cyrano seizes the opportunity of speaking through the body of another man: "Tu marcheras, j'irai dans l'ombre à ton côté: / Je serai ton esprit, tu seras ma beauté" (II.10), he says to the handsome Christian. Then, as he addresses Roxane in the darkness from beneath her balcony, Cyrano knows the intoxication of speaking to her in his own voice, but without the impediment of his detested body.
Yet this magical scene ultimately confirms that the body is an integral part of conversation. Stirred by Cyrano's words, Roxane desires a contact with the body, and Christian claims the kiss won by Cyrano's eloquence.

The balcony scene confirms that it is artificial and difficult to eliminate the body from conversation. Cyrano had tried to do precisely this by instituting a linguistic reshaping of reality. Though unable to change the reflection he sees in the mirror, Cyrano can attempt to ensure that his appearance will never be reflected back to him in the mirror of language. Cyrano's cadets warn the newly-recruited Christian that he must observe a strict linguistic code:

\[
\text{Monsieur de Neuvillette, apprenez quelque chose:} \\
C'est qu'il est un objet, chez nous, dont on ne cause \\
\text{Pas plus que de cordon dans l'hôtel d'un pendu! (II.9)}
\]

Asked what the taboo object is, the speaker replies only by mysteriously touching his nose three times. Pronouncing the word "nez" in Cyrano's presence is a powerful speech act whose punishment is swift and terrible. Yet this attempt to eliminate the body from conversation proves futile: the linguistic interdiction makes Cyrano's entourage all the more aware of his nose. Moreover, Cyrano is helpless when Christian decides to violate the interdiction in public (II.9).

Situations—like the balcony scene—which permit Cyrano to eliminate his body from conversation are rare and ephemeral; the possibility of bodiless conversation remains the stuff of fantasy. It is the written medium which offers Cyrano a reliable escape from the body he finds so repulsive. He is able to express and inspire love through the letters he writes to Roxane under Christian's name. Roxane sees the letters as the prolongation of the bodiless communication of the balcony scene. She addresses thus the man she believes to be the author of the love letters:
Mon Dieu, je t'adorais, c'est vrai, depuis qu'un soir,
D'une voix que je t'ignorais, sous ma fenêtre,
Ton âme commença de se faire connaître:
Eh bien, tes lettres, c'est, vois-tu, depuis un mois,
Comme si tout le temps, je l'entendais, ta voix
De ce soir-là, si tendre, et qui vous enveloppe! (IV.8.)

Analogue of the voice heard in the darkness, the written word permits the direct apprehension of soul by eliminating the body: "Chacun de ces petits feuillets / Était comme un pétale envelopé de ton âme" (IV.8).

The final act confirms the link between the written word and the magical experience of bodiless conversation. On the day of his death, Cyrano persuades Roxane to let him read aloud the letter she wears in her bosom, a letter she believes Christian wrote her shortly before his death. As the evening grows darker, Roxane realizes that Cyrano is not reading the letter, but reciting it from memory. Hearing his disembodied voice once again, she finally recognizes him as the man she has loved for years:

ROXANE
Les lettres, c'était vous...
CYRANO
Non!
ROXANE
Les mots chers et fous.

C'était vous...

CYRANO
Non!
ROXANE
La voix dans la nuit, c'était vous.

Je vous jure que non!

ROXANE
L'âme, c'était la vôtre! (V.5)

---

8 Roxane's use of the verb envelopper reinforces the link between this voice heard in the darkness and the written word of Cyrano's letters.
Like the balcony conversation, the written word turns Cyrano into pure voice unencumbered by body.

Cyrano de Bergerac challenges the logocentric principle that writing is "supplément de supplément, signe de signe, tenant lieu d'une parole déjà signifiante" (De la Grammatologie 398). Cyrano's writing does not take the place of speech, for the initial problem is precisely that he is incapable of speaking his love. Rostand's play concentrates less on the relation between text and speech than on that between text and body. Because the text is a thing, a material body in its own right, it can function as a substitute for the physical body. Cyrano's letters permit him to communicate in the absence of the detested body which inhibits him in face-to-face communication.9

The substitution of textual body for physical is all too successful, for it is only in letter form that Cyrano is ever pressed to Roxane's bosom. The play's bittersweet ending is linked to the bodily nature of text. As well as expressions of love, Cyrano's letters are also decidedly physical things. The final letter is a bandage worn over Roxane's wounded heart: "Elle [ma blessure] est là, sous la lettre au papier jaunissant / Où l'on peut voir encor des larmes et du sang!" (V.5). The letter's meaning is enriched by its physicality. Roxane cannot understand why Cyrano, in the many years since Christian's death, has not revealed himself as the author of the letters:

Pourquoi vous être tu pendant quatorze années,
Puisque sur cette lettre où lui n'était pour rien
Ces pleurs étaient de vous? (V.5)

Giving back the letter, Cyrano replies, "Ce sang était le sien" (V.5). The letter means not only through its content, but also through its materiality. Cyrano's last letter is a true parole gelée, frozen

---

9 Though this brief sketch of Cyrano de Bergerac does not examine its generic specificity, it is interesting to note that when the play is performed, the letter is often present upon the stage as one body among many.
definitely with Christian's death. And like any *parole gelée*, it has meaning through its colour and material nature: the yellowing paper is stained not only with Cyrano's tears, but also with Christian's blood.

A century before *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Fanny Burney writes a novel exploring the agony of being trapped in a grotesque body, and the possible escape offered by the written medium. As in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, the textual body in *Camilla* becomes a substitute for the physical body. *Camilla*'s sub-plot tells the tale of Eugenia Tyrold, a young woman who is made rather than born repulsive. Her doting uncle's carelessness leaves her lame and scarred with smallpox, shattering a perfect correspondence of inner and outer loveliness.

*Camilla* anticipates the linguistic conspiracy in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, for Eugenia's guilt-ridden uncle, Sir Hugh Tyrold, insists that her ugliness and deformities never be alluded to:

> Those incidents, therefore, from never being named, glided imperceptibly from her thoughts; and she grew up as unconscious as she was innocent, that, though born with a beauty which surpassed that of her lovely sisters, disease and accident had robbed her of that charm ere she knew she possessed it. (50)

But after a tranquil childhood, Eugenia inevitably comes up against a world which cares nothing for her uncle's linguistic interdictions. When several lower-class women taunt Eugenia about her grotesqueness, it is her family whom she reproaches: "'These women,' said she, calmly, 'are not to blame; they have been untutored, but not false; and they have only uttered such truths as I ought to have learnt from my cradle'" (294).

Though a plain-spoken man tells her that the Exeter Change dwarf would be a fit partner for her (280), Eugenia falls in love with an unusually handsome man, just as her male counterpart Cyrano falls in love with an unusually beautiful woman. Eugenia's situation seems doubly hopeless by virtue of the fact that Melmond, the man she loves, is exceptionally sensitive to physical beauty;
his infatuation with Indiana can have no other cause. How can the frightful Eugenia win out over the stunning Indiana? Like Cyrano's, Eugenia's salvation lies in the written word, which permits her to communicate the beauty of her soul in the absence of her unsightly body.

Writing's association with body is linked to the logocentric denigration of the written word. Yet it is precisely the bodily nature of text which proves Eugenia's—and Cyrano's—salvation. *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Camilla* are faithful to the logocentric tradition insofar as they conceive of the written word as a substitute or *supplément*. They skew logocentric thinking insofar as they see the written word as a substitute not for the spoken word, but rather for the body of the speaker.

Melmond first glimpses the beauty of Eugenia's soul when he sees a poem in which she expresses her love for him. However, he is shocked by the thought that she would permit anyone to see this tender confession of love: "'Why, my sister,' he cried, 'why would she give you this? why would you deliver it?'" (675). Melmond's sister hastens to the defense of Eugenia's feminine reticence: "this matchless creature merits not so degrading an idea; she gave me not the precious paper . . . she knows not I possess it; it was found upon the stairs: Ah! far from thus openly confessing her unhappy prepossession, she conceals it from every human being" (675). The written word is ideally suited to Cyrano because it can function in the absence of his physical form. The written word is ideally suited to Eugenia for a second reason as well: it can function in the absence of her intention to communicate. We will see that like Eugenia's, Pamela textual body is known against her will.

Once he understands that he is seeing Eugenia's poem against her wishes, Melmond is suffused with "tender though melancholy gratitude" (676): "To have excited such a regard in a mind that seemed so highly cultivated, and so naturally elegant, could not fail to touch him" (675-6). Since in any case poverty prevents him from marrying Indiana, Melmond agrees to propose to Eugenia.
She is blissfully happy until events reveal to her that Indiana still possesses Melmond's heart. At this time a second text reveals her nobility of soul. Eugenia draws up a document stating that she will give up half her fortune so that Melmond and Indiana can marry. This legal document completes the work that the misplaced poem had begun. Melmond recognizes that Eugenia's inner beauty surpasses Indiana's superficial charms: "'Ah, Madam!' exclaimed Melmond, wholly overcome, 'the noblest as well as softest of human hearts I perceive to be yours—and were mine at my own disposal—it must find you resistless!'" (746). When free, Melmond, won over by the beauty of Eugenia's textual body, once again proposes marriage to her: "Melmond, long conscious of her worth, and disgusted with all that had rivalled it in his mind, with the fervour of sincerity, yet diffidence of shame and regret, now fearfully sought the favour he before had reluctantly received" (912).

Before the reconciliation with Melmond, however, Eugenia lives through a period of believing that she will never inspire romantic love. Convinced that she is henceforth destined to be "only a spectatress of others" (905), she begins to write her memoirs. Eugenia has already experienced one linguistic reshaping of her body: the linguistic conspiracy designed to keep her in ignorance of her grotesqueness. By embarking on her memoirs, Eugenia engages in an alternative linguistic treatment of her body. This body is to be more than a simple object of ridicule or pity, for she intends to use it to impart a "philosophical idea" (905). From the first sentence, Eugenia addresses the issue of physical appearance, warning that hers will not be the typical memoirs of a woman: "O gentle reader! you have the story of one from whom fate has withheld all the delicacy of vanity, all the regale of cruelty—!" (905). Eugenia's literary presentation of her body gives new meaning to her personal tragedy. She transforms her face into a text which indicts society's superficial valuation of women:
Ye, too, O lords of the creation, mighty men! impute not to native vanity the repining spirit with which I lament the loss of beauty; attribute not to the innate weakness of my sex, the concern I confess for my deformity; nor to feminine littleness of soul, a regret of which the true source is to be traced to your own bosoms, and springs from your own tastes: for the value you yourselves set upon external attractions, your own neglect has taught me to know; and the indifferency with which you consider all else, your own duplicity has instructed me to feel.

The oral conspiracy initiated by Eugenia's uncle had sought to deny her physical deformities in a forced and unnatural manner. Because the written medium naturally functions in the absence of its creator, Eugenia can successfully use text to ask people to view her body in a different way. A significant detail reminds us that the written word is the medium of the body's absence. Eugenia leaves a space in her memoirs to be filled in with her portrait, yet this space remains blank at the novel's close. This blank emphasizes the fact that the written medium permits Eugenia to transcend the brute fact of her physical deformity, and engage instead in a textual re-presentation of this body.

Eugenia rejects the familiar idea that a woman's face is a text revealing her inner nature. When Melmond is astonished at the generous offer of half her fortune, Eugenia rebukes him gently by saying, "Shew less surprise, Sir, or I shall conclude you thought me as frightful within as without! But no! Providence is too good to make the mind necessarily deformed with the body" (746). Having rejected the idea that a woman's face is a text, Eugenia takes pen in hand to write her own texts: poems, legal documents, memoirs which reveal her inner beauty. Though unable to reshape her physical body as she would like, Eugenia makes full use of her power to create for herself a textual body deserving of love and admiration.

* 

This thesis will look at two literary works which, like *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Camilla*, are
fascinated with the bodily nature of text. *The Golden Ass* and *Pamela* both have protagonists with striking bodies. Like Cyrano, Lucius finds himself imprisoned in a grotesque body, and turns to writing to transcend this body. Pamela's dilemma is the opposite of Eugenia's: if the latter suffers because she is trapped in a repulsive body, the former suffers because she is trapped in a too-seductive body which subjects her to her master's unsavoury designs. Yet like Eugenia, Pamela wins love and happiness by creating a textual body more revealing than her physical body. In both *The Golden Ass* and *Pamela*, a substitution of literary corpus for physical self is a key element of the plot.

The thesis, composed of two chapters on *The Golden Ass* and two on *Pamela*, does not systematically follow any one critical school, but draws eclectically upon the insights of Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Gérard Genette, Michel Foucault, and psychoanalytic theory in general. The first chapter looks at the close association between physical form and textual form which Apuleius establishes in *The Golden Ass*. When Lucius is metamorphosed into an ass, his body becomes a kind of text in which his inner nature is inscribed. Apuleius then establishes a link between the form of the ass's body, and the form of the memoirs which Lucius produces. We discover that the two kinds of corpus are inseparable, the structure of Lucius's body determining the structure of his story.

The second chapter takes up the theme of the substitution of textual for physical body which we looked at briefly in *Cyrano de Bergerac* and *Camilla*. In *The Golden Ass*, this substitution takes place in an erotic context. Apuleius shows that like the human body, the text can be an object of desire and a source of pleasure. This similarity between textual and physical body prepares the way for a substitution to which Lucius will resort in extremis. Condemned to have sex with a murderess in the arena, Lucius changes the form of his public exhibition, prostituting his textual body instead
of his physical body.

If the Apuleius chapters focus on the word *corpus*, those on Richardson revolve around the word *textus* which, uniting the textile and the textual, is central to our understanding of *Pamela*. Like Apuleius, Richardson establishes a close bond between his protagonist's body and text, for Pamela wears her writings against her skin. The journal thus worn is also a kind of garment, and we will see that Pamela is defined as much through her clothing as through her writing. Having identified Pamela with both kinds of *textus*—clothing and text—Richardson subjects her first to a textile, and then to a textual rape. These metonymic rapes sketch out the possible endings to Pamela's story. The textile rape suggests that her tale could have ended in suicide, while the textual rape points up the happy consequences of substituting textual for physical body. By raping Pamela textually rather than physically, Mr. B. gains knowledge of Pamela's inner purity without sullying it.

The fourth chapter focusses on Richardson's continuation of *Pamela*. This work suffers the disdain so often reserved for sequels, and it is true that it was born in inauspicious circumstances. Just as Pamela is "forced" to write a commentary on Locke in *Pamela*, Part II, so was Richardson obliged to pen a sequel to his hugely successful first novel: he wrote Part II in self-defence because spurious sequels were being produced.\(^{10}\) Pamela's reluctance to write mirrors her creator's. But *Pamela*, Part II is more than the sickly twin of the first volume; it is a work which explores with elegance and precision the fact that textual insemination is a natural consequence of textual rape. Having conflated Pamela's body and text in *Pamela*, Richardson uses his sequel to establish parallels between Pamela's creation of textual and physical bodies.

---

\(^{10}\) See pp. 74-5 of Margaret Anne Doody's *A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson*. 
Apuleius and Richardson—second-century African and eighteenth-century Englishman—are greatly distant from each other in time, geography and mentality. Though it may be inexcusable to compare two such disparate authors to a third writer distant from them both, a text of Max Jacob's seems oddly fitting.\footnote{For this letter of 7 December, 1930 to Jean Cocteau, see p.7 of André Billy's \textit{Max Jacob}.}
Corpus: the word in Latin can apply to both the physical and the textual body. This overlap of meaning is richly relevant to The Golden Ass, a work in which body and text are interrelated in multiple and complex ways. An early passage alerts the reader to this interrelationship. We learn in Book II that the Chaldaean diviner Diophanes had prophesied that Lucius would become a book: "respondit [...] historiam magnam et incredundam fabulum et libros me futurum" (II.12). This prophecy is characterized as strange (mira et satis varia II.12), perhaps because one would have expected Diophanes to have predicted not that Lucius would become a book, but, more banally, that he would write a book.

At first glance, Book III seems to confirm Milo's claim that Diophanes is a mere charlatan: Lucius is indeed metamorphosed, but into an ass, not a book. Yet the charlatan proves unexpectedly perspicacious. In The Golden Ass, physical form and textual form are inseparable, for the shape of Lucius's body determines the shape of his text.

Evidently concerned with questions of narrative form, Apuleius opens The Golden Ass with a comment about its structure: "At ego tibi sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conseram" (I.1). As the novel proceeds, we are not permitted to forget the literary kinship to which Lucius lays

---

12 The Oxford Latin Dictionary gives as the final definition of corpus, "A comprehensive collection of facts on a given subject; a compendium of scientific, literary, or other writings, an encyclopaedia, corpus, etc." (OLD s.v. 16).

13 J. Arthur Hanson translates thus: "I will become a long story, an unbelievable tale, a book in several volumes." Other translators (among them William Adlington, Pierre Grimal, Paul Vallette, Robert Graves and P.G. Walsh) succumb to the temptation to make this prediction more "logical," and translate that Lucius will write a book or will become the subject of a book. For instance, Adlington gives "he sayd I should write a great Historie" (39); while Grimal translates, "on raconterait de moi une longue histoire" (II.12). Yet in straying from the letter of the text, these translators are eliminating an important indication of The Golden Ass's fusion of body and text.
claim. A second reference to Milesian tales occurs in Book IV, where Apollo pronounces an oracle in Latin "propter Milesiae conditorem" (IV.32). The structure of The Golden Ass seems to pose no problem, the author having defined his work ab initio as an example of Milesian tales. But only at our peril can we take at face value the statement which opens a book notorious for its interpretive slipperiness. As is so often the case in The Golden Ass, the book's incipit is as much provocation as statement; Apuleius is inviting us to ponder the value of an assertion which is both true and untrue, both helpful and misleading.

The narrator's reference to The Golden Ass as "Milesian" leads us to expect a collection of diverse narrative elements strung together. The term comes from the name of a Greek author of perhaps the first century B.C., Aristides of Miletus, who was adapted into Latin by Sisenna (Vallette xxii). Aristides's work is not extant, and the precise definition of the Milesian tale has been disputed. Recent scholarship suggests that the term refers to what we would call a loosely-constructed novel unified by the continued presence of a single narrator.14 In typical Milesian tales, the principle of unity is fairly external: the same narrator witnesses or experiences a series of disparate adventures.

As we might expect, Apuleius is not content passively to appropriate an existing form. In his hands, Milesian tales become Apuleian Milesian tales, for he transforms the genre's external principle of unity into an internal principle of unity. In The Golden Ass, there is a necessary, logical link between the nature of the ever-present narrator and the form of the story. The body of the ass

---

14 See Chapter 6 of Gottskálk Jansson's thesis entitled The Recollections of Encolpius: A Reading of the Satyricon as Greco-Roman Erotic Fiction. Jansson refutes the rival definition of the Milesian tale as a collection of short stories, and makes a case for the Milesian nature of Petronius's Satyricon: "the original Satyricon was not radically episodic, as is often assumed by scholars, but rather exhibited a central plot constructed around the person of the narrator" (288).
both functions as a text in itself, and determines the shape of the text we call *The Golden Ass*.

There is a sense in which Diophanes's prophecy is fulfilled from the very moment of Lucius's metamorphosis, for Lucius becomes readable like a text when he becomes an ass. In classical literature, metamorphosis is not a matter of chance. James Tatum explains that the nature of an individual's metamorphosis is determined by his personality:

> the less familiar (but original) title of the novel, *Metamorphoses*, announces that we may expect radical transformations in appearance but, curiously, *not* in character. Generally speaking, tales of transformation will be not so much about the development of a person's psychology as a *symbol* of it; some single facet of the personality will be represented in a symbolic transformation.

*(Apuleius and The Golden Ass 30)*

It is no accident that Lucius does not become an owl—symbol of wisdom—as Pamphile did, for Books I-III indicate that he is somewhat lacking in judgment and good sense. As Tatum suggests, "Change of outward appearance only typifies the psyche within" (31), and Book III's metamorphosis gives outward expression to Lucius's inner asininity. Lucius, it has been noted, makes an ass of himself in more ways than one.

The specific features of Lucius's new body flesh out (if the pun be excused) his character. The huge ass-ears are a symbol of Lucius's overwhelming curiosity; the oversized phallus, a symbol of his rampant libido. Lucius's asinine body is a text which we can "read" to discover his inner nature.\(^{15}\) By the time we reach the metamorphosis scene, we are already familiar with the concept of reading body parts to discover character, for this is precisely what Byrrhena does when she first encounters Lucius (II.2). In "Physiognomy in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* 2.2," H.J. Mason notes that in her lengthy commentary on Lucius's appearance, "Byrrhena is employing the methods of

---

\(^{15}\) In "Le Sens de l'expression *Asinus aureus*," René Martin suggests that the colour of the ass can also be "read." Martin believes that the ass represents Seth, the evil figure in the Isiac religion. Seth is associated with a reddish ass, and Martin makes a case for the word *aureus* being applicable to a reddish colour.
physiognomy, which claimed (Gell. NA 1.9.2) "mores naturasque hominum coniectatione quadam de oris et uultus ingenio deque totius corporis filo atque habitu sciscitari" (307). Apuleius's readers would have been sensitive to the significance of the details mentioned by Byrrhena, for, as Maud G. Gleason explains, in ancient times everyone "made risky inferences from human surfaces to human depths": "This was a world in which the scrutiny of faces was not an idle pastime but an essential survival skill" (Making Men: Sophists and Self-Presentation in Ancient Rome 55).

There is some evidence that Lucius fears the keen gaze of the woman who apparently raised him ("Ego te, o Luci, meis ists manibus educavi" II.3). Encouraged to greet Byrrhena, he pretends not to know her: "'Vereor' inquam 'ignotae mihi feminae,' et statim rubore suffusus deiecto capite restiti" (II.2). Byrrhena does prove uncomfortably perspicacious, noting as she scans Lucius's face, "Oculi caesii quidem, sed vigiles" (II.2). H.J. Mason points out that in a generally glowing portrait, Lucius's blue eyes strike a jarring note suggestive of "cowardice, rashness, and impudentia" ("Physiognomy" 309). Apuleius thus gives bodily proof of Lucius's asininity even before he is transformed into an ass. A subtle text before his transformation, Lucius's body becomes a graffiti scrawl after it.

The Golden Ass confirms that in metamorphosis, there is a link between what one was, and what one becomes. Yet Lucius's case is more complicated than, for example, that of the prosecuting barrister whom Meroe turns into a ram (I.9). With Lucius, we need to deepen the analysis between

---

16 Byrrhena is well aware that she is introducing a critical note. Mason notes her use of the adverb "quidem" when she brings up Lucius's eye colour ("Physiognomy" 308). English translators have not on the whole been sensitive to the concessive value of the quidem/sed structure in "oculi caesii quidem, sed vigiles et in aspectu micantes, prorsus aquilini..." (II.2). Adlington translates "his gray and quicke eyes like to the Eagle" (30), Walsh gives "his green eyes have a watchful look, quick to focus, sharp as an eagle's," and Hanson's version is "wide-awake light-blue eyes with flashing glance just like an eagle's." French translators have been more careful to retain the qualification of the Latin text. Vallette gives "des yeux verdâtres, mais éveillés" (emphasis added). Grimal's translation is the most successful in capturing the quidem/sed nuance: "des yeux bleus, je veux bien, mais vifs et brillants" (emphasis added).
personality and physical form, for, in spite of Lucius's avowed horror at finding himself an ass, there is an element of wish-fulfilment in his metamorphosis. On two occasions Lucius claims that his transformation did afford him a single source of consolation in causing one of his body parts to grow enormously. Yet with asinine inconsistency, he mentions two different parts: once he tells us that his only consolation is his huge penis (III.24), and once that his only consolation is his huge ears (IX.15). These two sources of solace which Lucius at different times acknowledges signal wishes underlying his metamorphosis into an ass.

If Lucius was intensely interested in sex, he was also slightly fearful that he was not satisfying Photis sexually. As an ass, he is doubly absolved of this anxiety. Not only is he equipped with a massive penis, but also he need no longer have sex with Photis: "Nec ulla miserae reformationis video solacium, nisi quod mihi iam nequeunti tenere Photidem natura crescebat" (III.24). His ass-ears also fulfil a wish. On learning that Pamphile was a witch, Lucius could hardly contain his excitement: "Habes exoptatem occasionem et voto diutino poteris fabulis miris explere pectus" (II.6). This hope proves justified, for after his metamorphosis Lucius will have his heart's content of wonderful stories. The ass Lucius possesses huge, high-powered ears which let him eavesdrop even at considerable distances: "isto tamen vel unico solacio aerumnabilis deformitatis meae recreabar, quod auribus grandissimis praeditus cuncta longule etiam dissita facillime sentiebam" (IX.15). The actor Lucius only drops occasional hints of the positive aspects of asinine existence. The older and wiser auctor explicitly gives thanks for the metamorphosis which brought him so much knowledge: "Nam et ipse gratas gratias asino meo memini [...]" (IX.13). This retrospective expression of gratitude confirms that the ass's physical attributes do more than simply symbolize Lucius's character traits: they realize his secret wishes.

The explicit desire of the actor Lucius was to be transformed not into an ass, but—like
Panphile—into a bird. One would think that the two metamorphoses offer much the same advantages. Like the ass, a bird could travel widely and eavesdrop easily, and thus do Lucius the favour of making him *multiscius* (IX.13). And like the ass-transformation, the bird-transformation seems to offer Lucius increased virility, for Photis fears that as a bird Lucius would have new opportunities for sexual adventure: *"Sic inermem vix a lupulis conservo Thessalis. Hunc alitem factum ubi quaeram, videbo quando?"* (III.22). Lucius's reply to Photis's fears is instructive. After the requisite gallant declaration that he prefers no woman to his Photis, he points out that since he would become an owl—a bird of ill-omen—his freedom would be severely curtailed:

*Tunc etiam meis cogitationibus occurrit, cum semel avem talem perunctus induero, domus omnes procul me vitare debere. Quam pulchro enim quamque festivo matronae perfruentur amatore bubone! Quid quod istas nocturnas aves, cum penetraverint larem quempiam, solliciteprehensas foribus videmus affigi, ut quod infaustis volatibus familiae minantur exitum suis luant cruciatibus?* (III.23)

Being an ass offers Lucius respite from anxiety-provoking sex with Photis. In contrast, being an owl would place him in greater sexual peril, for he could be nailed to a door for merely approaching a woman. The owl's reputation as a bird of ill-omen presents another drawback: since the owl Lucius would have to stay far away from all houses, he would have limited opportunity to become *multiscius* through eavesdropping. Suddenly being an owl seems much less desirable. Unlike the asinine metamorphosis, the avian would offer Lucius neither respite from his sexual anxieties, nor gratification of his *curiositas*.

Despite disclaimers to the contrary, Lucius's secret wishes influence his transformation. Personality determines form. This is doubly true in *The Golden Ass*, for Lucius's personality determines both his physical form and his narrative form. From the novel's opening pages, we know that curiosity is Lucius's dominant character trait. This curiosity determines the course of his life, and consequently the form of his narrative. To take an early example, on his way to Thessaly
Lucius chances upon two travellers headed in the same direction, Aristomenes and his sceptical companion. Lucius coaxes Aristomenes into telling his story, and the result is the novel's first Milesian-style side-trip.

The fact of meeting Aristomenes is necessary, but not sufficient. Lucius's personality plays a key role in the inclusion of Aristomenes's story in the larger narrative framework. It is because Lucius is ever hungry for knowledge—"velim scire vel cuncta vel certe plurima" (I.2)—that he wheedles the story out of Aristomenes. If by some freak of chance the Princesse de Clèves had bumped into Aristomenes on the road, her exquisite politeness and reticence would have prevented her from probing into a stranger's intimate secrets. Aristomenes and the Princess would perhaps have exchanged a banal comment about the weather, and when the story of the Princess's life came to be written, the encounter with Aristomenes would not be deemed worthy of inclusion.

Considered a model of cohesion and unity, La Princesse de Clèves is structurally opposed to The Golden Ass because the Princess's personality is so different from Lucius's: she is introspective and absorbed by a select group of people, he is outward-turning and endlessly curious about others.

Lucius's thirst for knowledge and experience leads to the most striking aspect of The Golden Ass's structure: a suppleness which allows it to assimilate a great range of narrative material. With The Golden Ass, we do not merely have a cluster of varias fabulas (I.1) which happen to be unified to some degree by Lucius's continued presence. Rather, Lucius's nature is such that it would have been impossible for him to write anything but "varias fabulas"—he is too open to the diversity of experience to write otherwise. In Lucius's case, digressions are the very stuff of life. Laurence Sterne might be writing about The Golden Ass when he comments that digressions "are the life, the soul of reading;—take them out of this book for instance,—you might as well take the book along with them" (Tristram Shandy 1.22.55).
Thus if Lucius's personality determines the nature of his transformation, it similarly determines the structure of his narrative:

Yet from the moment of Lucius's metamorphosis, this relationship between physical and textual form changes subtly. The fact of being an ass has structural consequences; had Lucius been transformed into a mouse or a parrot in a cage, the form of his story would doubtless be very different. Since Lucius's function as a narrator of *varias fabulas* is inscribed in his very physical form, we can trace the following sequence at work in *The Golden Ass*:
As a man, Lucius had deliberately sought out a wide variety of experience and knowledge; as an ass, his physical form ensures that he is willy-nilly exposed to a gamut of experience beyond his wildest dreams. In Book IX, we find a third instance of the now-familiar claim—alerting us to the fulfilment of a key wish—that Lucius's abhorred transformation brought him only a single source of solace: "Nec illum uspiam cruciabilis vitae solacium aderat, nisi quod ingenita mihi curiositate recreabar" (IX.13). Lucius's curiosity will be gratified by his metamorphosis, and the abundance of data which comes the ass's way translates naturally into a narrative structure characterized by digression, diversity and interpolation.

In what ways does Lucius's asinine form affect the structure of his narrative? To begin, the very fact of being an animal is significant. On the assumption that Lucius is just a dumb, uncomprehending beast, people pay no attention to what they say or do in front of him. Lucius's animal form functions as a kind of ring of Gyges: "praesentiam meam parvi facientes libere quae volunt omnes et agunt et loquuntur" (IX.13). It is because he is an animal that Lucius discovers the secret of "Haemus"'s true identity: "nam procedente sermone paulo iam clarius contempta mea praesentia quasi vere mortui" (VII.12). Similar neglect of his presence allows Lucius to witness the orgy of Atargatis's priests (VIII.29). The simple fact of shedding human form gives Lucius access to knowledge not intended for him. As he intends to share this knowledge with us, he expresses himself within a structure which welcomes digression and expansion.

Nor is Lucius just any animal. The fact of being an ass redoubles the influx of narrative raw material. We have already discussed the delight which the ever-curious Lucius derives from having enormous asinine ears, ideally suited to eavesdropping (IX.15). Once again, the shape of Lucius's

---

17 The ass in la Comtesse de Ségur's Mémoires d’un âne enjoys a similar invisibility: "je continuai à écouter et à faire semblant de ne rien comprendre de ce qu’ils disaient" (70). See also pp. 56, 61, 75. Later in the novel, the ass loses this invisibility: "Je suis sûre qu’il nous entend et qu’il nous comprend" (220), says Camille.
body exposes him to numerous and varied sources of information. Lucius often reminds us of his impressive ability to hear in order to give authority to his stories: "Haec ad istum modum gesta compluribus mutuo sermocinantibus cognovi" (X.7), he will say, or "sermo talis meas affertur aures" (IX.16), or "Quam meis tam magnis auribus accipiens" (VI.32).

While an admirable listening machine, the ass-body is ill-equipped for speaking. The Golden Ass takes up a motif which appears in Ovid's Metamorphoses: the agony of the fact that the human being trapped in an animal body loses the power of speech. Transformed into a heifer, Io tries desperately to speak to her guardian: "conatoque queri mugitw edidit ore / pertimitutque sonos propriaque exterrita voce est" (Met. I.637-8). When Apuleius writes his own Metamorphoses, he exploits the comic potential of this situation:

\[Cum\ denique\ iam\ luce\ clarissima\ vicum\ quempiam\ frequentem\ et\ nundinis\ celebrem\ praetiremum,\ inter\ ipsas\ turbelas\ Graecorum\ genuino\ sermone\ nomen\ augustum\ Caesaris\ invocare\ temptavi.\ Et\ "O"\ quidem\ tantum\ disertum\ ac\ validum\ clamitavi,\ reliquum\ autem\ Caesaris\ nomen\ enuntiare\ non\ potui.\ Aspernati\ latrones\ clamorem\ absonum\ meum,\ caedentes\ hinc\ inde\ miserum\ corium\ nec\ cribris\ iam\ idoneum\ relinquent.\ (III.29)\]

Never one to waste a good joke, Apuleius will offer two variants of this situation of Lucius trying desperately to speak, only to find that he can produce nothing but an asinine bray (VII.3; VIII.29). There are other moments as well when the ass is frustrated at not being able to speak. He cannot save the innocent man accused of dismembering the nasty boy: "Quam rem procul dubio sentiebam ego illius ursae dentibus esse perfectam, et hercules dicerem quod sciebam si loquendi copia suppeditaret" (VII.26). His escape attempt with Charite on his back fails because he cannot tell her why they must not take the right-hand fork in the road: "Sic nos diversa tendentes et in causa finali de proprietate soli, immo viae herciscundae contendentes, rapinis suis onusti coram deprehendunt ipsi latrones" (VI.29).
Frustrated by her inability to speak, Ovid's Io has recourse to the written word. In heifer form, she encounters her father, and is desperate to reveal her identity to him:

\[\text{si modo verba sequantur,\hfill oret opem nomenque suum casusque loquatur;}\]
\[\text{littera pro verbis, quam pes in pulvere duxit,\hfill corporis indicium mutati triste peregit. (Met. I.647-50)}\]

Lucius never traces letters in the dust with his hoof in order to make known his plight. Yet like Io, he does have recourse to the written word out of frustration at not being able to speak. A thwarted desire to communicate builds up in the ass. This desire will find relief when Lucius regains his human form. He makes ample use of his *renata lingua* (XI.14) when he becomes a priest and a lawyer. However, he has a specific need to communicate his experiences as an ass, and this can be satisfied only by writing his memoirs. It is too late to pronounce to Charite the words he so desperately wished to say when they were stuck at the crossroads: "*Quid facis, infelix puella? Quid agis? Cur festinas ad Orcum?*" (VI.29). Yet there is doubtless a kind of retrospective relief in being able to commit the words and the situation to paper.

It is not only the words he could not speak as an ass which Lucius wishes to communicate to the reader. Lucius's brand of *curiositas* is fully satisfied only when he has the pleasure of communicating newly-acquired knowledge to others. A streamlined narrative structure is impossible because Lucius is driven to incorporate all he learns into his story: if Lucius's ears make us think of Midas, his potent urge to tell all makes us think of the unhappy king's barber. In a novel which explores the many valences of desire, one of the most prominent urges is the "*narrare cupio*" (VIII.22). Because Lucius's curiosity is inseparable from a desire to tell, every time he gains new knowledge, his narrative gains a new twist: "*cognoscimus lepidam de adulterio cuiusdam pauperis fabulam, quam vos etiam cognoscatis volo*" (IX.4), he will say, or "*Fabulam denique*
bonam prae ceteris, suave comptam ad aures vestras afferre decrevi” (IX.14). The curious Lucius remakes the reader in his own image, for whenever a juicy story comes to his ears he creates a narrative side-trip to let us share the pleasure: “ut vos etiam legatis, ad librum profero” (X.2).

As an ass, Lucius takes in more information than he can communicate, and the balance is only restored when, again a man, he takes Nile reed in hand to write of his adventures. Nor is it the long ears alone which ensure that the ass is continually learning new things. With his new form, Lucius gains a new function: he quickly discovers that as a beast of burden he is condemned to be forever on the move. Photis had promised to bring him the antidote-roses the morning after the transformation, yet in the interim robbers recruit him to carry the spoils from Milo's house. Henceforth Lucius, passing through a string of masters, will not stop moving for more than brief periods of time. Like the animal form and the powerful ears, Lucius's mobility ensures that he is exposed to sources of raw material for his story. Paradoxically, in becoming an ass Lucius acquires a certain kinship with the epic hero:

* Nec immerito priscæ poeticae divinus auctor apud Graios summae prudentiae virum monstrare cupiens, multarum civitatum obitu et variorum populorum cognitu summas aedempt virtutes cecinit. Nam et ipse gratias gratias asino meo memini, quod me suo celatum tegmine varisque fortunis exercitatum, etsi minus prudentem, multiscium reddidit. (IX.13)

Since Lucius's form and function bring him experience of epic scope, it is natural that his narrative should have something of the flexible, episodic structure of the epic.18

The fact that Lucius is continually on the move demands that the narrative structure be all-embracing and assimilative. His beast-of-burden identity has other structural consequences as well. *The Golden Ass* does not have the linearity of *La Princesse de Clèves*—that is to say, the focussed

---

18 For a systematic comparison of narrative techniques in *The Golden Ass* and the *Odyssey*, see pp.23-27 of James T. Svendsen's "Narrative Techniques in Apuleius’ Golden Ass."
concentration on a single plot-line. Yet it does not follow that Apuleius's novel is devoid of linearity; simply, its structuring principle is the linearity not of plot, but of the road. *The Golden Ass* is a road book. Lucius meets someone who plays a brief role in his life, but then the ass is obliged to move on, in all likelihood never to see the individual again. We do not learn what happens to Atargatis's priests after the villagers lock them up, for Lucius keeps moving forward: "*altera die productum me rursum voce praecoris venui subiciunt*" (IX.10). Nor do we learn the fate of Lucius's gardener master after his arrest:

*Die sequenti meus quidem dominus hortulanus quid egerit nescio, me tamen miles ille qui propter eximiam impotentiam pulcherrime vapularat ab illo praesepio nullo equidem contradicente diductum abducit [*] (X.1)*

Lucius's narrative privileges the vignette and the digression because the ass experiences life as a series of brief contacts and chance encounters. The beast of burden does not have the luxury of pausing to develop deep and lasting ties, nor that of doubling back to pursue past relationships. We may hope for a final scene of reckoning between Lucius and Photis, but we are bound for disappointment. The novel has a relentless forward-driving motion, for the beast of burden must move on.20

Thus the fact of being an ass is deeply relevant to the novel's structure. This link between physical form and literary form is borne out by a later novel. If asked to name another famous ass in literature, we would probably think of the donkey in *Don Quijote*. Although in this case the ass

---

19 Even before his metamorphosis, Lucius had an imperfect grasp of what was going on around him, as the Festival of Laughter episode illustrates. Having Lucius turn into a travelling ass emphasizes yet another of his characteristic traits: by nature Lucius is someone who is not in control of the facts.

20 Technically, Lucius's itinerary will be circular, for he returns to his starting point of Corinth. Yet, as Carl Schlam points out, there is little feeling of coming home: "Lucius does not return to his family and restore his prior social position. Rather he is reborn and follows a new course of life as a devotee of Isis" (*The Metamorphoses of Apuleius* 20).
is not the narrator, he too is associated with a narrative structure characterized by movement, variety, twists and turns. The linearity of Don Quijote, like that of The Golden Ass, is the linearity of the road.  

Another novel, this time from the eighteenth century, sheds light on the way Lucius's narrative is shaped by the characteristics of the asinine body. There is no ass among the dramatis personae of Diderot's episodic novel, Les Bijoux indiscrets, yet a magic ring changes the central character in ways which recall Lucius's own transformation. At the opening of the story, Prince Mangogul is bored and listless. His beloved Mirzoza is a brilliant storyteller, but she has "épuisé l'histoire scandaleuse de Banza" (35). Mangogul's malaise is diagnosed as a dearth of narrative material. Like Lucius, Mangogul longs to learn new things, and will have recourse to magic to satisfy this need. He obtains from the genie Cucufa a magic ring that gives him many of the qualities which Lucius gained in becoming an ass. The ring has "la vertu de faire parler les bijoux des femmes sur lesquelles on en tournait le chaton" (41), just as the ass's long ears make him privy to female sexual secrets. The ring also has the power to make its wearer invisible, just as Lucius's animal form gives him a paradoxical invisibility. Finally, the ring has the power to transport its wearer from one place to another, just as Lucius's function as beast of burden keeps him continually on the move. Mangogul's ring fulfills a function similar to that of the asinine body: it provides the wealth of stories and experiences necessary to a prolific and aggregative plot. Both novels can only

---

21 Though Don Quijote's cathedral priest scorns Milesian tales as "wildly nonsensical stories seeking only to give pleasure" (I.47), there are explicit links between Don Quijote and The Golden Ass. For example, Don Quijote's "noble but unusual battle against several wineskins filled with red wine" (Don Quijote I.36) is an echo of Lucius's wineskin slaughter in Books II-III. The story of the two aldermen who bray like asses shows that Cervantes pursues Apuleius's interest in men who make asses of themselves (Don Quijote II.25).

22 In Diderot's novel, bijou is a euphemism for "vagina."

23 See Book IX, where the ass learns of the sexual indiscretions of the miller's wife, Barbarus's wife, and the fuller's wife.
be brought to a close by a reformation which curtails the narrative input. Mangogol gives the magic ring back to Cucufa, and Lucius sheds the animal form which carried him to so much knowledge.

Super-acute hearing, invisibility, mobility: whether supplied by an asinine body or a magic ring, these characteristics lend themselves to a fertile, episodic narrative structure. There is yet another way in which Lucius's identity as an ass is relevant to the structure of the novel. Up to Book XI, Lucius is bestial in two senses. Apart from having the physical form of a beast, he is animal-like in that he has not yet experienced the divine revelation which will give his life transcendent meaning. Like the ignoble beast of burden, the uninitiated man lives a kind of lowly, second-rate existence. Unenlightened by Isis, Lucius truly has the servile status of the ass. He is at the mercy of Fortuna, just as the ass is at the mercy of its master:

\[
\text{Ass} \quad = \quad \frac{\text{Man}}{\text{Master} \quad \text{Fortuna}}
\]

Lucius's physical, literal servitude symbolizes another kind of servitude: he is the bondsman of Fortuna. This vulnerability to the whims of Fortuna has structural consequences. Because Lucius is at the mercy of a force which delights in catching him off guard, his narrative is inevitably characterized by rupture and deviation. Shifts in the narrative are often signalled by an explicit reminder that Lucius is the plaything of Fortuna. Usually Fortuna's name is brought up when fresh disaster strikes: "illa Fortuna mea saevissima, quam per tot regiones iam fugiens effugere vel praecedentibus malis placare non potui, rursum in me caecos detorsit oculos" (VIII.24).

---

24 The ring and the ass-body are alibis of what Gérard Genette calls la paralèse, in which one gives "plus [d'information] qu'il n'est en principe autorisé dans le code de focalisation qui régit l'ensemble" (Figures III 211). In IX.30, the ass seems aware that he is open to the criticism of knowing more than is strictly plausible: "Sed forsitan lector scrupulosus reprehendens narratum meum sic argumentabерis: 'Unde autem tu, astutule asine, intra terminos pistrini contentus, quid secreto, ut affirmas, mulieres gesserint scire potuisti?'"
Occasionally Fortuna's name will signal a *deus ex machina* turn of events, though Lucius suspects that she shows mercy only to prolong the pleasure of toying with him: "Sed in rebus scaevis affulsit Fortunae nutus hilarior, nescio an futuris periculis me reservans, certe praesente statutaque morte liberans" (VII.20).

The novel's episodic structure is the correlate of Lucius's sense of being perpetually vulnerable to the assaults of Fortuna. His narration makes one think of a later "I" narrator whose text is equally unpredictable and multifaceted. Like Lucius before his enlightenment, Tristram Shandy has a keen sense of being at the mercy of Fortuna. If Lucius speaks of "*Fortuna meis cruciatibus insatiabilis*" (VII.17), or "*Fortuna meis casibus pervicax*" (VII.25), Tristram calls himself "the continual sport of what the world calls Fortune": "in every stage of my life, and at every turn and corner where she could get fairly at me, the ungracious Duchess has pelted me with a set of as pitiful misadventures and cross accidents as ever small HERO sustained" (*Tristram Shandy* 1.5.8). Perhaps Lucius lurks behind Tristram's "small HERO." In *Tristram Shandy* as in *The Golden Ass*, a narrator who sees himself as the plaything of Fortuna expresses himself in a supple narrative structure full of interpolation, surprise and rupture.²⁵

Tristram does have a slight advantage over Lucius, for the latter is subject to a double enslavement: he must contend not only with the external whims of Fortuna, but also with the internal demands of his asinine body. The huge phallus and belly Lucius acquires through his transformation suggest that he will be tormented by his hunger for sex and for food. Once again,

²⁵ We have seen that in *The Golden Ass*, the ass's body justifies the narrative structure, Lucius's physical form determining his narrative form. If Tristram is a bit of an ass in many ways, he yet has the body of a man. Sterne must justify his narrative technique otherwise. He finds the freedom he needs in Locke's principle of the association of ideas. Ian Watt explains that "[a]s regards narrative technique, Locke's prestige gave Sterne authoritative support for making any narrative connections whatever he might wish to make, since they could be explained as based on Tristram's mental associations" (Introduction to *Tristram Shandy* xiii).
physical form influences textual form, for the ass's intense physical drives are forever pushing him towards the outside world and into new adventures. The mere suspicion that he lusts after human beings brings him within a hair's breadth of castration (VII.23). The charge is not entirely groundless: long before he copulates with the *matrona*, sexual desire intensifies his interest in Charite and her fate. His desire for union with Charite risks being fulfilled in a grotesque manner when the bandits threaten to imprison her inside his body (VI.31). And if, post-metamorphosis, Lucius is still interested in attractive women, he has a new interest in attractive animals which will lead him into further misadventures; he is brutally attacked by stallions when he dares lust after their mares (VII.16). At other times, Lucius is a passive victim of his body. The impressive dimensions of the ass's phallus lead the *matrona* to initiate an affair, which in turn gives Thiasus the idea of having the ass copulate with a woman in public.

Lucius's appetite for food proves as dangerous as his sexual drive, and as important in driving plot episodes. He is attacked when he tries to share the rations of his stable-mates (III.26), and thrashed within an inch of his life after devastating a vegetable garden (IV.3). Consuming huge quantities of the robbers' bread will bring not external, but rather internal punishment: he is overcome by "*asinali verecundia*" (IV.23). Book X seems to present an example of his appetite having positive consequences, for Lucius's condition improves immensely when he is discovered gorging himself on the delicacies prepared by his cook masters. But the reprieve is fleeting: his eating of human food leads to the project of public copulation with a murderess. The great plot crisis in Book X—the decision to have the ass perform sexually in the arena at the risk of his life—is the consequence of his appetite for both food and sex.

---

26 In La Comtesse de Ségur's *Mémoires d'un âne*, the ass's appetite plays a comparable role in driving plot episodes (see pp.15 and 53).
The metamorphosis thus magnifies Lucius's corporeality, and leads him to engage with the world in attempts to satisfy his pronounced physical needs. (Does the Princesse de Clèves ever get hungry?) The ass's body challenges structure on several levels. We have seen that his physical urges lead him to flout societal structure: the ass invades the property of others to satisfy his desires, as when he steals food or covets forbidden females. In conflict with societal structure, Lucius's body inevitably affects narrative structure as well. The ass-body militates against an orderly story-line because the ass's corporeal urges are continually leading him into new misadventures and narrative side-trips.

Like Fortuna, the ass's body occasionally adopts a *deus ex machina* role. When the ass is being beaten after raiding the vegetable garden, his body literally manufactures his salvation:

> rursum caedendo confecissent profecto, nisi dolore plagarum alvus artata, crudisque illis oleribus abundans et lubrico fluxu saucia, fimo fistulatim excusso, quosdam extremi liquoris aspergine, alios putore nidoris faetidi a meis iam quassis scapulis abegisset. (IV.3)

Ever reluctant to use a good joke only once, Apuleius has recourse to the same excremental expedient when the nasty boy's mother is brutalizing the ass:

> solo quod restabat nisus praesidio, liquida fimo strictim egesta faciem atque oculos eius confodedassem. Qua caecitate atque foetore tandem fugata est a me pernacies; ceterum titione delirantis Althaeae Meleager asinus interisset. (VII.28)

Like Fortuna, the ass's appetites are a volatile force which frequently lands Lucius in scrapes, and infrequently extricates him from them. At times, one wonders if the mischievous, malevolent Fortuna is not a projection of Lucius's tyrannical bodily drives. In Book XI, Lucius's triumph over Fortuna is closely linked to his gaining mastery of his corporeal demands.

---

27 Fortuna is held responsible for the good as well as the bad: in Book X, the ass credits Fortuna for the positive turn in his life when he could as logically credit his own insistent appetite (X.16).
Lucius's body is the ally of Fortuna in ensuring that the structure of *The Golden Ass* is full of twists and turns. It is not surprising that Lucius's bodily appetites should work against a unified narrative structure, for *The Golden Ass* suggests that the physical drives are in general inimical to structure. When Socrates indulges in a single night of lust with Meroe, the structure of his life is permanently shattered: "Et statim miser, ut cum illa acquievi, ab unico congressu annosam ac pestilentem coniunctionem contraho" (I.7). In turn, involvement with Meroe and Socrates compromises the structure of Aristomenes's life: like Socrates, he will abandon family, homeland and profession. Lucius's own life is similarly derailed when he begins his affair with Photis. Faced with a public copulation in the arena, the ass fears that erotic union will be simultaneous with death (X.34-5). Thrasyllus's lust for Charite destroys the life she is beginning with Tlepolemus, and perturbs the narrative structure of *The Golden Ass*. We believe the story of Charite and Tlepolemus to be neatly and "comically" wrapped up in Book VII, but discover a tragic codicil in Book VIII.

Female sexuality is similarly shown to be a force hostile to structure. Though Meroe is the ultimate example of a woman whose sexual urges menace male tranquillity, even women lacking her magic powers wreak havoc with their lust. Book IX illustrates abundantly that female sexuality endangers that basic structuring principle of society, the family. The wife's infidelity causes the dispersion of the fuller's family (IX.25) and the miller's family (IX.28); Barbarus's family is rotten to the core for the same reason, even though husband and wife remain together (IX.21). As usual, form and theme are intertwined: there is an abundance of family break-ups in Book IX, a book whose narrative structure is particularly fragmented and dispersed. Book X brings us the tale of the stepmother whose incestuous lust threatens to destroy her family. In the end, the family is saved only through her expulsion. Nature's rules prove no more sacrosanct than society's. If many women lust after partners outside their marriage bed, some even covet partners outside their species, as in
the case of Book X's lascivious *matrona*.

*The Golden Ass* establishes that the body and its drives are in general antithetical to structure. If the body of the ordinary human being entails conflict with structure, it is logical that the great ass-body should be a redoubtable anarchic force. The ass's hyperbolic belly and phallus are markers of the complexity and unpredictability of *The Golden Ass*’s narrative structure. Yet the asinine body is also the enemy to existing structure in a more free-floating way. The ass will often destroy the status quo by obtruding his ungainly body into a delicate situation. He is responsible for the arrest—and doubtless the execution—of his sympathetic gardener master, for he betrays the gardener’s hiding place when he squeezes his head out through a little window (IX.42). In more deliberate fashion, he uses his body to ensure the discovery and punishment of other culprits: he crushes the fingers of a hiding adulterer so that he and the faithless wife will meet their just deserts (IX.27), and brays loudly to expose the priests' orgy (VIII.29). When the ass does not have the invisibility of Gyges, his body tends to be particularly intrusive and disruptive.

Textual body is thus intimately intertwined with physical body. The ass's body holds attractions for the *curiosus*, for it is admirably suited to garnering the sources of information needed to produce an intricate and complex narrative structure. In addition, the potent appetites of the ass are a force hostile to tranquil, unified structure. Lucius is the slave not only of Fortuna, but also of the tyrannical body whose drives land him in misfortune as often as the capricious goddess.

The ass's body shapes not only the text, but also the reading experience. We have seen that classical metamorphosis gives outer expression to inner traits. The ass-body continually reminds us of Lucius's asininity—and indeed he makes egregious errors, as when, seeing Charite kiss the infamous "Haemus," he concludes that she is whorishly wanton (*scortari tibi libet* VII.11). Having an admittedly asinine narrator is conducive to structural irony: sceptical of Lucius's judgment, the
reader is obliged to draw his own conclusions and maintain his autonomy vis à vis the narrator.

Lucius's asinity—both literal and metaphoric—profoundly affects the reading experience, inviting the reader to maintain an active, critical stance in the face of an unreliable narrator.

John J. Winkler illuminates another way in which the ass-body is rich in narrative consequences. Because its narrator is a grotesque, risible creature, *The Golden Ass* participates in a cultural forum in which speakers in grotesque disguise are allowed not only to be obscene but to utter critical truths about authority. One of the moves possible, and therefore inevitable, in the repertoire of low, vulgar comedy is a serious sassiness. Because the actor is already grotesque, deformed, and without honor, and because he is punished with slapsticks on the spot, he can speak the unspeakably irreverent thoughts about rulers that are forbidden to normal citizens. The ritual or performative connection between a visibly shameful status and a greater freedom of thinking and speaking can be traced through all the eras of Greco-Roman culture. (A&A 287)

The grotesqueness of the asinine body facilitates the novel's irreverent thrust. Paradoxically, Apuleius's critical inclinations are liberated because his narrator is imprisoned in a hideous, degraded form.

Winkler compares *The Golden Ass* to another book whose narrator is "both shockingly ugly and enormously phallic" (A&A 281), the *Life of Aesop*. This book has in common with *The Golden Ass* a kind of déclassé shrewdness:

both acknowledge the existence of a higher realm of elite education and they both stand outside that realm. Lucius is born to wealth and educated power but is forcibly ejected from his birthright by a magic transformation that disfigures him; Aesop is born disfigured and must always be regarded as ignoble, even when he is proved again and again to be superior in intellect to the elite. (A&A 282)

Lucius's most explicit social critique occurs at the Corinth mime when Paris awards Venus the prize for beauty because she promises him a stunning woman (X.32): "Quid ergo miramini, vilissima capita, immo forensia pecora, immo vero togati vulturii, si toti nunc iudices sententias suas pretio nundinantur" (X.33). Not coincidentally, Lucius's outburst ends with a reminder of his
grotesque, bestial body as he conjures up the humourous image of himself as a "philosophizing ass" (philosophanem asinum X.33).

If The Golden Ass's use of the grotesque body is in the tradition of Aesop and mime (A&A 291), Apuleius's innovation is to exploit to the full the particular form in which his narrator is trapped. In The Golden Ass, the asinine body does more than determine the shape of the textual body. There is also a close link between the ass's ingestion of food and the narrative structure's incorporation of diverse elements: the ass-belly functions as a metaphor for the nature of Lucius's text.

Before turning to this metaphor, let us look in more general terms at the close association between food and story established in The Golden Ass. As in Plato's Symposium, the acts of talking and eating go together naturally. Winkler notes that "[s]tories in the A[sinus] A[ureus] are often presented as mealtime or after-dinner activities. The fullness of good food and good wine and good stories are often associated, as if to say that the ideally satisfied audience are stuffed with tasty words" (A&A 37). Thelyceron tells his story at Byrrhena's elegant banquet (II.20), and the triad of robbers' stories is told at a more riotous banquet (IV.8). In other, more ominous cases, storytelling is seen as an act which rudely interrupts the pleasures of the table. When Lucius's market-gardener master is offered a "sumptuous dinner" (opipari prandio IX.33) by a paterfamilias he has obliged, a slave comes running to report the horrifying tale of the death of the man's three sons (IX.35). At the tale's close, the distraught father kills himself at the dinner table, using an eating utensil and staining the table with his blood:

---

28 Again there are links between The Golden Ass and Don Quijote. When Sancho Panza says he would rather eat a meat pie than listen to the goatherd's story, Don Quijote replies, "You go where you want to, and eat as much as you can, for I have eaten all I need and the only food I require, now, is for my soul, which this good man's story will provide" (I.50). Similarly, at the cena Trimalchionis, Encolpius seeks out narrative entertainment when his belly is stuffed: "Non potui amplius quicquam gustare, sed conversus ad eum, ut quam plurima exciperem, longe accersere fabulas coepi" (Satiricon Chapter 37).
The tale brings the meal to a grisly close as the *paterfamilias's* body becomes yet another carcass displayed on his own dinner-table.

Book VIII gives us a more extreme example of a tale which turns its listener into food. On the run after their mistress's death, Charite's slaves seek food for a meal (VIII.19). They ask one old man for food, but instead get a *fabula* from a second old man who tells of a grandson trapped in a pit. One of the travellers volunteers his help only to find that *fabula* has turned him into food:

"*conspicatum se quippe supinato illi et iam ex maxima parte consumpto immanem draconem mandentem insistere, nec ullum usquam miserum senem comparere illum*" (VIII.21). The fugitive slaves had hoped to obtain a meal from one old man; instead, a skilful *fabula* tricks them into furnishing a gruesome meal for a second old man.

This macabre tale finds an echo within the Psyche story. Psyche's sisters tell her a *fabula* which makes her believe she is destined to become food for her invisible husband: "*cum primum praegnationem tuam plenus maturaverit uterum, optimo fructu praeditam devoraturum*" (V.18). In a satisfying reversal, Psyche herself ends up concocting a story which successfully turns her sisters into food. She persuades one of her sisters that she is the destined bride of Cupid, and the sister eagerly throws herself off the magic cliff: "*per saxa cautium membris iactatis atque dissipatis et proinde ut merebatur laceratis visceribus suis, alitibus bestiisque obvium feren pabulum interiit*" (V.27). The same story will similarly turn the second sister into *pabulum* for birds and beasts.

*The Golden Ass* thus presents a troubling set of *fabulae* which turn, or threaten to turn, their
hearers into food. Yet in general, the relationship between food and fabula in The Golden Ass is more benign. Fabula is often paralleled with food as something which brings pleasure and sustenance. Some sixteen centuries after The Golden Ass, Henry Fielding shows true Apuleian spirit when he calls his introduction to Tom Jones a "Bill of Fare to the Feast" on the grounds that the author's duty is parallel to the restaurateur's:

An Author ought to consider himself, not as a Gentleman who gives a private or eleemosynary Treat, but rather as one who keeps a public Ordinary, at which all Persons are welcome for their Money. [...] As we do not disdain to borrow Wit or Wisdom from any Man who is capable of lending us either, we have condescended to take a Hint from these honest Victuallers, and shall prefix not only a general Bill of Fare to our whole Entertainment, but shall likewise give the Reader particular Bills to every Course which is to be served up in this and the ensuing Volumes. (Tom Jones LI)

Fielding's Bill of Fare presents Tom Jones as a delectable dish for the reader's consumption. If it were permitted to indulge in fanciful etymology, we could link Fielding's word "fare" to the Latin verb "fari," meaning "to speak."

Insofar as it is linked to the genre of the satura, The Golden Ass too has the status of a tasty, varied dish. "Satura" is originally a culinary term meaning a "dish of mixed ingredients" (OLD s.v. 1). Through a transfer from the culinary to the literary, it came to mean "a literary composition consisting of a miscellany of prose and verse on various topics" (s.v. 3b). The other surviving Latin novel is explicitly linked to this genre: Michael Heseltine says that the title Satiricon, evoking the satura, meant that Petronius was "free to pass at will from subject to subject" (Introduction xii). Though he does not use the term satura, Apuleius manifestly avails himself of the same freedom.

The Golden Ass is linked to the satura not only through its supple and varied nature, but also through its satiric thrust. The term satura evolved to mean a "poem directed at prevalent vices or follies, satire" (s.v. 4). Though The Golden Ass is not habitually classed as satire, Paul Vallette
notes the many targets of its "verve satirique": "on la voit s'exercer tour à tour sur Milon l'avaricieux (I-III), les prêtres charlatans de la déesse syrienne et leurs moeurs dépravées (VIII), les maris bafoués ou les galants sur lesquels ils prennent des revanches d'une jovialité un peu drue (IX), et combien d'autres encore" (Vallette xxxiii).

Apuleius's satire also touches on wide-ranging political and social issues. In the other extant version of the ass-tale, Pseudo-Lucian's Lucius, or the Ass, Lucius makes an efficacious appeal to the provincial Governor (105). In Apuleius's The Golden Ass, there seems to be no secular authority to whom the hero can turn. On one occasion, the mistreated Lucius tries to call out O Caesar (III.29), invoking the ultimate symbol of social authority. The attempt is a dismal failure, for Lucius cannot even articulate the name of Caesar. One story alone presents a Caesar who is both just and powerful. When Plotina appeals to Caesar, the results are immediate: "Denique noluit esse Caesar Haemi latronis collegium, et confestim interivit: tantum potest nutus etiam magni principis" (VII.7). Yet this counter-example falls flat when we recall that Plotina is a character in a story made up by a fake bandit.

If Apuleius does not advertise his work as a satire, he is partial to another term which, like satura, straddles the culinary and the intellectual. The word pabulum appears seven times in The Golden Ass. It means "food" or "fodder," and it also has the figurative sense of "food (for thoughts or feelings)" (OLD s.v. 2e). On two occasions, the ass narrowly escapes being turned into pabulum in the literal sense. One of the robbers proposes doing away with the lazy, ill-omened ass: "eum vulturiiis gratissimum pabulum futurum praecipitabo" (VI.26). Lucius does not forget that this end could await him. When he becomes a performing ass, he takes care not to appear too intelligent so

---

29 Pseudo-Lucian's Lucius, or the Ass and Apuleius's The Golden Ass are believed to derive from a common Greek source extant in the ninth century, Lucius of Patrae's Metamorphoses. On the relationship between these three works, see pp.1-6 of H.J. Mason's 'Fabula Graecanica: Apuleius and his Greek Sources."
that he will not be slaughtered as a *monstrum* and turned into food for vultures (*me obtruncatum vulturiis opimum pabulum redderent* X.17). Book X brings us yet another example of the ass nearly becoming fodder for animals: he fears that the wild beasts will tear him apart if he has public sex with the murderess (X.34). Lucius runs away from this dreadful fate, and ends up writing his memoirs. Having several times escaped becoming *pabulum* for the body, he transmutes himself into *pabulum* for the mind.\(^{30}\)

Fielding begins his novel with a "Bill of Fare" designed to whet the reader's appetite. Apuleius begins his with a prologue which similarly promises pleasure: "*Lector intende: laetaberis*" (I.1). We discover quickly that story brings food-like pleasure and sustenance not only to *The Golden Ass*’s readers, but also to its characters. The acts of storytelling and eating are linked from the novel's opening pages. Book I of *The Golden Ass* presents a relay of narration. The primary narrator, Lucius, meets Aristomenes and talks him into taking on the role of narrator. In turn, Aristomenes yields the floor to Socrates at the appropriate moment in his story. This relay of narration is doubled by a relay of nutrition. Aristomenes hears Socrates's tale only after feeding him. Eager to hear Aristomenes's story, Lucius promises to feed him in exchange: "*Ego tibi solus haec pro isto credam, et quod ingressui primum fuerit stabulum prandio participabo. Haec tibi merces deposita est*" (I.4). Lucius reneges on his promise, but gets his come-uppanace later in Book I when, having been deprived of his dinner by his friend the aedile, he goes to bed having dined only on stories (*cenatus solis fabulis* I.26).

It seems to be Aristomenes's destiny to be deprived of anticipated food. He had originally come

---

\(^{30}\) Thanks to Laurence Sterne, the English word "*pabulum*" has the same double meaning as the Latin: "The figurative meaning of intellectual or spiritual nourishment, food for thought, is first recorded in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*" (*Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology* 748). See *Tristram Shandy*, 7.31.397: "Such a story affords more *pabulum* to the brain, than all the Frusts, and Crusts, and Rusts of antiquity."
to Hypata to buy some whacking good cheese (I.5). Thwarted in this quest for food, he instead gets a whacking good story when he bumps into his old friend Socrates. Once again, a playful equivalence is posited between story and food. Socrates himself is the luckiest of the three men, for he receives both story and food. When Aristomenes finds him sitting on the ground in a lamentable state, he restores him with both food and fabula: "cibo satio, poculo mitigo, fabulis permulceo" (I.7). In exchange for this physical and spiritual nourishment, Socrates will tell his own fabula to Aristomenes. This barter of food for fabula is repeated within Socrates's tale. When Socrates tells Meroe the story of his misadventures, she gives him a meal in return: "Quae me nimis quam humane tractare adorta cænae gratæ atque gratuitae" (I.7).

Later books furnish other examples of fabula being used as a panacea or restorative. The main task of the robbers' domestic is to restore and comfort by providing meals. Yet to restore the desolate Charite, she offers not food, but fabula: "Sed ego te narrationibus lepidis anilibusque fabulis protinus avocabo" (IV.27). Charite herself uses food and fabula not as a restorative, but as a reward. Escaping on the ass's back, she promises him that if he delivers her to safety, he will receive exquisite food (VI.28) and become the hero of a great story (VI.29).32

The first book offers other playful parallels between oral ingestion and the ingestion of story. Socrates has his throat invaded by a sword (I.13). When Aristomenes hears Socrates's story, he similarly feels as though he has been invaded by a blade: "mihi quoque non parvam incussisti

---

31 See for example the robbers' address to the anus in IV.7: "... nec nostris tam magnis tamque periculosus laboribus solacium de tam sera refectione tribues?" The word solacium is one of Lucius's favourites. We have seen that Lucius's metamorphosis brings him no less than three "sole" solacia. Two of these three have to do with the fact that Lucius's asinine form gives him access to knowledge and stories (big ears, Odyssean travels). The robbers' solacium is food, while Lucius's is story: the robbers' use of the word solacium sketches yet another link between pabulum and fabula.

32 The food-fabula association here seems to be Apuleius's innovation. In Pseudo-Lucian's Lucius, or the Ass, the Charite figure promises the ass that he will get lots of food, and that he will never again have to work (80).
Aristomenes is involved in another ludic parallel between oral ingestion and ingestion of story. Aristomenes's companion is sceptical and mocking: "'Parce' inquit 'in verba ista haec tam absurda tamque immania mentiendo'" (I.2). But if the sceptic has difficulty swallowing Aristomenes's story, that same story shows Aristomenes having difficulty swallowing in a more literal sense: "frustulum panis quod primum sumpseram, quamvis admodum modicum, mediiis faucibus inhaereret ac neque deorsum demere neque sursum remeare posset" (I.19).

The network of correlations between food and story invites us to see the great ass-belly as a metaphor for the nature of Lucius's text. As a man, Lucius had a limited capacity to take in food, a point driven home when he reveals that he almost choked to death on cheese polenta: "Ego denique vespera, dum polentae caseatae modico secus offum grandiorem in convivas aemulus contruncare gestio, mollitie cibi glutinosi faucibus inhaerentis et meacula spiritus distintentis minimo minus interii" (I.4). But if Lucius's physical capacity to ingest is small, his mental capacity to ingest is almost limitless: "velim scire vel cuncta vel certe plurima" (I.2). Lucius himself uses an alimentary metaphor when he describes himself as ever thirsty for new knowledge: "sititor [...] novitatis" (I.2). He scorns men like Aristomenes's sceptical companion, whose mental capacity to take in new things is very limited:

_Tu vero crassis auribus et obstinato corde respuis quae forsitan vere perhieantur. Minus hercule calles pravissimis opinionibus ea putari mendacia quae vel auditu nova vel visu rudia vel certe supra captum cogitationis ardua videantur; quae si paulo accuratius exploraris, non modo compertu evidentia, verum etiam factu facilia senties._ (I.3)

Oddly enough, to give this sceptic an example of strange things which prove true, he tells of a man with an astonishing _physical_ capacity to take things in:
The example of the sword-swallowers amazing physical capacity to take things in should teach the sceptical companion how foolish he is to have such a limited mental capacity to take things in. This same example also serves as the basis for a second comparison. The sword-swallowers unlimited physical capacity to ingest contrasts with Lucius's very limited physical capacity to ingest, for the latter risks choking on a mouthful of polenta. This contrast is not destined to last long, for Lucius is soon to acquire a truly astonishing ingestive capacity.

Book I's ludic parallels between mental and physical ingestive ability invite us to see Book III's great event in these same terms. We have seen that metamorphosis in general gives physical expression to psychic qualities, making the outer a reflection of the inner. This once again proves true in Lucius's case, for his metamorphosis brings about an equilibrium between his mental and physical capacity to take things in. Transformed into an ass, Lucius acquires a body as insatiable and as capacious as his mind. The episode in which the ass pilfers the robbers' bread explicitly contrasts Lucius's former and current ingestive ability: "Et quamquam prius, cum essem Lucius, unico vel secundo pane contentus mensa decederem, tunc ventri tam profundo serviens iam ferme tertium qualum rumigabam" (IV.22). The man Lucius had sought to know vel cuncta vel certe plurima (I.2); the ass Lucius wants to consume vel cuncta vel certe plurima as well.

The insatiable ass-belly functions as a metaphor for the text's astonishing capacity to engulf and incorporate diverse narrative material. Sometimes the knowledge in The Golden Ass strikes us as somewhat undigested, as one might expect from an ass who is multiscius but not prudens (IX.13). One example is Lucius's misreading of "Haemus" and Charite's relationship. The image
of undigested knowledge continues the belly-text parallel, for—as we see after Lucius raids the vegetable garden—the ass-belly does not always digest satisfactorily. The metaphor of digestion of knowledge was familiar in antiquity. Jensson points out that "Seneca, in a letter dedicated to the practice of literary studies (Ep. 84), [...] strongly advises students to 'digest' (Ep. 84.7, conçoquere) the intellectual food they take in through their reading so that it can truly be assimilated into the bloodstream, or the seat of genius (ingenium), not just into memory" (70).

The voraciousness of Lucius's text does not preclude a subtle ordering of material. Many commentators have explored the conscious artistry of the arrangement of narrative material. We can think of the use of the triad as a structuring principle in the novel, with three robbers' tales matched by three adultery tales and three stories of monstrous crimes, or of the subtle parallels between Lucius's story and Psyche's, or of the fact that the early witchcraft tales are, in Schlam's words, "carefully coordinated to the progress of the main plot, Lucius' increasing involvement in magic" (The Metamorphoses of Apuleius 31). A belly-image from the other Latin novel is perhaps germane. At the feast of Trimalchio, foodstuffs are presented in a vast pig's belly, where they have been artificially arranged by a human hand (Satiricon Chapter 49). Like this belly, the text of The Golden Ass holds an array of materials presented with conscious artistry.

Book XI brings a radical change to both belly and text. This book offers us one last image of

33 For a detailed exploration of Apuleius's use of the triad, see Alexander Scobie's "The Structure and Unity of Apuleius' Metamorphoses," especially pp. 81-82.

34 Alexander Scobie calls the Psyche tale "at once a retrospective recapitulation of Lucius' adventures and a prospective introduction to their happy conclusion" ("The Structure of Apuleius' Metamorphoses" 54).

35 Like The Golden Ass, the Satiricon establishes a parallel between food and knowledge: "In his declamation for Agamemnon, young Encoipius first laments the unreal subject matter and bombastic style of declamation, which he calls mellitios verborum globulos et omnia dicta factaque quasi papavere et sesamo sparsa—'honey-balls of phrases, every word and act besprinkled with poppy-seed and sesame' (I.3), and then he says that qui inter haec nutriuntur non magis sapere possunt quam bene olere qui in culina habitant—people who are fed on this diet can no more have taste (or be wise) than people who live in the kitchen can smell good" (2.1)" (Jensson 70).
greedy devouring: "Tunc ego trepidans, assiduo pulsu micanti corde, coronam, quae rosis amoenis intexta fulgurabat, avido ore susceptam cupidus promissi cupidissime devoravi" (XI.13). This act of eating will change the nature of all such future acts. When Lucius regains his human form, the huge ass-belly shrinks back into a human-sized belly. Yet Lucius does not once again become the man who had looked forward to a feast with Photis before their first sexual encounter. As an initiate of Isis, Lucius undergoes a mortification of the flesh which includes dietary strictures and periods of fasting; the ass-belly which engulfed all has become not only a human belly, but a particularly fastidious and discriminating one.

This change in Lucius's relationship to his body is anticipated by a curious episode of Book I. At the market of desire (forum cupidinis36 I.24), Lucius selects and pays for some fish for his supper. He then encounters an old friend, now an aedile, who declares himself scandalized by the price Lucius has paid for his goods. He has an attendant trample the offending fish, and walks off satisfied—unlike Lucius who, deprived of both money and fish, goes to bed hungry. This episode is yet another example of the food/fabula equivalence, for in a sense fabula replaces food. The fact that Lucius-as-character is deprived of his dinner enriches the story that Lucius-as-author is telling, for the fish-trampling prefigures Book XI's pious dénouement. When he becomes an initiate of Isis, Lucius will not be allowed to eat fish.37

The puzzling market episode becomes clear in the light of Isiac religious practices. Fish were a forbidden food for followers of Isis because of the role they play in her story. When the evil Seth

---

36 Hanson emends to cuppedinis, but if we see the episode as anticipating Lucius's curtailing of desires as an Isiac priest, cupidinis is relevant.

37 For the abhorrence of fish in the Egyptian religion, see Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride, § 7, 18 and 32. Fish play a supernatural role in Apuleius's own life. When Apuleius was accused of having used witchcraft to marry a rich widow, one of the prosecutor's arguments was Apuleius's suspicious interest in fish. Apuleius apparently took this accusation seriously, for he responds to it at length in his defense speech (Apologia 29-41).
cut up Osiris's body and threw the pieces into the Nile, there was but one body part which Isis was unable to retrieve. This was Osiris's penis, eaten by fish (De Iside et Osiride §18). Isis was obliged to fashion a substitute phallus out of Nile mud and saliva (Le Corsu 8), and henceforth the eating of fish was taboo for her followers. Lucius's adventure at the market foreshadows the moment when the demands of Isis oblige him to curtail the fleshly pleasures of bed and table.\(^\text{38}\)

As an initiate and then priest of Isis, Lucius introduces into his belly only the bare minimum of selected foods. The parallel between belly and text continues, for Book XI is much more streamlined and linear than the preceding books. Gone is the text which was ever hungry to incorporate as many diverse elements as possible. Lucius becomes the exclusive focus, and his life now unfolds according to a unified pattern, for the blind Fortuna has been replaced by a beneficent Fortuna videns (XI.15). Under Isis, the physical urges which wreaked such havoc in Lucius's life are strictly controlled. Among the desires which are now chastised is the *narrare cupio*. The narrator who previously did not scruple to relate the details of his bowel movements and sexual positions now exercises a strict self-censorship, telling us only what does not violate the mysteries of Isis: "*quod solum potest sine piaculo ad profanorum intelligentias enuntiari referam*" (XI.23). Lucius has learned that there are "*tacenda quaedam*" (XI.27),\(^\text{39}\) just as there are forbidden foods.

If Lucius's belly is mortified in Book XI, so is his text.

\(^\text{38}\) See France Le Corsu's *Isis, mythe et mystères*, p.154. The market episode is particularly rich in Isiac meaning. In "L'Affaire du marché d'Hypata dans la • Métamorphose • d'Apulée," Derchain and Hubaux explain that the aedile's fish-trampling is "*la transposition d'un rite égyptien [...] qui consistait à piétiner des poissons assimilés magiquement aux « ennemis », c'est à dire aux puissances maléfiques de toutes sortes, que l'on réduisait ainsi à l'impuissance*" (102).

\(^\text{39}\) Book XI alludes to the role of the ineffable in the Isiac religion: "*Gerebat alius felici suo gremio summi numinis venerandam effigiem, non pecoris, non avis, non ferae, ac ne hominis quidem ipsius consimilem, sed sollerti repertu etiam ipsa novitate reverendam, altioris utcumque et magno silentio tegendae religionis argumentum ineffabile*" (XI.11). Lucius acknowledges the limits of language in a prayer to Isis: "*At ego referendis laudibus tuis exilis ingenio et adhibendis sacrificiis tenuis patrimonio; nec mihi vocis ubertas ad dicenda quae de tua maiestate sentio sufficit, nec ora mille linguaeque totidem vel indefessi sermonis aeterna series*" (XI.25).
The belly is a metaphor for the nature of Apuleius's text: the voracious ass-belly corresponds to the assimilative narrative structure of the first ten books, and the deprived priest-belly corresponds to the streamlined narrative structure of Book XI. There is little to surprise us in such correlations, for the prologue has led us to expect parallels between physical form and textual form.

"Iam haec equidem ipsa vocis immutatio desultoriae scientiae stilo quem accessimus respondet" (I.1), says the prologue-speaker. S.J. Harrison's gloss underscores the text/body harmony: "The preface moves to its close with [...] an assertion that a translation or transformation of an original in another language is an appropriate vehicle for subject-matter which itself concerns transformation (i.e. metamorphosis through magic)" (Harrison 512). The prologue-speaker again associates body and text through his choice of metaphor for the act of literary composition, claiming that he has written the book in much the same way that a circus-rider jumps from one moving horse to another.

*The Golden Ass's* prologue invites us to be sensitive to analogies between body and text. The reader who takes up the challenge is amply rewarded, for there are many such parallels on a small scale. For instance, it seems at one point that Charite will be incorporated into the ass-body: "Hunc igitur iugulare crastino placeat, totisque vacuefacto praecordiis per medium alvum nudam virginem. quam praetulit nobis, insuere" (VI.31). If she narrowly escapes being placed in the middle of Lucius's physical body, this is precisely the place that she will occupy in his textual body.

There are many other examples of stories-within-stories in *The Golden Ass*. Charite's own story incorporates the Psyche tale told to her during her captivity. We have seen that in Book I, Lucius's tale incorporates Aristomenes's, which in turn incorporates Socrates's. This Chinese-box structure is repeated in Book IX, where three adultery tales are encapsulated within one another. Once again,
a parallel exists between the physical and the textual body. Just as there are examples of stories-within-stories, so are there examples of bodies-within-bodies: we can think of the perpetually pregnant woman whose womb Meroe has sealed (I.9), or Thrasyleon sewn into the bear's carcass (IV.15). The ass himself nearly experiences an unnatural pregnancy, for in an interesting aveu d'écriture, the robbers use the term uterus when discussing their plan to incorporate Charite into the ass's body: "cum sol nimiis caloribus inflammarit uterum" (VI.32). The ass himself confirms the pregnancy image: "ventremque crebro suspiciens meum iam misellam puellam parturibam" (VII.4). Once again, there is a slide from the physical to the textual body. Lucius will be pregnant not with Charite's body, but with her story. The image of the writer as pregnant with a work is common in antiquity, and the ass explicitly expresses a desire to couch in writing the tale told to Charite by the robbers' domestic: "Sed astans ego non procul dolebam mehercules quod pugillares et stilum non habebam qui tam bellam fabellam praenotarem" (VI.25).

Another striking image is the body which is titillating because only partially revealed. In Book X's magnificent spectacle, an actress represents Venus "qualis fuit Venus cum fuit virgo, nudo et intecto corpore perfectam formositatem professa, nisi quod tenui pallio bombycino inumbrabant spectabilem pubem" (X.31). The image recalls the memorable scene in which Photis metamorphoses herself into the Venus pudica: "in speciem Veneris quae marinos fluctus subit pulchre reformata, paulisper etiam glabellum feminal rosea palmula potius obumbrans de industria quam tegens verecundia" (II.17). If the delicately veiled body piques the interest and imagination, the same is true of the imperfectly revealed textual body. In Le Plaisir du texte,

40 The primary meaning of the word uterus is "womb"; the transferred meaning is "belly." Apuleius twice exploits the double meaning of the term in a way which an English translation cannot render: Thrasyleon is sewn into the bear's uterus, and Charite is nearly sewn into the ass's uterus. Uterus is not Apuleius's habitual choice for the word "belly." The word uterus is used four other times in The Golden Ass (Oldfather 482), and means simply "womb" in all four cases.
Roland Barthes compares narrative suspense to a strip-tease, for both produce pleasure inhering in "un dévoilement progressif: toute l'excitation se réfugie dans l'espoir de voir le sexe (rêve de collégien) ou de connaître la fin de l'histoire (satisfaction romanesque)" (20).

Photis's sex remains covered only for a moment; the narrative suspense is more long-lived. We never learn the truth of the steamy relationship between Lucius and Photis. Did Photis truly make an innocent mistake in giving Lucius the wrong magic salve? Or was Lucius her toy from the beginning? Or was Photis perhaps the agent of Pamphile all along? These two women, after all, played a key role in Lucius's humiliation at the Festival of Laughter. The text piques our interest by refusing complete revelation. We are remade in Lucius's image, for our curiosity regarding Photis's textual body equals Lucius's curiosity regarding her physical body:

\[
\frac{Lucius}{Photis's \ Body} = \frac{Reader}{Photis's \ Story}
\]

The most interesting bits of Photis's body remain veiled, just as the most interesting bits of her story remain hidden.

John J. Winkler's analysis of the Thelyphron tale highlights a curious interchangeability between parts of the body and parts of the story. After the fateful night, Thelyphron wakes up in a panic, and rushes to the cadaver

to see whether he had suffered dismemberment (which would mean that he would have to suffer a reciprocal dismemberment to replace what was missing)—and saw nothing. Instead, reversing the terms of the contract, the corpse supplies what was missing to the narrator: not parts of his face, but the part of his story about the parts of his face. (A&I 114-5; italics added)

Within *The Golden Ass*'s logic, bits of textual body are seen as equivalent for bits of the physical body; the fact that both watcher and corpse are named Thelyphron reinforces this equivalence.
We have seen that Lucius often makes use of his huge ears to listen in on private stories. Such eavesdropping is the aural equivalent of spying on bodies he is not meant to see, the most striking example of which is found in Book III: "Iamque circa primam noctis vigiliam ad illud superius cubiculum suspenso et insono vestigio me perducit ipsa, perque rimam ostiorum quamiam iubet arbitrari, quae sic gesta sunt. Iam primum omnibus laciniis se devestit Pamphile [...]" (III.21).

This act of spying on the forbidden, naked female body is an echo of Acteon's transgression, represented in Byrrhena's statuary: "Inter medias frondes lapidis Actaeon simulacrum, curioso optutu in deam versum proiectus" (II.4). In the final book, it is the reader who finds himself in the role of the curiosus who wishes to know too much about the body. Here, however, the object of curiosity is the textual rather than the physical body: "Quaerar forsitan satis anxie, studiose lector, quid deinde dicunt, quid factum. Dicerem si dicere liceret, cognosceris si liceret audire" (XI.23).

We have seen that in Latin, the word *corpus* can be applied to both the physical and the textual body. This is true of a number of other terms, among them *genus*;\(^41\) as biologist and literary critic, Aristotle explored *genus* in two senses of the word. *The Golden Ass* plays with the polysemy of the term *genus*, for there is a marked fluidity with respect to both gender and genre. The novel presents a number of switches in gender. To follow her husband into exile, Plotina not only disguises herself as a man (VII.6), but also faces her trials with the spirit of a man (ingenio masculo VII.6). Her example is typical. Each time a woman in *The Golden Ass* manifests courage or resolution, she is portrayed as briefly transformed into a man: Charite, Psyche, and even the

---

\(^{41}\) This polysemy operates in French as well. One word, *genre*, covers what we call "(sexual) gender," "(taxonomic) genus" and "(literary) genre." Two other Latin examples of body-text words are *membrum* and *colon*. The word *membrum* can mean a limb of the body or a clause of a sentence (cf. the French "les membres d'une phrase"). *Colon* can mean either the large intestine, or the section of a sentence which follows the punctuation mark we call colon.
robbers' elderly servant all experience at least one moment of admirable virility. Photis appears as a man in a slightly different context, for during her first sexual encounter with Lucius she presents herself as the adversary in a military battle (II.17). The fact that she is initially on top during sex emphasizes her masculine role.

The robbers also succeed in feminizing Lucius. They decide to kill the ruptus asellus (VI.26) who has brought them nothing but bad luck. To escape this fate, the ass plucks up a virile courage: "Quin igitur masculum tandem sumis animum tuaeque saluti, dum licet, consulis?" (VI.26). He makes a valiant escape attempt with Charite on his back. His new virility is accentuated by the fact that he to some degree adopts the role of Charite's lover: he neighs sweet nothings, and finds pretexts to kiss her feet (VI.28). But this new masculinity will come to nothing. The robbers catch the escapees, and hit upon a punishment which feminizes Lucius: he is to serve as a womb (uterus VI.32) for Charite in a grotesque pregnancy.

There are even more examples of male-to-female gender fluidity. A member of the Isiac procession cross-dresses (XI.8), and "Haemus" tells of disguising himself as a woman (VII.8). Aristomenes's masculinity is threatened much more gravely when Meroe and Panthia consider various ways of punishing him: "Quin igitur [...] membris eius destinatis virilia desecamus?" (I.13). Having voluntarily undergone this fate, Atargatis's priests are referred to as "girls" (puellae VIII.26). The ass himself faces a similar menace to his maleness when threatened with a castration which will make him gentler than any wether in the flock (quovis vercece mitiorem efficere; VII.23). Though the detestatio (VII.23) never takes place, the auctioneer in Book VIII will call

---

42 For Psyche, see V.22 and VI.5; for Charite, see VI.27, VIII.11 and VIII.14; for the robbers' anus, see VI.27.

43 Paul Veyne reminds us that in Roman mores, "être actif, c'est être un mâle" (28). He cites Seneca to evoke the horror that was inspired by the idea of a woman straddling a man (31).
Lucius a wether ("Vercem" inquit "non asinum vides" VIII.25), and will assign to him an ignominious sexual role: "si faciem tuam mediis eius feminibus immiseris, facile periclitaberis quam grandem tibi demonstrat patientiam" (VIII.25).

Castration is the most direct and dramatic threat to Lucius's masculinity. Yet even before his metamorphosis, Lucius is frequently feminized in a more oblique fashion. An anxiety-provoking woman in many ways, Byrrhena feminizes Lucius by insisting on his resemblance, both moral and physical, to his mother:

"En" inquit "sanctissimae Salviae matris generosa probitas. Sed et cetera corporis exsecrabuliter ad [regulam qua diligenter aliquid affingunt] amussim congruentia: inenormis proceritas, suculenta gracilitas, rubor temperatus, flavum et inaffectatum capillitium, oculi caesii quidem, sed vigiles et in aspectu micantes, prorsus aquilini, os quoquoversum floridum, speciosus et immediatus incessus."

II.2

Milo too subtly feminizes Lucius from their first meeting. Lucius arrives at Milo's house just as the latter is beginning to dine. As is customary for women, his wife remains seated rather than reclining on a couch: "Assidebat pedes uxor" (I.22). Having read Lucius's letter of introduction, Milo manifests his hospitality in slightly ambiguous fashion: "iubet uxorem decedere, utque in eius locum assidam iubet" (I.23). Since he is inviting Lucius to adopt the posture of a woman, it is hardly surprising that Lucius should hesitate (me [...] cunctantem I.23). The feminization of Lucius is reinforced when Milo alludes to his virginal modesty (virginali [...] verecundia I.23).

The end of Book I brings us another bit of stage business in which Milo feminizes Lucius. Milo uses a touch of force to lead a reluctant Lucius to his bed:

pergit ipse et iniecta dextra clementer me trahere adoritur. Ac dum cunctor, dum modeste renitor. "Non prius" inquit "discedam quam me sequaris." Et dictum iure

---

44 Paul Vallette reminds us that custom "voulait qu'à table les hommes fussent couchés. les femmes assises" (Vol.1, p.23, note 2).
The scene seems innocent enough until we read a later scene in which an older man leads a charming, though unwilling, young man to his bed: "Talis sermonis blanditie cavillatum deducebat ad torum nolentem puerum, sequentem tamen" (IX.28). The miller leads Philesitherus to his bed in order to feminize and humiliate him by sodomizing him. Milo's leading Lucius to his bed similarly prefaces a humiliation, though slightly deferred. At the Festival of Laughter, Lucius becomes, like Philesitherus, a mere instrument for the pleasure of others. Philesitherus—already described as girlishly pretty—is feminized by being made a catamite. Though less physical, Lucius's humiliation similarly compromises his masculinity: the traumatic episode leaves him sobbing and shaking with fear (III.10).45

It is hardly surprising that Byrrhena and Milo, both of whom feminized Lucius in subtle ways, should be at least complicit in his symbolic castration at the Festival of Laughter. Byrrhena seemed to know in advance that Lucius would play a role in inspiring merriment at the Festival of Laughter (II.31). Milo too seems implicated, for he shocks Lucius by participating in the cruel taunting at the festival (III.7). He also contributes to Lucius's pain by taking him to the public baths after the mock trial, ensuring that he will be exposed to the maximum number of jeers and pointing fingers (III.12). This scene leads to another parallel in femininity between Lucius and Philesitherus. Walking to the baths, Lucius clings to Milo's side (lateri eius adambulabam obiectus III.12). Once again, a scene involving Lucius is twinned with a later scene involving Philesitherus. When the supposedly bold lover first appears, he is clinging to the side of an old bawd: "ecce nequissimae

45 The twinning of these scenes creates a parallel between body and text. If the miller leads Philesitherus to his bed in order to delve into his body, Milo leads Lucius to his bed in order to delve into his story: "Percontatur accuratius causas etiam peregrinationis meae" (I.26).
The Golden Ass thus presents a series of examples suggesting that one gender can turn into the other. If this is true of the physical genus (gender), it is equally true of the textual genus (genre), for a number of tales in The Golden Ass abruptly switch genre. In the case of Book X's Phaedra tale, the genre change is explicitly signalled by the narrator: "Iam ergo, lector optime, scito te tragoediam, non fabulam, legere et a socco ad cothurnum ascendere" (X.2). Yet it is a mistake for the reader to settle too complacently into the tragic mode. Later, the same story will shift from tragedy to comedy with the intervention of the perspicacious physician: "ut res est de me cognoscite" (X.8).

The genre shift is implicit in Book X's tale of a baby girl saved from infanticide who, at nubile age, is befriended by her brother. Unaware that the two are siblings, the brother's wife becomes jealous. This initial situation is suggestive of ancient comedy or melodrama, yet Apuleius will subvert the reader's generic expectations. The tale has a tragic ending which leaves the stage littered with gruesomely-murdered corpses.

The very first tale prepares the reader for sudden genre shifts. René Martin analyzes Aristomenes's tale as an example of the fantastic (Genres littéraires 1.82-3). This means that its genre is fundamentally undecidable; in reading the tale, we oscillate between believing it to be a tale of the supernatural, and believing it to be a historia whose surprising occurrences have a natural explanation. Apuleius continues to play with our genre expectations in later books. In Book III, we believe that we are reading a tragedy as we see Lucius accused of a triple murder and faced with torture and execution; suddenly, we are thrown into the world of comedy as our homicida proves to be a utricida (III.18). Charite's story exemplifies a genre shift in the other direction: what we believe to be romantic comedy in Book VII swerves into tragedy in Book VIII.
Some gender switches in *The Golden Ass* are benign, as when a man cross-dresses, or even positive, as when a woman becomes male by exhibiting courage. But more often, gender switches are deeply troubling. The threat or reality of castration affects a number of male characters, and castration also appears in displaced form, as when Charite stabs out Thrasyllus's eyeballs with her hair pin⁴⁶ or Thelyphron has his ears and nose cut off. We have seen that because Lucius is unceremoniously hurried from place to place, stories like that of the gardener master are also truncated. Like the physical, the textual body in *The Golden Ass* is vulnerable to having parts unceremoniously lopped off.

Occasionally in *The Golden Ass*, a prosthetic device will be used to mask a bodily mutilation.⁴⁷ This prosthesis permits a period of illusory tranquillity. Aristomenes is reassured when, having left the inn, he surreptitiously examines Socrates's neck: "'Vesane,' aio 'qui poculis et vino seputus extrema somniasti. Ecce Socrates integer, sanus, incolumis. Ubi vulnus, spongia? Ubi postremum cicatrix tam alta, tam recens?''" (1.18). The shock is all the greater when the prosthetic device falls out as Socrates stoops to take a drink: "Necdum satis extremis labiis summum aquae rorem attigerat, et iugulo eius vulnus dehiscit in profundum patorem et illa spongia de eo repente devolvitur eamque parvus admodum comitatur cruor" (1.19). A similar sequence is found in the next book, where a prosthetic device—this time wax ears and nose—gives Thelyphron a false belief that his body is integer. He is caught cruelly off guard when the cadaver informs him of the

---

⁴⁶ The scene echoes *Oedipus the King*: "from her dress he tore / The golden brooches that she had been wearing, / Raised them, and with their points struck his own eyes" (1268-70). According to Freud, the act of blinding someone, "in the legend of Oedipus, as well as elsewhere, stands for castration" (*The Interpretation of Dreams* VI:398, footnote 1).

⁴⁷ These "prostheses" recall the substitute penis which Isis fashioned for Osiris out of mud and saliva.
mutilation he has undergone: "His dictis perterritus temptare formam^48 aggredior. Iniecta manu nasum prehendo: sequitur; aures pertracto: deruunt" (II.30).

Just as characters are lulled into thinking that their bodies are integer, so is the reader often lulled into thinking that the textual body is integer. This is the case in the examples above: we breathe a sigh of relief when Thelyphron escapes the widow's house with apparently only a few cuts and bruises, or when Socrates seems to emerge hale and hearty from the inn. The tale of the miller's wife also lulls us with a deceptive happy ending—happy for the miller, in any case, who repudiates his wife after sodomizing her lover (IX.28). However, in a tragic sequel, the wife has recourse to a witch to bring her husband to a grisly end (IX.30). The Golden Ass's most startling example of false narrative closure is Book VII's happy ending to the Charite tale. We are duped by a story which appears seamless and complete, just as Thelyphron was duped by a body which appeared seamless and complete.

Another false dénouement surfaces at the end of Book II, when Lucius is indicted on the murder charge. Though not happy, the preliminary ending does have a certain grandeur: Lucius risks being tortured and executed, but he has given proof of great valour. He describes the battle scene in epic terms (III.6), and presents himself as the restorer of the peace and the protector of public safety (III.6). If Lucius is executed, he will die with a reputation for legendary prowess.

Pathos plunges into bathos when Lucius discovers that a cruel joke has been played on him. The shift in the nature of the story is directly caused by a shift in the nature of the body, for the critical moment occurs when Lucius uncovers the slain bodies to find that they are not what he had thought. With the sight of the punctured wineskins, Lucius and his tale simultaneously change.

^48 Modern editors emend Fortunam to formam. (See note 3 on page 118 in Hanson's edition.)
*genus*. The story shifts from tragedy to comedy, while Lucius goes from believing himself to be a valiant hero to appearing an effeminate creature who cries, trembles, recoils from pointing fingers and cowers against Milo's side. In this particularly clever exploitation of the double meaning of the word *genus*, man and story change *genus* in the same instant.

Book XI marks another shift in both physical and textual *genus*. The pious final book is so different from the bawdy, rambunctious tales which precede it that some critics have speculated that it was penned by a different author. Yet the abrupt transition has a certain Apuleian logic, for once again the change in literary *genus* corresponds to a change in physical *genus*. In regaining human form, the ass changes biological *genus*. This shift is accentuated by the fact that Lucius partially renounces his gender (*genus*) to enter the Isiac priesthood. Though less exigent than the Syrian goddess Atargatis, Isis does ask that Lucius give up something of his virility by taking a vow of chastity (XI.19). The shift in literary *genus* coincides with a dual shift in physical *genus*: Lucius changes both his species and his gender.

The motif of invasion or penetration is another which applies equally to the physical and the textual body. Bodies in *The Golden Ass* are peculiarly susceptible to invasions of different kinds. Socrates suffers a brutal invasion at the hands—*c'est le cas de le dire*—of Meroe: "*immissa dextera per vulnus illud ad viscera penitus cor miseris contubernalis mei Meroe bona scrutata protulit*" (I.13). The ass is invaded when the nasty boy's mother shoves a red-hot firebrand between his hind legs (VII.28). In an echo of this episode, the jealous wife kills her suspected rival by thrusting a white-hot firebrand between her thighs (X.24). The Philesitherus story is constructed on the principle of an-invasion-for-an-invasion: Philesitherus is sodomized by the man whose wife he has bedded (IX.28). Lucius, who in human form is described as a pretty-boy much like Philesitherus, fears that he will become the asinine catamite of Atargatis's priests (VIII.26). In the Charite story,
one invasion again calls another: driven by his desire to invade Charite's body, Thrasyllus brutally invades that of her husband (*per femus dexterum demisit lanceam* VIII.5). Yet rather than submit to sexual invasion, Charite will herself invade Thrasyllus's body: "*acu crinali capite deprompta Thrasylli convulnerat tota lumina*" (VIII.13).

If literal invasions abound, invasion also plays a role in many metaphors. At the beginning of Book III, Lucius's mind is invaded by anxiety: "*Aestus invadit animum*" (III.1). With Aristomenes as well, fear is conceived of as an invasive force: Socrates hits him with a spear-thrust (*lancea* I.11) of anxiety. The robbers invade homes in *cuneus* formation (IV.26), and Philesitherus will use a *cuneus* of a different nature to invade Myrmex's mind: "*addens ad postremum cuneum, quiregentem prorsus servi tenacitatem violenter diffinderet; porrecta enim manu sua demonstrat ei novitate nimia candentes solidos aureos*" (IX.18). Even before being subjected to literal invasion, Socrates is keenly aware that a man's life is always susceptible to the "*instabiles incursiones*" (I.6) of Fortune.

The abundance of invasions in Books I-X, both literal and metaphoric, suggests that our lives are open to invasion by external forces at any time. This existential experience is represented on the structural level, for the main story-line is continually invaded by ancillary material: the textual body is subject to invasion just as the physical body is. Particularly rich in bodily invasions, the first book also introduces us to the principle of narrative construction through invasion. Lucius's story is invaded by Aristomenes's, which in turn is invaded by Socrates's. Sometimes the invasive nature of story is represented on the diegetic level. The rich *paterfamilias* 's life is brutally invaded by story, and in consequence he invades his own body with a knife. Similarly, the lives of Charite's slaves are brutally invaded and irrevocably changed by the story of her demise, and this invasion by story is the prelude to physical invasions: ferocious dogs will soon be sinking their teeth into
the runaway slaves (VIII.17).

The invasive power of story is thus both a theme and a structuring device in *The Golden Ass*. During the first ten books, Lucius's body and text have been shown to be equally susceptible to invasion. This changes in Book XI, where Lucius arrives at the harbour of Peace (*ad portum Quietis [...] venisti XI.15*). Protected and charmed by Isiac rituals, Lucius's body is no longer vulnerable to invasion by weapons, sexual organs and red-hot firebrands. Similarly, his textual body gains a new impenetrability, and is no longer invaded by interpolated stories.

*Apuleius establishes a matrix of correlations between body and text. If the body is vulnerable to invasion, *genus* change, truncation, and encapsulation in other bodies, the same is true of the text. Both can be an object of desire and a source of pleasure; both can lull our fears with an eerie illusion of *integritas*. This series of analogies between body and text confirms that in *The Golden Ass*, there is no impermeable cloison between the textual and physical body; the body both determines the shape of the text on a macro-level, and is paralleled to the text on a micro-level. One final analogy between text and body suggests itself as an apt conclusion. Lucius is spellbound when he watches Pamphile change shape: "Et *illa quidem magnis suis artibus volens reformatur. At ego nullo decantatus carmine, praesentis tantum facti stupore defixus, quidvis altud magis videbar esse quam Lucius" (III.22). Just as Lucius loses himself as he contemplates the transformations of Pamphile's body, so do Lucius's readers lose themselves as they discover the transformations of his text.*

*The Golden Ass's* intermeshing of physical and textual *corpus* has consequences on the level of plot. Because Apuleius establishes that body and text are in some sense equivalent, the latter can
conceivably be substituted for the former. We will see in the next chapter that Lucius has recourse to such a substitution when threatened with a particularly public and humiliating death.
In Book X of The Golden Ass, the audience of the judgment-of-Paris mime is entranced by a stunning Venus whose form is revealed as a breeze toys with the sheer silk veiling her charms (X.31). For Roland Barthes, this scene might be interpreted as an image of reading. Rather than reading an entire book with the same intensity, says Barthes, we skim what interests us little in order to reach the "lieux brûlants": "nous sommes alors semblables à un spectateur de cabaret qui monterait sur la scène et hâterait le strip-tease de la danseuse, en lui étant prestement ses vêtements, mais dans l'ordre" (PT 21). According to this model, any text can be seen as a body. Yet there are other, more complex forms which the relationship between body and text can take. In The Golden Ass, the body is more than a metaphor for the text, for the two are shown to be interchangeable. Lucius's adventures suggest that the text can replace the body as object of desire and source of pleasure.

We have seen several ways in which Diophanes's odd prediction that Lucius would become a book comes true. First, Lucius's asinine body is a text in which his most marked personality traits are inscribed. Second, the book which Lucius authors is profoundly shaped by the form and nature of the asinine body. In an intimate sense, Lucius's self and text are one. There is yet another way in which the charlatan's prediction proves true. In Book X, the ass is destined to copulate with a vile murderess in the public arena. The ordeal will certainly bring dishonour, and perhaps death as well: Lucius is doubtful that the wild beasts will be discriminating enough to sink their teeth only into the scelestas femina (X.34), and not the innocent ass. In this moment of crisis, Lucius decides to flee. Yet rather than eluding his destiny of public exhibition, he is merely changing its form. He
will render himself public (publicare) in a different sense: in becoming an author, Lucius offers
the world his textual body in place of his physical body.

"Ergo igitur non de pudore iam, sed de salute ipsa sollicitus" (X.35). Such is the ass’s state of
mind moments before he is to have intercourse with the condemned woman. By the time we reach
the bestiality exhibition in Book X, sex has long been associated with anguish and violence. In the
couple of books immediately preceding Book X, a slave is punished for his extramarital affair by
being smeared with honey and tied to a tree to be devoured by ants (VIII.22). Another lover is
asphyxiated by sulphur fumes as a result of his adulterous escapade (IX.25). And of course
Philesitherus could testify eloquently to the painful consequences of sex: "insperata potitus salute,
tamen nates candidas illas noctu diuque dirruptus, maerens profugit" (IX.28).49

Sex with a witch is no less hazardous than sex with a married woman, as Socrates ruefully
learns. He is not the first of Meroe’s lovers to meet a bad end. There is, for example, the paramour
whom Meroe turns into a beaver, "quod ea bestia captivitati metuens ab insequentibus se
praecisione genitalium liberat, ut illi quoque simile, quod Venerem habuit in aliam, proveniret"
(I.9). The lovers of that other witch, Pamphile, are scarcely more to be envied, as Byrrhena's
warning to Lucius suggests:

simul quemque conspexerit speciosae formae iuvenem, venustate eius sumiter et
ilico in eum et oculum et animum detorquet. Serit blanditias, invadit spiritum,
amoris profundi pedicis aeternis alligat. Tunc minus morigeros et viles fastidio in
saxa et in pecua et quodvis animal puncto reformat, alios vero prorsus extinguit.

   (II.5)

Lucius prudently avoids intimacy with his host’s wife, deciding instead to further his

49 Philesitherus’s punishment suggests the violence of gay anal sex. I.4, which we have looked at in a different
context, hints that gay oral sex is similarly a violent phenomenon. Lucius describes how he nearly choked to death
when he tried to take too big a piece of polenta in his mouth. He then expresses admiration for a man who is able to
plunge various weapons into his throat with apparent ease.
fascination with magic by seducing her attractive slave: "Photis illa temptetur" (II.6). Despite Lucius's rather cold and calculating motives, the ensuing love-scene is one of The Golden Ass's most passionate: Lucius describes how Photis gratified him with the pleasures of the suspended Venus as he lay on his back. Yet even this steamy passage has troubling undertones. The plastic image of Photis suspending herself over Lucius recalls the sadistic moment in Book I when Meroe and Panthia urinate on Aristomenes. Though it is repugnant to think that there could be any common ground between Book II's magnificent slave-girl and Book I's horrible sisters, the rigorous parallelism between the two scenes imposes the comparison. The following sentence shows the sisters crouching over Aristomenes:

\[\text{remoto grabatulo varicus super faciem meam residentes vesicam exonerant} \text{ (I.13)}\]

The sentence which describes Photis crouching over Lucius uses not only the same vocabulary, but also the same syntactic structure:

\[\text{inscenso grabatulo, super me sensim residens ac crebra subsiliens lubricisque gestibusmobilem spinam quatiens, pendulae Veneris fructu me satiavit} \text{ (II.17)}\]

The erotic image is fused with a violent image. This twinning of the two scenes invites exploration of the sadistic aspects of Lucius's and Photis's relationship. When Lucius first manifests interest, Photis twice warns him that involvement with her will bring pain as well as pleasure (II.7; II.10). The imagery she invokes suggests that the female anatomy is as dangerous as desirable: "'Discede,' inquit 'miselle, quam procul a meo foculo, discede'" (II.7). He disregards her warnings, but the promise of violence and suffering will be fulfilled. The Golden Ass confirms the Ovidian tag that "Militat omnis amans" (Ov. Am. 1.9.1), for Lucius's and Photis's erotic escapades are
couched in the language of warfare:

"Proeliare" inquit "et fortiter proeliare, nec enim tibi cedam nec terga vertam. Comminus in aspectum, si vir es, derige, et grassare naviter et occide moriturus. Hodierna pugna non habet missionem." (II.17)50

In a later sexual encounter, violence is more than a metaphor. After the Festival of Laughter episode, Photis invites Lucius to beat her in retribution for the suffering she has caused him:

"lorum quempiam sinu suo depromit mihique porrigens, 'Cape,' inquit 'oro te, et de perfida muliere vindictam, immo vero licet maius quodvis supplicium sume'" (III.13). A moment later, the two are consumed with desire: "oculos Photidis meae, udos ac tremulos et prona libidine marcidos iamiamque semiadopertulos, adnixis et sorbillantibus saviis sitienter haunebunt" (III.14).

The key role Photis plays in Lucius's humiliation at the Festival of Laughter strengthens the parallel between Photis and the witch-sisters. Like Meroe and Panthia, Photis seems a malevolent force who delights in toying with men's lives. Since Meroe has a penchant for metamorphosing her lovers, Photis again appears her avatar when she turns Lucius into an ass. Though she always claims innocence of intent, Photis undeniably proves a "dulce et amarum gustulum" (II.10) as she had warned Lucius she would.

Sex proves as hazardous to the ass as it was to the man. The ass is attacked by stallions when he eyes their mares (VII.16). The nasty boy need only pretend that the ass lusts after human beings in order to provoke the decision to have him castrated (VII.21-23). Even the affair with the matrona has troubling undertones: the ass goes quickly from fearing that he will destroy her with his great phallus to worrying that he is insufficient to satisfy her (X.22). One is left with the

50 Apuleius uses a rich champ lexical of violence in the lovers' encounters: tantum cruciatum voluptatis eximiae (II.10), tota enim nocte tecum fortiter et ex animo proeliabor (II.10), prorsus gladiatoriae Veneris antecenia (II.15), proelio quod nobis sine fetiali officio indixeras (II.16), iam saucius paulisper (II.16), ubi primam sagittam saevi Cupidinis in ima praecordia mea delapsam excepì, arcum meum et ipse vigorate tetendi (II.16).
impression that women are sexually insatiable creatures who consume males.

Lucius's personal knowledge of the dangers of sex is confirmed by the stories which come to his ears. The intimate intertwining of sex and death is one of the many parallels between the Psyche tale and the frame story. The Psyche tale invokes the tradition according to which the girl who dies unmarried is seen as the bride of Death. When Psyche's father consults the oracle, he receives the following instructions: "Montis in excelsi scopulo, rex, siste puellam / ornatum mundo funerei thalami" (IV.33). The motif of funereal nuptials recurs frequently in the paragraphs that follow. Psyche prepares for her funereal wedding (feralam nuptiarum IV.33), and the arrangements for her funereal marriage (feralis thalami IV.34) are carried out. The narrator fuses eroticism and violence with the rhyming pair nuptias/exequias: "lacrimosa Psyche comitatur non nuptias sed exsequias suas" (IV.34).

Psyche's sisters take up the theme of fatal nuptials when they warn Psyche that her lover intends to kill and eat her. In turn, Psyche makes the motif her own when she drives her sisters to their death by persuading them that Cupid wishes to wed them. Perhaps this insistent motif of the funereal wedding influences the woman for whose benefit the Psyche tale is told, for Charite has recourse to this idea when seeking to avenge her husband's death. She promises a night of love to Thrasyllus, but in reality is staging a marriage of death (scaena feralium nuptiarum VIII.11) in which she will brutally attack him.

Eroticism and death are again conflated when the jealous wife kills her supposed rival in a parody of intercourse, thrusting a white-hot firebrand between her thighs (X.24). This gruesome tale is particularly troubling to Lucius, for the murderess is none other than the woman with whom

51 See for example Sophocles's Antigone, lines 813-16: "No wedding day can be / Mine, no hymn will be raised to honour / Marriage of mine; for I / Go to espouse the bridegroom, Death"; and line 891: "O grave, my bridal-chamber [...]"
he is to copulate in the public arena.

Because _The Golden Ass_ so consistently associates sex with violence or death, we can understand the depth of Lucius's terror as the moment of the exhibition approaches: "At ego praeter pudorem obeundi publice concubitus, praeter contagium scelestae pollutaeque feminae, metu etiam mortis maxime cruciabar" (X.34). His anguish is such that he would welcome death, but one of the horrors of being trapped in the ass-body is that suicide is impossible: "privatus humana manu, privatus digitis, ungula rotunda atque mutila gladium stringere nequaquam poteram" (X.29). Yet as Lucius himself insists, within the ungainly body remains a human intelligence: "quamquam perfectus asinus et pro Lucio iumentum, sensum tamen retinebam humanum" (III.26). By using this intelligence, Lucius will substitute for the intended sex-show a public exhibition of a different and more satisfying nature.

Lucius's _sensus humanus_ (III.26) permits him to benefit from the wealth of experience he has gained in his asinine odyssey. On several occasions, he learns that people in a tight spot have recourse to substitutions. Unable to obtain the hairs of the Boeotian her mistress desires, Photis avoids a savage beating by substituting hairs similar in appearance:

> Verum cum tristis inde discederem, ne prorsus vacuis manibus redirem, conspicor quendam forficulis attondentem capitram et manibus. Quos cum probe constrictos inflatosque et iam pendentes cernerem, capillos eorum humi iacentes, flavos ac per hoc illi Boeotio iuveni consimiles, plusculos aufero eosque dominae meae dissimulata veritate trado. (III.17)

This substitution of goat-hairs for human hairs paves the way for a second substitution, one which

---

52 Had Charite been sewn into the ass-body, she too would have known the horror of being unable to commit suicide: "nec suis saltem liberis manibus mortem sibi fabricare poterit" (VI.32).

53 See also IV.6: "f axs vos quoque an mente etiam sensuque fuerim asinus sedulo sentiatis."

54 Later in Book III, Photis carries out a second substitution—that of one magic salve for another—but we do not know whether she does so deliberately or by accident.
will bring Lucius infinite relief. On trial for murder, he suddenly discovers that slashed wineskins have been substituted for the slain bodies (III.9).

If this substitution saves Lucius's life, a later substitution will put the ass's life in jeopardy. In Book VIII, a cook is panic-stricken when a dog makes off with the stag he was to serve his master for dinner. The cook is contemplating suicide when his wife proposes a canny substitution:

"Adeone" inquit "praesenti malo perterritus mente excidisti tua, nec fortuitum istud remedium quod deum providentia sumministrat intueris? Nam si quid in ultimo Fortunae turbine resipiscis, expergite mi ausculta et advenam istum asinum remoto quodam loco deductum iugula, femusque eius ad similitudinem perditi detractum et accuratius in protrimentis sapidissime percoctum appone domino cervi maiorem vicem."

(VIII.31)

The proposed substitution fails only because the ass in question can understand the conversation and take defensive action.

One of Book IX's adulterous wives has recourse to a substitution in a pinch. A poor workman returns home unexpectedly while his wife is entertaining her lover (IX.5). She has the lover hide in an empty storage-jar, but is taken aback when her husband announces that he just sold the jar and has come home to fetch it. She cleverly tells her husband that she has already sold the jar—and at a higher price—to a man who is at that moment inside the jar inspecting its quality. The faithless wife gets herself out of a scrape by effectively substituting a buyer for a lover.

A second adultery tale offers another example of substitution-in-a-pincher. Barbarus goes to extreme measures to ensure his wife Arete's fidelity in his absence, entrusting her to the slave Myrmex. Philesitherus gains access to Arete by bribing Myrmex, but has to make a quick escape when the husband returns unexpectedly. The next day, when Philesitherus sees a furious Barbarus leading Myrmex in chains, he recalls that he had left his sandals under the bed. He pummels Myrmex in a mock rage, accusing him of stealing his sandals at the public baths the previous day.
(IX.21). Philesitherus saves Myrmex from Barbarus's wrath by substituting the crime of pilfering for that of pimping.

Lucius has had ample opportunity to witness how useful a substitution can be in extricating an individual from a difficult situation. More, Lucius himself has carried out a couple of substitutions which foreshadow his reaction to Book X's impending bestiality show. Finding himself transformed into an ass, Lucius wishes to voice his rage at Photis—but discovers that he is unable to speak. He instead exploits the expressive possibilities of the ass-body:

"Ac dum salutis inopia cuncta corporis mei considerans non avem me sed asinum video, queren de facto Photidis, sed iam humano gestu simul et voce privatus, quod solum poteram, postrema deiecta labia, umidis tamen oculis obliquum respiciens ad illam tacitus expostulabam. (III.25)"

Lucius understands that one form of communication can replace another. Here, body language is substituted for the spoken word; later, the textual body will be substituted for the physical body.

Another early episode anticipates Lucius's defense strategy when faced with the bestiality exhibition. In Book II, Lucius carries out a substitution to sidestep a sexual situation which could threaten his very life. Though thrilled to learn that Pamphile is a witch, Lucius is reluctant to sleep with her not only because he wishes to honour his host's marriage bed, but also because Byrrhena warns him of the attendant dangers. After detailing the dreadful fates which Pamphile's partners habitually meet, Byrrhena indicates that she considers Lucius to be in great jeopardy: "'Haec tibi trepido et cavenda censeo. Nam et illa urit perpetuam, et tu per aetatem et pulchritudinem capax"

---

55 One meaning of capax is "big enough for" (OLD s.v. 2a). In this sentence of Byrrhena's, the word has a sexual connotation which most translations miss. For example, P.G. Walsh gives, "your youth and handsome bearing make you a suitable target for her" (II.5), while Vallette translates, "ton âge et ton extérieur ont bien de quoi faire impression sur elle" (II.5). Adlington comes closer with his rather literal translation: "she burneth continually, and you by reason of your tender age and comely beauty are capable of her fire and love" (33). It is desirable for a translator to convey the sexual nuance here, for Lucius's anxiety about his sexual capacitas will surface periodically (see in particular X.22's tryst with the matrona). For another example of capax used in an erotic context, see the incestuous stepmother's attempt to persuade her stepson to sleep with her: "habes capax necessarii facinoris otium" (X.3).
Lucius's instinct for self-preservation encourages him to play a game of sexual metonymy. He transfers his libidinous intentions from the mistress to the maid: "a nexu quidem venerio hospitis tuae tempera et probi Milonis geniale torum religiosus suspice, verum enimvero Photis famula petatur enixe" (II.6).

There are other examples of one sexual partner being interchanged for another. In Book IX, the miller discovers that his wife has been entertaining a charming young man in his absence. The miller professing to believe that husband and wife are one flesh, nothing is more natural than the substitution, through another metonymic slide, of husband for wife in the erotic dance: "Nam et ipse semper cum meaconiuge tam concorditer vixi ut ex secta prudentium eadem nobis ambobus placerent. Sed nec aequitas ipsa patitur habere plus auctoritatis uxorem quam maritum" (IX.27).

Lucius's experience has taught him that, in general, the principle of substitution is useful in extricating oneself from a difficult situation. More particularly, he has learned that erotic pairings are not absolute: in the game of love, one partner can easily be substituted for another. In Lucius's response to Book X's crisis, his knowledge of the usefulness of substitution will be combined with another observation which his asinine experiences have afforded him. A number of episodes have brought to his attention the fact that there are two ways in which one can be exhibited to the public. One can either be exhibited personally, an experience which tends to be harrowing and traumatic, or one can be exhibited through an artistic representation of the self, an experience which tends to be more tranquil and controllable.

Lucius's own experiences as a man have taught him that it is infinitely more pleasant to be exhibited in artistic form rather than to undergo the exhibition in person. At the Festival of Laughter, Lucius is humiliated by the mocking laughter of a huge crowd. Devastated, he freezes into a kind of statue: "fixus in lapidem steti gelidus nihil secus quam una de ceteris theatri statuis
vel columnis" (III.10). The pose is prophetic, for moments later the magistrates inform him that the city has decreed that a bronze statue of him be erected. Lucius will continue to be the centre of attention and the object of the gaze—but rather than enduring this attention personally, he will be allowed to retire into anonymity as the statue takes his place.

After his metamorphosis, Lucius has another occasion to ponder how much more agreeable it is to have an artistic representation of oneself exhibited rather than to endure the public gaze personally. In Book VIII, he attempts to escape from the robbers with Charite on his back. She promises him artistic immortality if they succeed:

\[\text{Nam memoriam praesentis fortunae meae divinaeque providentiae perpetua testatione signabo, et depictam in tabula fugae praesentis imaginem meae domus atrio dedicabo. Visetur et in fabulis audietur doctorumque stilis rudis perpetuabitur historia. 'Asino vectore virgo regia fugiens captivitatem.' Accedes antiquis et ipse miraculis [...] (VI.29)\]

But instead of being presented to others indirectly through art—as the subject of a painting and of a story—the ass becomes the centre of attention in a personal and negative way. He is mocked, beaten and humiliated by the robbers when they catch him with Charite. More, he nearly becomes a horrible exhibition when the robbers decide to scrape out his insides and sew the naked Charite into his belly (VI.31). The links are strong between this intended freak-show in Book VI, and Book X's planned bestiality exhibition. The project of fusing Lucius's and Charite's bodies into one has sexual overtones, and seems an ironic fulfilment of the desire which Lucius expressed for Charite from the first moment he saw her (IV.23). In addition, this exhibition, like that of Book X, would have ended with the "bites of wild beasts" (\textit{morsus ferarum} VI.32).\textsuperscript{56}

Lucius's wide experience has thus taught him both that sex is often a hazardous enterprise with

\[\text{\textsuperscript{56}The robbers say only that the girl will be exposed to the bites of wild beasts. But just as later the ass will wonder how the beasts could attack the \textit{scelesta femina} without harming him, so can we wonder how the wild beasts could maul Charite without destroying her asinine envelope.}\]
sadistic undertones, and that being exhibited in public tends to involve humiliation and trauma. Since Thiasus's intended spectacle cumulates the two dangers—sexual activity and public exhibition—it is small wonder that Lucius resorts to flight. The ass creeps away while everyone is transfixed by the spectacle, and then races to Cenchreae where he is transformed by Isis. The principle of substitution is manifestly at work, for Lucius has fled one public exhibition only to star in another. His re-transformation takes place in front of a mass of people: "Populi mirantur" (XI.13). A crowd had gathered at Corinth to see the beast copulate with a woman. Instead, the crowd at Cenchreae witnesses an even more astonishing phenomenon: rather than grotesquely taking on the function of a man, the ass regains a man's form.

Just as he would have been at the bestiality spectacle, Lucius is the focus of all eyes after his retransformation: "totae civitati notus ac conspicuus, digitis hominum nutibusque notabilis" (XI.16). The priest Mithras makes it clear that Lucius is to remain in the limelight: "Comitare pompam deae sospitaticris inovanti gradu. Videant irreligiosi, videant et errorem suum recognoscant" (XI.15). But if Lucius remains the centre of attention, the nature of the exhibition has changed. Lucius's genitals are no longer the focus; as soon as he is re-metamorphosed, he is given a tunic to cover his nakedness (XI.14). His body has become the object of the gaze in a different sense, for his re-metamorphosis is interpreted as a manifestation of divine benevolence: "En ecce pristinis aerumnis absolutus Isidis magnae providentia gaudens Lucius de sua Fortuna triumphat" (XI.15). Restored to manhood, Lucius becomes a text on which the power and beneficence of Isis are writ large.

One type of exhibition has replaced another: Lucius is gazed on as a text rather than as a sexual spectacle. This substitution of text for body is repeated in Lucius's decision to write his memoirs. In Book X, Lucius is destined for a dangerous and degrading public exhibition in the arena.
Instead, he offers himself to the public in a different manner by publishing a book.

Though Lucius's decision to become an author is everywhere implied because of the book we hold in our hands, he nowhere explicitly discusses this decision. However, Lucius does emphasize the written nature of his memoirs. Jensson notes that Petronius's *Satiricon* "does not present its narrator as betraying any knowledge of the fact that his words constitute a written text" (53). Since The Golden Ass’s prologue in some ways resembles that of a Plautine comedy (Harrison 509), one might expect that, like the *Satiricon*, The Golden Ass would present itself as a text to be performed. In reality, however, Lucius is at pains to remind us that he is a writer addressing a reader. The very first sentence of the prologue draws attention to the materials of writing (*papyrum Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam* 1.1), and the Book II brings us the prophecy that Lucius will become a book (II.12). If the *Satiricon* is "performance literature" designed "to be recited in a lively manner" (Jensson 46), The Golden Ass foregrounds its status as a written text designed to be read. In this respect Apuleius is closer to Longus than to Petronius, for Daphnis and Chloe’s narrator emphasizes that he is a writer. The preface shows him listening to a man who explains the exquisite painting he has stumbled upon: "l’ayant bien écouté, je composai quatre livres..." (Longus 8).

Longus's narrator responds to beautiful things with a desire to capture them in writing. He lists

---

57 Gottskálk Jensson analyses the *Satiricon* as the "'spoken-to-be-heard' (as opposed to 'written-to-be-read') performance of the narrator Encolpius" (i). See Chapter 1 of *The Recollections of Encolpius: A Reading of the Satyricon as Greco-Roman Erotic Fiction*.

58 The prologue-speaker also evokes the speaking voice, promising to caress our ears with a *lepidus susurro* (I.1). However, in antiquity the murmur of a voice was associated with both reading and writing. It was customary to read aloud, and an example from the *Satiricon* suggests that an audible murmur could accompany the act of writing as well as the act of reading; Petronius uses the word *murmur*, whose meaning is very close to *susurrus*, for a poet’s mumbling as he composes poetry (*Satiricon* 115).

59 Quoted from Jacques Amyot's sixteenth-century translation—the first into French—of *Daphnis and Chloe*. 
the things he saw in the painting: "lesquelles je regardai en si grand plaisir et les trouvai si belles, qu'il me prit l'envie de les coucher par écrit" (8; emphasis added). Lucius has a similar response to beauty. Hearing the Psyche tale, he regrets not having the "pugillares et stilum" (VI.25) he would need to write it down (praenotarem VI.25). Later phrases show that Lucius's desire to write has been realized: "ut vos etiam legatis, ad librum profero" (X.2), he says of a juicy tale which came to his long ears. Again in contrast to Encolpius's narrative, which "seeks to hide its own textuality" (Jensson 53), Lucius makes it clear that he is addressing not listeners or watchers, but readers: the prologue exhorts the reader to pay attention (Lector intende: laetaberes I.1), and IX.30 takes into account the reactions of the lector scrupulosus. In a sense, Lucius does not need to tell us in Book XI that he decided to write a book—the lector scrupulosus will know this from Lucius's frequent references to the act and materials of writing.

Lucius opts for textual rather than sexual self-exhibition. This substitution of book for body has etymological justification. The Latin verb "to publish"—publicare—means more generally "to make public" (OLD s.v. 3). When Lucius publishes a book, he is simply choosing to make himself public in a different manner. Another meaning of publicare confirms the logic of Lucius's substitution of book for body. If the verb's primary meaning is "to make public property" or "to exhibit publicly" (s.v. 1,1b), it is but a small jump to a more specialized meaning: publicare also means "to prostitute" (s.v. 1c). Thiasus had planned to prostitute the ass's body in the arena; Lucius decides instead to prostitute his textual body.

In responding to Book X's crisis, Lucius truly uses his sensus humanus. His choice to produce a book is the logical response to two facts which have been drawn to his attention. He has observed that one can have recourse to a substitution in a difficult situation, and that it is infinitely more pleasant to be exhibited through an artistic representation of the self rather than to endure the public
gaze in person. The decision to write memoirs is the natural outcome of these observations:

The textual body is substituted for the physical body, and Diophanes's odd prophecy that Lucius would become a book is realized.

An early episode may give Lucius the idea that safety lies in substituting text for body. It is generally considered that Lucius does not learn what he should from Thelyphron's tale—i.e. that one runs great bodily risks if one meddles with magic. Yet the differing fates of the two Thelyphrons send Lucius an important message. The first Thelyphron (i.e. the slain husband) has his body transmuted into text. The widow brings in seven witnesses to view the corpse: "obtestata fidem praesentium singula demonstrat anxiæ, verba concepta de industria quodam tabulis praenotante. 'Ecce' inquit 'nasus integer, incolumes oculi, salvae aures, illibatae labiae, mentum solidum. Vos in hanc rem, boni Quirites, testimonium perhibetote'" (II.24). Thelyphron's body has become a text, and this text is sealed to keep it from harm: "Et cum dicto consignatis illis tabulis
One would know right away if this document had been tampered with. The same is not true of the second Thelyphron's body, which is mutilated unbeknownst to him. The Thelyphron who has been turned into text is kept from harm, while the Thelyphron who remains body is exposed to horrible injury. This moral of Book II is relevant to Lucius's decision to replace his own endangered body with a text.

Lucius's substitution of text for body is one of a series of substitutions deployed in response to Book X's crisis. The Golden Ass shows repeatedly that one erotic partner can be substituted for another, and such a substitution comes to Lucius's rescue in the final book. In Carl Schlam's words, "The resolution of the cycle of misfortunes is an initiation which substitutes for the planned exhibition of the Ass copulating with a condemned woman" (The Metamorphoses of Apuleius 21). Schlam identifies a detail which reinforces the impression that (spiritual) fusion with the goddess has been substituted for (physical) fusion with the scelestia femina: "the new initiate is displayed as the mate of the goddess" (The Metamorphoses of Apuleius 21). Nor has Lucius renounced pleasure, for Schlam notes that "[t]he voluptas of the chaste devotee is that of contemplation" ("Sex and Sanctity" 104).

This substitution of Isis for the scelestia femina is founded on another substitution. Throughout the first ten books, the threat of castration—both figurative and literal—hangs over Lucius. In Book VII, allegations of unnatural sex crimes lead to the decision to castrate the ass. This menace surfaces again in Book X when Lucius believes that his body will be torn apart if he copulates with the scelestia femina. Faced with this radical threat to his body, Lucius opts instead for a symbolic castration as the priest of Isis. Through a slide from the literal to the symbolic, he transforms the threat into the solution.

A set of twinned scenes helps us understand the castration subtext of Book XI. Lucius is
described as a statue (in vicem simulacri constituto XI.24) when he is exhibited, perfectly immobile, to the wondering public. The "statue" of Lucius faces that of Isis (ante deae simulacrum XI.24). This arrangement recalls Byrrhena's statuary in which the statue of Actaeon gazes at that of Diana (II.4). Once again, Apuleius twins two plastic images. Yet there is an apparent asymmetry: Lucius is associated with Actaeon not at the moment when the former is transformed into an ass, but at the moment when he has just regained his human form. Seemingly, a positive transformation (the ass's metamorphosis into a man) is paralleled with a negative one (Actaeon's transformation into a beast).

In what way can the earlier scene enrich our understanding of the later one? Book II's grouping of statues represents the moment at which the goddess Diana is initiating the attack on Actaeon's body. There a sense in which Isis similarly menaces the integrity of Lucius's body. If Lucius's regaining of human form is described in very positive terms, there is a significant omission. The symmetry between the scenes of metamorphosis and re-metamorphosis is imperfect because no mention is made of the fact that the ass's huge penis shrinks back into human proportions. Like so many episodes in Lucius's life, the scene of retransformation has undertones of castration. This sketch of a physical castration will be reinforced by a symbolic castration when Lucius takes a vow of chastity as Isis's priest (XI.19). Lucius's fears and hesitations at the thought of entering the priesthood emphasize that a great sacrifice is demanded of him: "quamquam cupienti voluntate praeditus, tamen religiosa formidine retardabar, quod enim sedulo percontaveram difficile religionis obsequium et castimoniorum abstinentiam satis arduam, cautoque circumspectu vitam, quae multis casibus subiacet, esse muniendum" (XI.19).

A detail suggests that Isis is not alone in demanding a symbolic castration of Lucius. Lucius must shave his head to be a priest of Isis. According to Freud, the act of cutting hair symbolizes
castration. Yet the image of the bald head becomes most prominent after Lucius, hitherto a priest only of Isis, submits to the initiation of her husband Osiris. The novel closes on the image of Lucius proudly displaying his bald head as one of the Egyptian god's chosen few: "Rursus denique quaqua raso capillo collegii vetustissimi et sub illis Sullae temporibus conditi munia, non obumbrato vel obiecto calvitio, sed quoquoversus obvio, gaudens obibam" (XI.30).

After a period of resistance, Lucius bows to the demands of the father-god Osiris. This submission can be seen as what Lacan terms l'entrée dans la Loi: the acceptance of a symbolic castration which gives the boy access to the Symbolic order, and permits his integration into society. Osiris is a powerful force in making Lucius a part of society. He not only welcomes him into his priesthood, but also insists that he pursue a legal career: "quae nunc incunctanter gloria in foro redderem patrocinia, nec extimescerem malevolorum dissemationes, quas studiorum meorum laboriosa doctrina ibidem exciebat" (XI.30). Finally, Osiris makes possible Lucius's substitution of textual for physical body by opening up the Symbolic to him.

Lacan identifies the incest taboo as the "pivot subjectif" (Fonction et champ 156) of the Law. The boy gains access to the Symbolic by accepting that certain women are forbidden as sexual partners: "La Loi primordiale est donc celle qui en régant l'alliance superpose le règne de la culture au règne de la nature livré à la loi de l'accouplement" (Fonction et champ 156). Lucius progressively accepts the necessity of erotic restrictions. In the later books, he emerges as the enemy of sexual transgression, exposing adulterous lovers and lascivious priests. The young man with a taste for unconventional sex becomes an ass firmly on the side of the moral majority.

---


61 Anthony Wilden explains Lacan's Symbolic thus: "in another sense it is exactly equivalent to Lévi-Strauss's notion of the 'world of rules' and the 'symbolic relationships' into which we are born and to which we learn to conform, however much our dreams may express our wish for a disorder or a counterorder" (Wilden 270).
Lucius's personal crisis comes in Book X, when he himself faces an aberrant sexual union. The punishment will be swift and terrible: loss of bodily integrity and death. Small wonder then that Lucius embraces the most extreme of sexual restrictions, swearing complete celibacy as a priest.

There are compensations for the loss of sexual freedom. Lacan states that the Loi gives access to the realm of language: "Cette loi se fait donc suffisamment connaître comme identique à un ordre de langage" (Fonction et champ 156-7). The Golden Ass illustrates that one must gain access to language by accepting sexual taboos. After his vow of celibacy, Lucius becomes a high-profile advocate. As such, he continues to perform in public—but now his words rather than his body are the focus of attention. If Lucius's performance is verbal in nature, so is the greatest danger he faces. Rather than worrying about being literally torn apart by beasts, he need only worry about being figuratively torn apart by slanderers envious of his success (XI.30).

The final book thus presents a series of substitutions which have in common a slide from the physical to the symbolic. As priest, Lucius substitutes symbolic castration for the physical castration with which he was threatened in the arena. And rather than experiencing physical union with a vile criminal, he seeks spiritual union with the goddess through the symbolic order of language: he prays to Isis and submits to her orders. As advocate, he substitutes verbal prowess for the physical prowess he was to have displayed in the arena. Finally, as author, Lucius offers the

---

62 Near-castration has textual consequences in the Satiricon as well. Like Lucius, the narrator of the Satiricon is hugely phallic. The name "Encolpius" suggests "crotch" (Jenson 95), and in one scene, Lichas recognizes a greatly-changed Encolpius by his mentula (Satiricon 105). Very much identified with his penis, Encolpius is devastated when he becomes impotent. Gottskálk Jansson explains that Encolpius makes a decision regarding his physical body which in turn affects his textual body. After Encolpius's second sexual failure with Circe, "in sermo solutus (prose) he tells us that he tried to save his pudor and hide what had happened from Eumolpus and Giton (for different reasons though) by staying in bed and pretending to be sick. But in bed he turned 'all the fire of his furor' against the 'cause of all these evils,' his penis. And now the narrator suddenly breaks into Sotadean verse (used only once before in reporting rather unmetrical carmina said to have been recited by a eunuch in 23.3) and in this form, so well suited to such unmanly content, he narrates his attempt at self-castration with a 'terrible double-bladed axe,' which in the end couldn't be applied to the task because his hands trembled overmuch and because the mentula itself fled and hid away in the thousand wrinkles of the foreskin!" (Gottskákl Jansson, personal communication).
world his textual body instead of his physical body. All three of Lucius's careers—priest, advocate and author—imply a new engagement with language which confirms that he has gained access to the Symbolic order through his acceptance of symbolic castration.  

Lucius's *entrée dans la Loi* makes possible the sleight-of-hand by which the book rather than the body is exhibited to the marvelling public. This pattern of book-substituted-for-man is explored in S.J. Harrison's article on the identity of the prologue-speaker. The traditional positions are that the prologue is voiced by Apuleius, by Lucius, or by some combination of the two. In "The Speaking Book: the Prologue to Apuleius' *Metamorphoses,*" Harrison notes that neither Apuleius nor Lucius fits the biographical information given by the speaker (Harrison 513). However, many enigmas dissolve if one posits that the prologue is spoken by "the book itself, conceived as a personified physical object" (509). The prologue-speaker claims Greek origin, and *The Golden Ass* is derived from a Greek text. The prologue-speaker says that he had migrated to Rome, which could refer to translation from Greek to Latin. A new light is shone on the speaker's boast that his three Greek cities of origin have won immortality through the books they have produced:

> to stress that cities have achieved fame through the books they produce or stimulate seems to be an unusual substitution of the much commoner notion that cities achieve fame through their citizens. *Thus books are substituted for men; this is unexpected, until we assume that the speaker is himself a book, naturally much more interested in the fame of books than in human glory, and himself personified and substituted for a human figure.* (Harrison 511; emphasis added)

There are thus three levels of book-substituted-for-man in *The Golden Ass.* Books are substituted for men in the prologue-speaker's boast about his cities of origin. A book is substituted for a man as the prologue-speaker. And finally, faced with the traumatic bestiality exhibition, Lucius

---

63 In Pseudo-Lucian's *Lucius, or the Ass,* Lucius was a writer before his transformation into an ass. Identifying himself to the Governor after he has regained human form, Lucius says: "I write short stories and various other things, and my brother writes poetry" (105). In Apuleius, nothing suggests that Lucius was a writer previous to his great adventures. This emphasizes that he has gained access to the Symbolic order after *l'entrée dans la Loi.*
substitutes a book for his own body as that which will be offered up for the public's enjoyment.

S.J. Harrison's argument dovetails neatly with Diophanes's odd prediction for Lucius. If Lucius is transmuted into a book, it seems logical that that book should be personified and given its own voice, as is the case with The Golden Ass's prologue. Harrison emphasizes that "[t]he motif of the speaking book, the work of literature which introduces or describes itself, is not unfamiliar in classical literature; more significantly, it occurs in prefatory contexts in works with which we can safely assume Apuleius had some familiarity" (509). But if Apuleius uses a recognizable motif, he gives it a unique spin—just as he does with the genre of Milesian tales. The prologue's substitution of book-for-man anticipates the similar substitution which takes place when Lucius replaces a sexual self-exhibition with a textual self-exhibition.

If we accept that Lucius offers the public his book instead of his body, another aspect of the prologue comes into focus. The prologue-speaker emphasizes the materials of writing: "auresque tuas benivolos lepido susurro permulceam, modo si pypyrum Aegyptiam argutia Nilotici calami inscriptam non spreveris inspicere" (I.1). The Egyptian references have been seen as a foreshadowing of the Isiac conclusion of the novel (A&A 186). Yet on another level, the allusion to the materials of writing presents the text as more than an ethereal, intellectual commodity: Apuleius's text is a concrete, material thing. The prologue-speaker's choice of verb in the incipit again emphasizes the concreteness of the text: "At ego tibi sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conseram" (I.1). The expressed intention to "tie together" or "string together" various tales again suggests that the text is a material body, like a beaded necklace. The prologue thus draws attention to the materiality of the text—and if the text is in itself a physical body, it is all the more logical that it should be substituted for that other physical body, the copulating ass in the arena.

Roland Barthes would doubtless have seen Lucius's substitution of textual for physical body
as a logical one. Barthes notes the affinity between body and text suggested by the double meaning of the word *corpus* (*PT* 56). But he goes farther, seeing the text as an essentially erotic body:

> Il paraît que les érudits arabes, en parlant du texte, emploient cette expression admirable: le corps certain. Quel corps? Nous en avons plusieurs; le corps des anatomistes et des physiologistes, celui que voit ou que parle la science: c'est le texte des grammairiens, des critiques, des commentateurs, des philologues (c'est le phéno-texte). Mais nous avons aussi un corps de jouissance fait uniquement de relations érotiques, sans aucun rapport avec le premier: c'est un autre découpage, une autre nomination; ainsi du texte: il n'est que la liste ouverte des feux du langages [...] Le texte a une forme humaine, c'est une figure, un anagramme du corps? Oui, mais de notre corps érotique. Le plaisir du texte serait irréductible à son fonctionnement grammairien (phéno-textuel), comme le plaisir du corps est irréductible au besoin physiologique. (*PT* 29-30).

Lucius carries out a logical substitution in replacing the erotic body (the copulating ass) with a textual body which is itself essentially erotic in nature.

The discontinuity and rupture which characterize *The Golden Ass* make it an especially apt substitute for the erotic body. Lucius's adventures follow a broken line as he passes from master to master, from shape to shape, and from place to place; for example, the narration cuts abruptly from Lucius's relationship with Photis to his adventures with the robbers, or from his adventures as an ass to his life as a devotee of Isis. The abundance of interpolated tales introduces further precipitous shifts in the narrative. Roland Barthes explores the principle of rupture in his analysis of Flaubert: "Flaubert: *une manière de couper, de trouser le discours* sans le rendre insensé" (*PT* 18). For Barthes, the principle of discontinuity and rupture intensifies the eroticism of the textual body:

> L'endroit le plus érotique d'un corps n'est-il pas là où le vêtement bâille? Dans la perversion (qui est le régime du plaisir textuel) il n'y a pas de "zones érogènes" (expression au reste assez casse-pieds); c'est l'intermittence, comme l'a bien dit la psychanalyse, qui est érotique: celle de la peau qui scintille entre deux pièces (le pantalon et le tricot), entre deux bords (la chemise entrouverte, le gant et la manche); c'est ce scintillement même qui séduit, ou encore: la mise en scène d'une apparition-disparition. (*PT* 19)
One of the results of the substitution of text for body is that the reader becomes intimately involved in the erotic experience: rather than the *scelesta femina* being pleasured by the asinine body, the reader is pleasured by the textual body.

Barthes would see *The Golden Ass* as uniquely qualified to bring the reader pleasure. He describes the reader at the moment when he takes his pleasure: "Alors le vieux mythe biblique se retourne, la confusion des langues n'est plus une punition, le sujet accède à la jouissance par la cohabitation des langages, qui travaillent côté à côté: le texte de plaisir, c'est Babel heureuse" (PT 10). Barthes cites Sade's audacity in juxtaposing different levels of language: "Sade: le plaisir de la lecture vient évidemment de certaines ruptures (ou de certaines collisions): des codes antipathiques (le noble et le trivial, par exemple) entrent en contact" (PT 14). Yet some sixteen centuries before Sade's birth, Apuleius had produced the epitome of the babelian text. Louis Callebat explores Apuleius's penchant for blending different registres de langage: "Vulgaire, obscène même parfois, Apulée, retrouvant une tradition littéraire notamment illustrée par les noms de Catulle, Martial..., est aussi précieux et maniére, et cela non pas dans des passages distincts mais à l'intérieur d'une même page, d'une même phrase" (Sermo cotidianus 550).

There is a second sense in which Apuleius's text is linguistically heterogeneous. In his essay on the "Genèse et spécificité" of Apuleius's prose, Callebat notes that *The Golden Ass* is a liminal text which participates in two linguistic moments:

*Dans l'histoire de la langue et des formes littéraires latines, la prose des Métamorphoses a paru significative d'un moment nouveau, au seuil de l'étape, longue et diverse, de la "latinité tardive." Appréhendées surtout dans une expérience stylistique et dans le comportement linguistique d'Apulée-écrivain, les marques ont été perçues de la dissolution d'une tradition de langage et d'une mutation profonde des modes et des formes d'expression littéraires classiques [...] ("Genèse et spécificité" 167)

*The Golden Ass* both juxtaposes different levels of language—"mixing Gadzooks! and
Goddamits!" (A&A 18), as Winkler pithily puts it—and represents a transitional moment in the evolution of the Latin language. If the reader is pleased by what Barthes terms a *cohabitation des langages* (PT 10), The Golden Ass is tailor-made to gratify him.

The narrative form of Lucius's text also renders it an ideal substitute for the erotic body. The Golden Ass welcomes the interpolation and the narrative side-trip, and according to Barthes such structural suppleness is conducive to the reader's pleasure:

*Le plaisir du texte n'est pas forcément de type triomphant, héroïque, musclé. Pas besoin de se cambrer. Mon plaisir peut très bien prendre la forme d'une dérive. La dérive advient chaque fois que je ne respecte pas le tout, et qu'à force de paraître emporté ici et là au gré des illusions, séductions et intimidations de langage, tel un bouchon sur la vague, je reste immobile, pivotant sur la jouissance intraitable qui me lie au texte (au monde). (PT 32-3)*

The Golden Ass raises the dérive to the level of an art form; once again, Apuleius's text seems admirably designed to procure pleasure. The book is substituted for the body, and textual pleasure begins where sexual pleasure leaves off.

The reader's pleasure, however, is something that the author cannot take for granted. Barthes continues his erotic metaphor by asserting that the writer must "cruise for" (draguer) his reader:

"*Ecrire dans le plaisir m'assure-t-il—moi, écrivain—du plaisir de mon lecteur? Nullement. Ce lecteur, il faut que je le cherche, (que je le « drague »), sans savoir où il est. Un espace de la jouissance est alors créé*" (PT 11). A strategy of seduction is manifestly deployed in The Golden Ass's prologue: "*Lector intende: laetaberis*" (I.1). Parallels exist between the prologue-speaker's attempt to seduce the reader, and other seduction scenes in the novel. In his *incipit*, the prologue-speaker declares that he would like to "caress [our] ears into approval with a pretty whisper".65

---

64 Callebat quotes E. Lofstedt: "*La grande tradition romaine se termine, en littérature, avec Tacite; Apulée, né vers 125, représente déjà un style nouveau*" ("Genève et spécificité" 167).

65 J.A. Hanson's translation.
"Auresque tuas benivolas lepido susurro permulceam" (I.1). This is the first of several seductive murmurs in the novel. Book X's zoophilic matrona will also whisper caressingly as she seeks to seduce: "Molles interdum voculas et assidua savia et dulces gannitus commorsicantibus oculis iterabat illa" (X.22). Incapable of an articulate lepidus susurro, Lucius offers the asinine equivalent when Charite is on his back: "virgini delicatas voculas adhinnire temptabam" (VI.28). Like the novel's later seducers, the prologue-speaker labours to create what Barthes calls un espace de la jouissance (PT 11). "Le texte que vous écrivez doit me donner la preuve qu'il me désire" (PT 13), says Barthes. In The Golden Ass, this is quite literally the case: a seductive prologue is spoken by the personified book.

More than a seductive whisper links the matrona to the prologue-speaker. The matrona is attracted by the ass's striking form (X.19). Similarly, the prologue-speaker tries to entice the reader by promising him that he will encounter wondrous forms—and wondrous changes of form—if he continues to read: "figuras fortunasque hominum in alias imagines conversas et in se rursum mutuo nexu refectas ut mireris" (I.1). The matrona had sought to seduce Lucius into a mésalliance of woman and beast. The prologue-speaker tries to seduce the reader into a mésalliance of another sort—a pleasurable meeting not of human and animal, but of reader and text.

For Barthes, the act of reading is founded on desire: "dans le texte, d'une certaine façon, je désire l'auteur" (PT 45-6). It is thus logical that the putative union of
Instead of the *scelesta femina* being pleased by the *asinus*, it is now the reader who is pleased by the *Asinus*. The displacement from sex to reading is particularly apt, for many commentators have noted that the reader of *The Golden Ass* is called upon to participate in the creative act. ⁶⁶ According to Barthes, such participation maximizes the reader's pleasure, permitting him *"d'accéder pleinement à l'enchantement du signifiant, à la volupté de l'écriture"* (S/Z 10).

Barthes emphasizes the erotic nature of the act of reading by using a vocabulary of pleasure to describe the reader's experience. ⁶⁷ Barthes distinguishes—though not consistently, as he himself

---


⁶⁷ Such transfer of terms from the sexual to the narratological is Apuleian in spirit. Cf. Lucius's "*narrare cupio*" (VIII.22) and "*auresque tuas benivolias lepido susurro permulceam*" (I.1).
recognizes\footnote{See for example pp. 10 and 33 of Le Plaisir du texte.}—between the \textit{texte de plaisir} and the \textit{texte de jouissance}. The former is a text which can be read comfortably, and which reinforces the sense of self: "[\textit{le lecteur} jouit de la consistance de son moi"] (\textit{PT} 26). The latter is a text which undermines the reader's assumptions and identity: "[\textit{le lecteur} recherche sa perte"] (\textit{PT} 26). It is an open question how to classify \textit{The Golden Ass}: the pleasurable, engaging reading experience of the first ten books suggests a \textit{texte de plaisir}, while the opaque and disconcerting eleventh book leans toward the \textit{texte de jouissance}. Curiously, the virtual arena scene offers models of both reading experiences. In the \textit{plaisir} model, the reader takes on the role of the wild beasts, for he consumes the ass's text just as the wild beasts would have consumed his body in the arena. In the \textit{jouissance} model, the reader takes on the role of the \textit{sceles\textit{ta femina}}, for he both engages in a creative act and is destroyed by it.

It is slightly disturbing to note that the reader of \textit{The Golden Ass} stands in for a partner not in a banal sexual union, but in an act of perversion: Thiasus's spectators would have witnessed a bestial coupling culminating in death and dismemberment. Yet bestiality seems an apt parallel for the union of reader and text, for here also, two radically different species come into contact. Even the fact that the erotic episode would have ended in death is relevant to the reading experience. The sado-masochistic union of the ass and the criminal could never be repeated, for it would have ended in the consumption of at least one of the lovers. Barthes recognizes that in most cases, the act of reading is similarly a matter of simple consumption, with the act of rereading being reserved for certain marginal groups such as "\textit{les enfants, les vieillards et les professeurs"} (\textit{S/Z} 22).

Barthes would not have been troubled by the fact that \textit{The Golden Ass} assimilates the act of reading to a perverted union, for he frequently uses a vocabulary of perversion when discussing
the pleasures of the text. "Beaucoup de lectures sont perverses, impliquant un clivage" (PT 76), says Barthes, and a translator would be hard pressed to know if perverses should be rendered in English by "perverse," or by "perverted." Like the pleasure of sexual perversion, textual pleasure is by nature marginal and unauthorized: "Tout ce qui est à peine toléré ou carrément refusé par la linguistique (comme science canonique, positive), la signification, la jouissance, c'est précisément là ce qui retire le texte des imaginaires du langage" (PT 55). Shady and illicit, textual pleasure naturally arouses the alarm of the authorities:

A peine a-t-on dit un mot, quelque part, du plaisir du texte, que deux gendarmes sont prêts à vous tomber dessus: le gendarme politique et le gendarme psychanalytique: futilité et/ou culpabilité, le plaisir est ou oisif ou vain, c'est une idée de classe ou une illusion. (PT 91)

Like other marginal pleasures, textual pleasure is of the realm of the inexpressible: "La jouissance est in-dicible, inter-dite" (PT 36). When this unspeakable pleasure is expressed in language, the rogue voice is quickly stifled:

Bien que la théorie du texte ait nommément désigné la signification (au sens que Julia Kristeva a donné à ce mot) comme lieu de la jouissance, bien qu'elle ait affirmé la valeur à la fois érotique et critique de la pratique textuelle, ces propositions sont souvent oubliées, refoulées, étouffées. (PT 101)

The perversion which Barthes most frequently associates with the text is that of fetishism: "Le texte est un objet fétiche et ce fétiche me désire" (PT 45). This statement is uncannily applicable to The Golden Ass, for here the text quite literally expresses its desire: the prologue's seductive captatio benevolentiae is spoken by the book itself.

For Barthes, the act of reading is analogous to fetishism because both imply that one simultaneously believes and disbelieves: "De même que l'enfant sait que sa mère n'a pas de pénis et tout en même temps croit qu'elle en a un (économie dont Freud a montré la rentabilité), de même le lecteur peut dire sans cesse: je sais bien que ce ne sont que des mots, mais tout de même... (je
Fetishism is a recurring motif in *The Golden Ass*, whether we think of Lucius's obsession with women's hair (II.8-10), or the matrona's fascination with the asinine phallus.\(^{69}\) *The Golden Ass* is also a book which raises interesting questions of belief and disbelief of the text. Saint Augustine entertained the possibility that Apuleius's work was an autobiography (*De Civitate Dei* 18.18), and the passing reference to Lucius as *Madaurensis* (XI.27) has kept biographical speculation alive. John J. Winkler points out another area in which we should question our propensity to believe the text. He suggests that it is dangerous to "believe" Book XI too implicitly, as though it were a historical document, and not part of a larger fiction: "Book 11 is tainted evidence and cannot be used in any straightforward fashion as Isiac or personal religious, data" (*A&A* 21).\(^{70}\)

Barthes's analysis of *le plaisir du texte* as an erotic, corporeal experience is relevant to Lucius's substitution of body for text when faced with the traumatic arena exhibition. Yet this is not the only moment in *The Golden Ass* when the textual body replaces the physical as object of curiosity and desire. In Book III, Lucius, gazing in secret at the female body, is portrayed as a new Actaeon. But by the close of the novel, the textual body has superseded the physical body as that which is avidly pursued; once again, the interchangeability of body and text in *The Golden Ass* underlines the eroticism of the act of reading.

When Lucius gazes in fascination at the Actaeon tableau, Byrrhena says to him, "*Tua sunt cuncta quae vides*" (II.5). Her words are prophetic, for Lucius will indeed become *all* that he sees.

---

\(^{69}\) Schlam notes that "The metamorphosis gives Lucius an animal form noted in antiquity for the large size of its penis" ("Sex and Sanctity" 100). The *matrona's* obsession with the asinine phallus is made even more clear in Pseudo-Lucian's *Lucius, or the Ass*. Lucius pays a final visit to the *matrona* after regaining his human form. She has him thrown out of the house when, seeing him naked, she realizes that he is once again a man in every respect (*Lucius, or the Ass* 106-7).

\(^{70}\) This claim is developed in Chapter 8 of *Auctor & Actor*. 
The tableau comprises two principal figures: Actaeon and the goddess. If the curious Lucius starts off as an Actaeon-figure, his evolution throughout the first ten books finally brings him to identify with the goddess. From being a *curiosus*, he has become a representative of the divine, and as part of this transition the text has replaced the body as object of desire.

*The Golden Ass* establishes a clear parallel between Actaeon and Lucius. Both men gaze at a naked woman gifted with supernatural powers: Actaeon watches Diana bathe, and Lucius watches Pamphile undergo a metamorphosis. Both men are punished for their overweening *curiositas* by being turned into animals. Lucius suffers because, while retaining his human intelligence, he is deprived of the faculty of speech. Here too he is in the image of Actaeon: "'me miserum!' *dicturus erat: vox nulla secuta est! / ingemuit: vox illa fuit, [...] mens tantum pristina mansit*" (Met. III.201-3).

The link between the two figures is pursued in the later books. If Actaeon is attacked by dogs (Met. III.225-252), Lucius experiences a similar assault when, on the run with Charite’s servants, he is attacked by "*canes rabidos et immanes*" (VIII.17). The ludic parallel between Lucius and Actaeon surfaces again in Book VIII. In Byrrhaia’s statuary, Actaeon is represented at the very moment of changing into a stag (iam in *cervum ferinus* II.4). In Book VIII, Lucius himself comes very near to being turned into a *cervus* with the help of a highly seasoned sauce (VIII.31).

After Actaeon had been turned into a stag and devoured, his hunting dogs were desolate at the loss of the master they had unwittingly killed. The centaur Chiron, who had reared Actaeon, made an image of him to console the dogs (Apollodorus 3.4). This episode of the Actaeon story is again

---

71 One of Diana’s aims in metamorphosing Actaeon had been to deprive him of speech: "*nunc tibi me posito visam velamine narrar, / sit poteris narrare, licet!*" (Met. III.192-3).

72 Having Lucius almost be turned into a stag may well be Apuleius’s innovation. In Pseudo-Lucian’s *Lucius, or the Ass*, it is a wild ass’s leg which is stolen by a dog, and which Lucius is to replace (93).
playfully reconfigured by Apuleius. Lucius is a huge success at the Festival of Laughter. Perhaps because the townspeople are reluctant to lose their source of merriment, a statue of Lucius is to be erected. Like Actaeon, Lucius will be replaced by an artistic stand-in whose purpose is to console those saddened by his loss.

Lucius is repeatedly paralleled with the legendary curiosus whose statue so fascinates him in Byrlena's atrium. Yet unlike Actaeon, Lucius does not pay for his temerity with his life. Lucius continues to exist and to evolve—to the point where by Book XI, he is identified not with the curiosus, but with the curiosity-inspiring divine. In this final book, the roles represented in the Actaeon tableau are shuffled. If Lucius is now the representative of the divine, none other than the reader himself appears as the curiosus. We are now the ones guilty of wanting to know too much as we press for more knowledge of Isiac mysteries.

Immediately after Lucius's re-metamorphosis, Apuleius signals that the Actaeon scene is once again to become relevant to Lucius's life. Naked when he regains human form, Lucius is protected from prying eyes:

[sacerdos] nutu significato prius praecipit tegendo mihi linteum dari laciniam. Nam me cum primum nefasto tegmine despoliaverat asinus, compressis in artum feminibus et superstrictis accurate manibus, quantum nudo licebat velamento me naturali probe muniveram. Tunc e cohorte religionis unus impigre superiorem exutus tunicam supertextit me celerrime. (XI.14)

The scene echoes the moment when Diana, surprised naked at her bath, is shielded from curious eyes:

qui simul intravit rorantia fontibus antra, sicut erant nuda, viso sua pectora nymphae percussere viro subitisque ululatibus omne inplevere nemus circumfuscque Dianam corporibus texere suis; (Met. III.177-181)

Suddenly, Lucius is paralleled not with Actaeon, but with the goddess on whom Actaeon gazes.
Yet if Lucius is now identified with the divine component of the Actaeon tableau, Apuleius has given the familiar situation a new twist.

In the Actaeon tableau, the goddess's body was the object of reprehensible curiosity. Only for a moment does Lucius's naked body fulfill a parallel role as object-of-the-gaze. In Book XI, it is less the physical than the textual body which arouses sacrilegious curiosity. Lucius restrains and chastises his reader: "Quaeras forsitan satis anxie, studiose lector, quid deinde dictum, quid factum. Dicerem si dicere liceret, cognosceres si liceret audire. Sed parem noxam contraherent et aures et lingua, ista impiae loquacitatis, illae temerariae curiositatis" (XI.23). French permits a pun which highlights the passage from Diana to Lucius and his text: adding an accent to the goddess's name—Diâne—suggests the conflation of the goddess and of the âne as object of curiosity.

It is peculiarly appropriate that Book XI should be the text that replaces Diana's body as the object of wanting-to-know-too-much. The pious Book XI centres around the goddess Isis, and Apuleius reminds us that Diana is one of the goddesses whom the syncretic Isis subsumes (XI.2). The goddess's body is thus replaced by a textual body concerning a sister-goddess: the passage is from divine physical body to divine textual body. This substitution of text for body emphasizes the eroticization of the text so perceptible in The Golden Ass. For Actaeon, Diana's body is an object of desire; the text is therefore eroticized when it replaces the goddess's body as object of desire in Book XI.

If the text awakens the curiosity and desire of the reader, Barthes suggests that it is a source of pleasure for its writer as well: "Si je lis avec plaisir cette phrase, cette histoire ou ce mot, c'est
qu'ils ont été écrits dans le plaisir" (PT 11). Unlike his asinine body, which came into being in a manner of seconds, Lucius's textual body is produced with care over a period of time. The process of writing can in itself be an erotic act. Again, the logic of substitution is at work. After Lucius's priestly vow of chastity, there will be no more erotic adventures with seductive slave-girls or lustful matronae. Yet the erotic pleasure of writing about such adventures is still licit. Another ancient novel acknowledges that an author can be caught up in the erotic adventures he recounts: "Mais Dieu veuille qu'en décrivant les amours des autres, je n'en sois moi-même travaillé!" (8), cries the narrator of Daphnis and Chloe at the close of the preface. Michel Foucault similarly recognizes the potential erotic charge of the act of writing. He says of the anonymous author of My Secret Life, "il s'agissait pour lui de majorer les sensations qu'il éprouvait par le détail de ce qu'il en disait; comme Sade, il écrivait, au sens fort de l'expression, 'pour son seul plaisir'" (Histoire de la sexualité I.32). When Lucius's habitual channels of sexual activity are curtailed by his vow of chastity, he finds in the textual body an alternative mode of erotic expression.

Foucault cites Sade in jail as an example of a man who turned to the textual body for erotic pleasure. Junichiro Tanizaki's Diary of a Mad Old Man furnishes a fictional instance of the gratification which the act of writing can provide. Utsugi, the eponymous old man, is trapped in a moribund, decrepit body. He can no longer live out physically the erotic longings which continue to torment him. Betrayed by his physical body, Utsugi turns to the textual body for satisfaction: his main source of erotic expression is the detailed diary which he keeps.  

---

73 Barthes suggests that the author's pleasure, like the reader's, is perverted in nature. This time, it is the perversion of incest which Barthes invokes: "Nul objet n'est dans un rapport constant avec le plaisir (Lacan, à propos de Sade). Cependant, pour l'écrivain, cet objet existe; ce n'est pas le langage, c'est la langue, la langue maternelle. L'écrivain est quelqu'un qui joue avec le corps de sa mère" (PT 60).

74 The substitution of textual body for physical body is a recurring theme in Tanizaki. His novel The Key focusses on an estranged couple whose erotic communication takes place largely through writing. Each partner keeps
If Lucius derives a kind of erotic gratification from the act of writing, we can understand a striking aspect of *The Golden Ass*’s form. The Lucius who recounts the tale—a pious priest of Isis, as we learn in Book XI—in general refrains from commenting on or condemning the actions of the younger Lucius who undergoes the adventures. We are plunged into the world of immediate lived experience, rather than perceiving a world sculpted and filtered by hindsight. Carl Schlam explains that "[t]he absence of condemnation, of a consistently religious view, has led some critics to deny any real connection between the ten books of adventures and the vision and conversion described in book 11" (*The Metamorphoses of Apuleius* 9). Even John J. Winkler comments in a footnote that "Lucius's vocation in Book 11 makes him precisely such a person as could not have narrated the preceding ten books" (*A&A* 9).

However, one can make a case for Book XI establishing precisely the kind of existence which would inspire Lucius to write of his tumultuous past, just as Sade writes furiously when in jail or Tanizaki’s old man turns to his diary when his body fails him. As a priest, Lucius leads a life of great self-abnegation. The pleasures of table and bed are curtailed; his insistent curiosity is mortified. It is precisely the restricted nature of Lucius's priestly existence which might lead him to seek an alternative gratification in writing of his days of freedom and adventures. This explains too why Lucius as *auctor* intrudes so little on Lucius as *actor*. Lucius must lose himself in an intimate diary, knowing that it is secretly read by the other.

75 Gérard Genette deals with the question of narrative mediation in *Figures III*'s chapter on "Mode." He proposes the equation "information + informateur = C, qui implique que la quantité d'information et la présence de l'informateur sont en raison inverse, la mimésis se définissant par un maximum d'information et un minimum d'informateur, la diégésis par le rapport inverse" (187). According to this formula, we could say that the Psyche tale, from which both Lucius and the *anus* are absent, is more mimetic than the rest of *The Golden Ass*, which is mediated and unified by Lucius's presence. Yet in *The Golden Ass*, we need to distinguish between two instances of Lucius, the young hothead and the older priest. The former is almost always present; the latter, with a couple of exceptions (see VII.10 and IX.14), does not make his presence felt until Book XI. The result is a text which, like *À la recherche du temps perdu*, is heavily mediated by the narrator, but which almost entirely lacks *À la recherche*’s retrospective quality.
returning to the immediacy of the lived experience in order to derive gratification from the act of writing; if the pious, post-conversion Lucius were to interfere, the fun would be spoiled.

A passage in Carl Schlam's *The Metamorphoses of Apuleius* lends support to the idea the act of writing could compensate Lucius for the deprivations of the priestly existence, functioning as a safety valve or sublimated form of gratification. Schlam notes that Apuleius's identity as a Platonist may have introduced him to the notion of the therapeutic value of storytelling:

In the *Metamorphoses* we are told stories, not given a philosophic treatise. Yet the idea that storytelling could be of therapeutic effect did come to have a place of some importance in Middle Platonism. Telling a good story was seen as one means of healing the spirit. Admittedly Plato himself had Socrates rule Homer out of his ideal polity, on grounds that his stories, giving false views of both gods and men, are corrupting. But narrative entertainment was not simply to be despised, for Plato had also created stories and defended *mythoi* which do not mislead but can charm the spirit, inculcate virtue, and resist fear. [...] Storytelling could be a means of verbal therapy which draws the reader forward on the chosen path.

The conception of the healing effect of stories was elaborated by the Platonizing physician Galen, a contemporary of Apuleius.

(*The Metamorphoses of Apuleius* 13-14)

In the prologue of *Daphnis and Chloe*, the narrator expresses a hope that his tale will be able to heal the sick (8). If stories can have a "healing effect" on their listeners, they can perhaps be equally beneficial to their tellers.

Storytelling and healing are early associated in *The Golden Ass*. The very first story which Lucius tells—and one which has as its aim to persuade Aristomenes to tell his story—contains an

---

76 Louis Callebat's stylistic analysis brings to light subtle qualifications. He discerns several "signes de distanciation entre le narrateur et la chose narrée, marques subjectives d'appréciation ironique et critique [...] ainsi *scilicet*, dans des emplois tels que Mêt. 9, 3 (204, 26): *Sed unus ex his, de caelo scilicet missus mihi sospitator*" ("La Prose des *Métamorphoses*: genèse et spécificité" 175-6). In general, however, Apuleius uses *scilicet* with a different value. Van der Paardt explains that the adverb indicates a refusal of retrospective omniscience: "[Lucius] cannot of course know more than he has witnessed, seen or heard. The relationships he mentions are inferences rather than facts, he cannot entirely commit himself vis à vis the reader which is why we come across the word *scilicet* so often (50 times in fact), in the *Met.*: this must be seen not only as irony but also as a deliberate move on the part of the author to maintain the limited perspective which he has allotted his character" ("Various Aspects of Narrative Technique in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*" 77).
emblem of therapy. Lucius says that he saw a young boy entwine himself around a sword which a street-performer had swallowed: "Diceres dei medici baculo, quod ramulis semiamputatis nodosum gerit, serpentem generosum lubricis amplexibus inhaerere" (I.4). This evocation of the physician's staff is followed immediately by a command to Aristomenes to pursue his tale: "Sed iam cedo tu sodes, qui coeperas, fabulam remetire" (I.4).

Lucius's encounter with Aristomenes illustrates that storytelling can be beneficial to both teller and listener. Lucius assures Aristomenes that he shall reap concrete benefits from telling his story: he promises to buy him dinner at the next inn (I.4). Though the promised payment (merces I.4) is never delivered, Aristomenes at least gains the satisfaction of knowing that some listeners, unlike the caustic sceptic, are convinced by his tale. Lucius too gains something from the story—the delight of being carried along by his ears (I.20)—but not all that he should: he is apparently oblivious to the fact that the story contains a warning about magic and women which is most applicable to his own case. The Golden Ass's first story-telling episode underlines that there are great gains to be derived from both listening to and telling a story—even if in this particular case, the potential gains are not fully realized.

For Lucius, storytelling offers unique rewards. During the first ten books of The Golden Ass Lucius alternately savours the pleasure of watching, and the pleasure of being watched. There is a continual oscillation between two poles which can be variously named:

Subject of the Gaze
Watcher
Invisible
Wearer of the Ring of Gyges

Object of the Gaze
Watched
Visible
Centre of Attention

After seesawing between these two extremes—and learning of their attendant dangers—Lucius
takes refuge in the written word. The fact of becoming an author permits him to reconcile the pleasures of the *voyeur* and the exhibitionist.

Lucius repeatedly experiences the titillation of watching unseen, as when he gazes at Pamphile transforming herself into an owl, or when he refreshes his *curiosos oculos* (X.29) by gazing at Thiasus's spectacle through an open gate. Sometimes it is through story that he gains a tantalizing glimpse into the life of another. Lucius's reaction to Aristomenes's tale suggests the delight he takes in losing himself in the story of another: "*ego huic et credo hercules et gratas gratias memini, quod lepidae fabulae festivitate nos avocavit, asperam denique ac prolixam viam sine labore ac taedio evasti"* (I.20). The metamorphosis into an ass facilitates such delicious invisibility. We have seen that the ass-body functions as a ring of Gyges since people assume that the ass is *bête* in both senses of the word.

When Lucius forfeits his invisibility to become the centre of attention, he discovers that the passage into the spotlight is fraught with danger. The Thelyphron tale, in which the theme of the gaze is capital, serves as a prototype: Thelyphron's adventures teach us what befalls a man who becomes the object of the gaze. When Thelyphron considers taking on the treacherous task of cadaver-watching, a passerby warns him that he will be able to preserve himself from harm only through the most vigilant watching:

*perpetem noctem eximie vigilandum est exsertis et inconivis oculis semper in cadaver intentis, nec acies usquam devertenda, immo ne obliquanda quidem, quippe cum deterrrimae versipelles in quodvis animal ore converso latenter arrepant, ut ipsos etiam oculos Solis et Iustitiae facile frustrentur.* (II.22)

Thelyphron brags that he is equal to the task: "*Vides hominem ferreum et insomnem, certe perspicaciorem ipso Lynceo vel Argo, et oculum totum*" (II.23). In the logic of *The Golden Ass*, there is a link between being "all eyes" (*oculeus totus*) and being a "man of iron" (*homo ferreus*).
One is invulnerable as long as one remains the watcher.

The witches understand that they can win only by transforming the scrutinizer into the thing scrutinized. Thelyphon's legendary vigilance soon proves chimerical. Alone with the cadaver, Thelyphon must rub his eyes to keep himself awake (II.25). Soon afterwards the watcher becomes the watched: "Mihique oppido formido cumulation quidem, cum repente introrepens mustela contra me constitit optatumque acerrimum in me destituit" (II.25). He entirely ceases being the subject of the gaze moments later when he falls asleep. We learn later that during the night, Thelyphon is at the centre of a series of concentric circles of observation. He is scrutinized first by the weasel, and then by the witches who observe him through a hole in the door. He is also the object of the cadaver's gaze, for the dead husband has apparently witnessed all that occurred during the night.

Out on the street, he unexpectedly becomes the object of the gaze of a great crowd when the cadaver points to him (Tunc digito me demonstrans II.30) as the man whose face bears incontrovertible evidence of the night's occurrences: "Iniecta manu nasum prehendo: sequitur; aures pertracto: deruunt" (II.30). Thelyphon knows the pain of being stared at and ridiculed by a mocking crowd: "Ac dum directis digitis et detortis nutibus praesentium denotor, dum risus ebullit, inter pedes circumstantium frigido sudore defluens evado" (II.30). Telling his story at Byrhena's request, Thelyphon relives the pain of public humiliation and mockery: "Cum primum Thelyphon hanc fabulam posuit, compotores vino madidi rursum cachinnum integrant" (II.31). Thelyphon's story suggests that one becomes vulnerable in becoming the object of the gaze. Cruel personal experience is soon to remind Lucius that it is dangerous to be transformed from the watcher into the watched. In the Festival of Laughter episode, Lucius follows a trajectory close to Thelyphon's. He at first seems a homo ferreus who exercises admirable vigilance. Witnessing three robbers trying to break into his host's house, Lucius valiantly throws himself into the fray.
But as in Thelyphron's case, the moment of glory is short-lived. The subject of the gaze knows trauma and humiliation when he is transformed into the object of the gaze. Like Thelyphron, Lucius goes from being an ironman of vigilance to a laughing-stock: "paulo altius aspectu relato conspicio prorsus totum populum—risu cachinnabili diffuebant" (III.7).

An episode in Book VI confirms that after a fleeting moment of glory, the fact of being in the limelight becomes perilous. Lucius makes a courageous escape attempt with Charite on his back, fantasizing that the feat will bring him literary and artistic immortality. But the dream quickly turns into a nightmare as he learns he is to become the object of the gaze in a different sense: his body is to be transformed into a womb—and a tomb—for Charite.

A episode of Book VIII confirms that the watcher exposes himself to grave danger when he becomes the watched. When the ass witnesses the priests' homosexual orgy, moral outrage forces him to forfeit his invisibility. He brays loudly to disclose the scandalous goings-on. Again, there is initially pleasure in being in the spotlight: Lucius has the satisfaction of revealing the priests' hypocrisy to the world (VIII.29). But he soon discovers that the spotlight entails pain and suffering, for the priests beat him nearly to death for his interference (VIII.30).

The pattern is repeated in Book X, where the ass regales himself secretly on the delicious leftovers of his cook masters. Found out one day, he becomes the object of the gaze: "Et hora consueta velut balneas petituri, clausis ex more foribus, per quandam modicam cavernam rimantur me passim expositis epulis inhaerentem" (X.15). In accordance with the now-familiar sequence, being in the limelight is initially a pleasurable experience. Lucius enjoys his celebrity as the performing ass—until the project of public copulation is tabled, for at this moment being the focus
of the gaze appears once again a source of torment and peril.\textsuperscript{77}

*The Golden Ass* thus presents a rhythmic oscillation between Lucius as object of the gaze, and Lucius as the invisible watcher. Both positions have their appeal. The role of watcher assuages Lucius's curiosity; the fact of being watched flatters his vanity. Yet the dangers of being watched become ever more apparent until, in Book X, Lucius's very life is endangered by the planned bestiality exhibition. Becoming an author permits Lucius to sidestep such perils, and to reconcile the pleasure of watching with that of being watched. The writing of memoirs is an act of rendering oneself public (*publicare*), of offering oneself up for the pleasure of others: "*Lector intende: laetaberis*" (I.1). Yet if Lucius is the centre of attention, he also continues to enjoy the pleasures of the invisible watcher. The novelist knows the voyeuristic pleasure of peeking into his characters' lives. Gérard Genette quotes Théophile Gautier to make this point: "*L'écrivain qui fait un roman porte naturellement au doigt l'anneau de Gygès, lequel rend invisible*"\textsuperscript{78} (Figures III 135). Lucius had lost his ring of Gyges when he sloughed off his asinine form. He regains this delightful privilege when he becomes an author.

Once again, Apuleius delicately links Lucius to the figure of Actaeon. In Byrrhena's statuary, Actaeon is represented at the moment when he is both watcher and watched. He is still the voyeur watching Diana at her bath, yet he has already caught the eye of the goddess and the dogs. Like Actaeon, Lucius as narrator is poised between seeing and being seen. The fact of being a narrator implies both a degree of invisibility and a degree of self-exhibition. The particular structure of *The Golden Ass* foregrounds this duality. There is a rhythmic alternation between the thread of Lucius's

---

\textsuperscript{77} As is often the case, there are parallels between Lucius and Psyche. Psyche is the ultimate cynosure: "*Iam multi mortalium longis iteribus atque alissimis maris meatibus ad saeuli specimen gloriosum conflueabant*" (IV.29). Psyche's status as object of the gaze will cause her great suffering, for she excites the envy of Venus and of her sisters.

\textsuperscript{78} The quotation is from *Le Capitaine Fracasse*. 
own narration, and the interpolated stories. To return to Genette's equation:

\[ \text{information} + \text{informateur} = C \]

there are passages of the novel in which Lucius as informateur is more or less obtrusive. He is strongly present in the opening passages, but then retreats into invisibility as he turns the narration over to Aristomenes. In relation to Aristomenes's tale, he is a second-degree narrator—he narrates to us the story that Aristomenes related to him. He respects the integrity of Aristomenes's tale by remaining unobtrusive during the telling. Only after the conclusive "Haec Aristomenes" (I.20) does Lucius once again make his presence felt, and the balance shifts back to the informateur. Just as on the diegetic level, the ass's body is alternately visible and invisible, so on the structural level is the narrator Lucius alternately discreet and perceptible: he recedes into the background for the interpolated tales, and makes his presence felt only when he returns to the main thread of the plot.

Storytelling is ideally suited to healing Lucius's spirit and bringing him gratification. By transforming his adventures into art, Lucius finds a means of enjoying the spotlight while avoiding its attendant dangers. Nor is the act of storytelling a mere re-living of previous adventures. The ass underwent experiences of Odyssean scope, but only as narrator can Lucius reconcile, with utter impunity, the pleasures of the voyeur and the exhibitionist.

\footnote{This needs slight qualification, because links between interpolated stories and the frame story suggest that Lucius is at times present when he is absent. For example, one of Psyche's trials involves a descent into hell. Though Lucius is absent from the narration of the Psyche tale, the episode foreshadows Lucius's own descent into hell during his Isiac initiation (XI.23). Lucius is more "present" in the tales when we re-read The Golden Ass than when we encounter the book for the first time.}

\footnote{It is significant that Lucius should choose the written mode. He has seen that Thelyphron, who told his story orally, re-lived his humiliation in the telling of it: "Cum primum Thelyphron hanc fabulam posuit, computores vino madidi rursum cachinnum integrant" (II.31). In the oral mode, Lucius gives merely a synopsis of his adventures: "narratisque meis propere et pristinis aerumnis et praesentibus gaudiis" (XI.19). He will give a comprehensive account of his experiences and emotions only in writing, for the written mode distances him from the reaction of his audience.}
In the preface to *Sade Fourier Loyola*, Barthes declares, "Rien de plus déprimant que d'imaginer le Texte comme un objet intellectuel (de réflexion, d'analyse, de comparaison, de reflet, etc.). Le Texte est un objet de plaisir" (12). No work illustrates better than *The Golden Ass* the status of the text as *objet de plaisir* for both author and reader. In becoming an author, Lucius finds a form of erotic gratification compatible with his priestly vows. The reader's pleasure is no less intense, as suggested by the parallels between the reading experience and the virtual arena scene. Though the spectacle planned by Thiasus never takes place, the reader takes on the role of all three parties who would have interacted with the ass: we are at once sexual partner, spectator and wild beast. Barthes claims that the supreme form of textual pleasure occurs when between the reader and text, "il se produit une co-existence" (*Sade Fourier Loyola* 12). Such a co-existence manifestly occurs with *The Golden Ass*, for the reader fuses with the *Asinus Aureus* just as the *scelesta femina* would have fused with the ass. Thiasus intended to offer up the ass's body for the public's entertainment; instead, the textual body is offered up for the reader's diversion. Finally, in the wild beasts eager to attack the ass we find an image of our own desire to ingest and digest the text. The erotic, bodily nature of reading is underscored by *The Golden Ass*'s substitution of textual pleasure for sexual pleasure. Thiasus's public narrowly missed witnessing a perverted sexual act; instead, it is the reader who experiences what Barthes calls "*la jouissance perverse des mots*" (*PT* 57).

* 

*The Golden Ass* presents a certain disjunction between eroticism and morality. After ten frankly bawdy books, the unexpectedly pious final book complicates our response to the text. We will now turn to a novel which blends eroticism and morality more intimately, for Richardson's moral purpose permeates the entire text of *Pamela*. Each novel contains its own mix of eroticism
and morality. Moreover, in both cases it is in part the moral thrust which leads to a diversification of sensuality. In *Pamela* as in *The Golden Ass*, sexual eroticism is transformed into textual eroticism as the protagonist seeks to avoid a sexual assault on the body.
Breaking the Seal: Textual Rape in *Pamela*

In the two chapters on Apuleius, we had much to say about the word *corpus*, which can refer to both body and text. In this chapter on Richardson's *Pamela*, we will be turning our attention to another Latin word, *textus*, from which we derive both our word "text," and our word "textile." This word is key to understanding a novel which associates its heroine intimately with her journal on the one hand, and her clothing on the other. Pamela's story is both traced out and changed by the story of her text and her garments. But before looking at the importance of *textus* in Pamela's life, we will briefly examine why the image of writing as a *textus* or "woven thing" is peculiarly applicable to Richardson's work.

* 

A central figure in logocentrism, Plato criticized the written word as lacking the dynamism and responsiveness of the spoken word. Oral communication is a two-way operation; the listener can ask for clarification, raise objections, make contributions. Plato claims that the written word, in contrast, can only mechanically repeat the same message. The written word is to the spoken word what a portrait is to a human being:

writing involves a similar disadvantage to painting. The productions of painting look like living beings, but if you ask them a question they maintain a solemn silence. The same holds true of written words; you might suppose that they understand what they are saying, but if you ask them what they mean by anything they simply return the same answer over and over again. (*Phaedrus* 275d)

Sterne and Richardson implicitly agree that the text is like a painting, for—as we saw in the introduction—they manipulate the text's material appearance in order to enrich its meaning. Yet this does not mean that they subscribe to the Platonic view that the text offers only mechanical,
one-way communication. If Plato asserts that writing lacks the dynamism and reciprocity of conversation, Tristram Shandy rebuts with the claim that "[w]riting, when properly managed, [...] is but a different name for conversation" (2.11.83). Tristram explicitly wishes to include the reader in the creative process:

As no one, who knows what he is about in good company, would venture to talk all;—so no author, who understands the just boundaries of decorum and good breeding, would presume to think all: The truest respect which you can pay to the reader's understanding, is to halve this matter amicably [...]  

*(Tristram Shandy 2.11.83)*

Richardson too likens writing to conversation—not surprisingly, for as Roger Duchêne notes, "*[la lettre] est, on l’a souvent répété après les Anciens, une conversation en absence*" ("Lettre" L29). Lovelace claims that "familiar writing is but talking" (Clarissa 915), and this sentiment reappears several times in Grandison. Jeronymo writes to Sir Charles, "when I am writing to you, I am conversing with you" (2.243). Charlotte echoes the sentiment when writing to Harriet Byron: "I have written already the longest Letter that I ever wrote in my life: Yet it is prating; and to you, to whom I love to prate" (2.417). Charlotte also coins the delightful phrase "pen-prattle" (2.550).

Richardson does more than simply state that writing is akin to conversation. His novels are exemplars of writing as a conversation-like exchange in which different voices are mingled. In these novels, dynamic exchange takes place on intra-, inter- and extratextual levels.

On the intratextual level, the exchange of letters replicates the back-and-forth rhythm of conversation: a letter from Lovelace elicits a response from Belford, and vice versa. In her study of epistolarity, Janet Altman notes that "[i]n no other genre do readers figure so prominently within the world of the narrative and in the generation of the text [...] The epistolary form is unique in making the reader (narratee) almost as important an agent in the narrative as the writer (narrator)" *(Epistolarity* 88). In his final novel, Richardson shows the reciprocity of letter-writing on an even
smaller scale: Lucy and Lady G. pen "by turns" (3.218) a lively letter describing Harriet's wedding (Grandison 3.218-229).

On the intertextual level, there is dynamic interplay between Richardson's various novels. When Harriet chides Charlotte Grandison for her cavalier treatment of Lord G., she does so by alluding to characters in Clarissa:

Upon my word, Lucy, she makes very free with him. I whisper'd her, that she did—A very Miss Howe, said I.
To a very Mr. Hickman, re-whispered she.—But here's the difference: I am not determined to have Lord G. Miss Howe yielded to her Mother's recommendation, and intended to marry Mr. Hickman, even when she used him worst. 
(Grandison 1.229)

This exchange has symbolic resonance, for on a larger scale, Richardson's later novels can be seen as responses to his earlier ones. Jocelyn Harris claims that "Pamela enlarges upon a situation sketched in his Familiar Letters, Pamela in her Exalted Condition writes over the top of Pamela, Clarissa courageously faces the implications of them both, and Sir Charles Grandison explores aspects of Clarissa" (Samuel Richardson 5).

The principle of dynamic exchange operates not only on inter- and intratextual levels, but also on the extratextual level. Terry Eagleton notes that Richardson considered producing a collaborative sequel to Grandison: "his critical correspondents were to assume the roles of the various characters left surviving from Grandison, sending him material which he would edit into a complete work" (The Rape of Clarissa 11). Though this sequel was never realized, Richardson made considerable experiments in collaborative writing. Jocelyn Harris notes of Grandison,

As the first two editions were printing, Richardson actively solicited comment for the third, circulating among his friends manuscript, printed sheets, bundles of sheets, and presentation copies. He was perfectly honest about his motives: telling Lady Bradshaigh that he planned a third edition, he added as the natural corollary, 'Your Correcting, Madam, hastened, will be a Favour,' and he hoped from Dr. Delany 'your condescending Assistance for another Edition, which is soon to be
Richardson's novels remained fluid, for he was ever rewriting them and adding to them. Terry Eagleton suggests that these novels can be "usefully thought of as kits, great unwieldy containers crammed with spare parts and agreeable extras, for which the manufacturer never ceases to churn out new streamlined improvements, ingenious additions and revised instruction sheets" (*The Rape of Clarissa* 20).

Conversation-like exchange thus takes place within, between, and around Richardson's novels. Plato's model of the text as a static portrait is inadequate to describe such dynamic works. A more fruitful analogy is suggested by the etymology of the word "text," which links the written word to another product of human creativity. We derive our word "text" from the Latin *textus*: "style or texture of a work; originally, thing woven, from *texere* to weave" (Barnhart Dictionary 1129). Cervantes invokes this image with the claim that a brilliant author "can without question create a fabric woven out of such variegated and beautiful yarn that, when he's done, it will glow with a loveliness and a perfection of finish that will achieve the highest goal any writing can aim for [...]" (*Don Quijote* 1.47).81 Interestingly, Jocelyn Harris uses a weaving metaphor to describe Richardson's compositional technique: "Increasingly he fused life and fiction, prompting debate over characters and scenes upon which he invited fresh comment to weave back into the book" (*Samuel Richardson* 5).

Cecilia Macheski notes that needlework and writing are closely linked in *Pamela*. When Mr. B. chides Pamela for minding her pen more than her needle, Macheski comments that "the situation

---

81 Cervantes is fond of applying textile metaphors to writing. *Don Quijote* claims that reading translations is "like looking at Flemish tapestries on the wrong side" (*Don Quijote* II.62). Cervantes promises that Part II of *Don Quijote* is "cut by the same craftsman and from the same cloth as the first" (Prologue to Part II). Days before his death, Cervantes apologized to his readers for the "broken thread" of his writing (de Armas Wilson ix).
is rich in irony, for Pamela has indeed only just stashed away her pen and paper and taken up her embroidery in an attempt to disguise her epistolary labour” ("Penelope’s Daughters: Images of Needlework in Eighteenth-Century Literature" 89). In the early part of the novel, Pamela is rarely without either pen or needle in hand, and her embroidery grows as steadily as her text. Moreover, both types of textus testify to Pamela’s developing love, for, as we will see, she uses the need to finish embroidering B.’s waistcoat as a pretext for remaining in his home.82

The textile image works against Plato’s belief that the written word offers mechanical, one-way communication. A painting is hung out of reach of dirty hands, to be admired from a distance. A piece of weaving, in contrast, often invites touch. More, its very texture implies collaboration; Plato’s one-way communication seems at odds with the image of the textus whose threads run in two directions.83 An episode from Pamela suggests the aptness of weaving as a metaphor for the act of writing, for there is a text which the captive Pamela decides to treat as a warp to which she will add her own woof: "when [Mrs. Jewkes] was gone, I remembering the 137th Psalm to be a little touching, turn’d to it, and took the Liberty to alter it to my Case more" (127). The 137th Psalm is a loosely woven textus which invites the reader to weave in his or her own thoughts; authors of captivity narratives often rework this Psalm to fit their particular story.84 Pamela personalizes and

82 Cecilia Macheski notes an analogy between textile workers and female writers in the eighteenth century: "The skilled and subtle craft of the eighteenth-century needleworkers was much like that of contemporary novelists; women were moving into a territory that had previously been dominated by men and reshaping it to suit their own tastes” ("Penelope’s Daughters” 85). Nor is needlework a mere metaphor for Macheski: "In looking more closely at several late-eighteenth-century women’s novels against the background of their more classical male forebears, I suggest that the women writers in fact share patterns of imagery and ideas based on their common experience of needlework, and that this special use of language constitutes a subtext on female experience” (86).

83 The image of threads running horizontally and vertically harmonizes with Roman Jakobson’s vision of the text as composed of two axes, the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic. (See "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances" in Fundamentals of Language, pp. 69-96.)

84 The anthology of American captivity narratives Puritans Among the Indians (eds. Alden Vaughan and Edward W. Clark) has several examples of such use of the psalm. See for example Mary Rowlandson’s "The Sovereignty and Goodness of God," pp.46-7.
adorns the 137th Psalm much as, with needle rather than pen, she embroiders her own designs on B.'s waistcoat.

In the Rêveries du promeneur solitaire, Rousseau gives an image of writing which similarly harmonizes with the act of weaving or embroidery. He acknowledges that memory and imagination are interwoven in his Confessions: "Je les écrivois de mémoire; cette mémoire me manquoit souvent ou ne me fournissoit que des souvenirs imparfaits et j'en remplissois les lacunes par des détails que j'imaginois en supplement de ces souvenirs, mais qui ne leur étoient jamais contraires" (4ième Promenade 1035). Yet he reserves the right of imaginative embroidery to himself alone. He was determined that the finished text of his Confessions be a seamless whole, a textus so tightly woven that there would be no room for the reader to weave in his own ideas or criticisms.

Tristram Shandy, who declares that "no author, who understands the just boundaries of decorum and good breeding, would presume to think all" (2.11.83), would have condemned Rousseau as the most indecorous and ill-bred of authors. Rousseau agrees with Plato that writing is essentially different from conversation—but values writing for precisely this reason. Rousseau is burdened by the pauses in conversation which signal that it is his turn to contribute: "c'est assez qu'il faille absolument que je parle pour que je dise une sottise infailliblement" (Les Confessions 1:153). He believes that in contrast to conversation, writing can be entirely devoid of the gaps which solicit participation. In his Confessions, Rousseau explicitly states his desire to eliminate all blanks:

Dans l'entreprise que j'ai faite de me montrer tout entier au public, il faut que rien de moi ne lui reste obscur ou caché; il faut que je tienne incessamment sous ses yeux; qu'il me suive dans tous les égarements de mon cœur, dans tous les recoins de ma vie; qu'il ne me perde pas de vue un seul instant, de peur que, trouvant dans mon récit la moindre lacune, le moindre vide, et se demandant: Qu'a-t-il fait durant ce temps-là? il ne m'accuse de n'avoir pas voulu tout dire. (1.96-7)
Rousseau assumes that any gaps he leaves would be filled in a malicious manner, and wants to avoid having his Confessions turn into a nasty "dialogue" between author and reader: "Je donne assez de prise à la malignité des hommes par mes récits, sans lui en donner encore par mon silence" (1.97).

Richardson could surely have sympathized with Rousseau's desire to maintain control over his text, for he was uneasy to discover the extent to which Clarissa remained open to interpretation. Rousseau's countryman, l'abbé Prévost, symbolizes the type of reader of whom Richardson disapproved. The first French translator of Clarissa, Prévost succumbed to Lovelace's charm, neglected the didactic pole in favour of the aesthetic, and blithely skipped parts that failed to hold his interest (Beebee 1-24). Richardson was dismayed:

This Gentleman has left out, a great deal of the Book [...] which I thought might be useful either for Warning or Instruction. He has given his Reasons for his Omissions, as he went along; one of which is, The Genius of his Countrymen; a strange one to me! (Beebee 9-10)

Richardson could not supervise the Prévost translation, known to him only through the intermediary of a French-speaking friend (Beebee 10). He did try to exercise greater control over other readers, reworking his novels in order to quash undesirable interpretations. Terry Castle explains that after the first edition, Richardson undertook "an elaborate rearguard action": he altered his novel and added an editorial apparatus in order "to obviate the problem of indeterminacy and establish, after the fact, his 'authority' over his readers" (Clarissa's Ciphers 175). Jocelyn Harris notes that Richardson finally abandoned the novel altogether: "he eventually resorted to

85 Beebee is quoting from Slattery's The Richardson-Stinstra Correspondence, pp. 21-22.

86 The Prévost reading of Clarissa which so perturbed Richardson proved enormously influential: "Prévost's version was primarily responsible for Richardson's popularity in France—and in Russia, where French translations were commonly used" (Beebee 3). The case of Grandison, popular in France, is similar: "the French knew Grandison in Prévost's version, abridged and deprived of much of its morality" (Introduction to Grandison xiii).
exhortation in his Indexes to *Clarissa* and *Grandison* and the *Collection of Moral and Instructive Sentiments* garnered from the three books" (Samuel Richardson 7).

The example of Pamela's reworking of the 137th Psalm captures Richardson's ambivalence toward the act of creative reading. Pamela wonders if she was justified in altering the original psalm: "I hope I did not sin in it" (127). However, the novel vindicates her reworking of the psalm. Mr. B. is touched by the way she turns the last verses (255), and Pamela wins much praise when Mr. B. has her psalm read side by side with the original (267-272). Finally, *Pamela*'s sequel shows her embarking on a much more extensive project of creative reading: Mr. B. has her use Locke's *Treatise on Education* as a warp into which she weaves her own thoughts about child-raising.87

Although Richardson shares some of Rousseau's desire to control interpretation, there is also an affinity between Richardson and writers like Diderot or Sterne, who actively seek to turn their readers into collaborators. In contrast to Rousseau, Sterne and Diderot cultivate the aesthetic of the gap, taking pains to ensure that their stories' incompleteness will not escape the reader's notice. The narrator of *Jacques le fataliste* leaves deliberate holes in the story, as when, having informed us that a storm overtakes Jacques and his master, he refuses to tell us where the two men took refuge for the night. He asks the reader to complete his text: "Entre les différents gîtes possibles ou non possibles, dont je vous ai fait l'énumération qui précède, choisissez celui qui convient le mieux à la circonstance présente" (*Jacques le fataliste* 40). Barthes could be glossing this passage when he writes, "Nous savons maintenant qu'un texte n'est pas fait d'une ligne de mots, dégageant un sens unique, en quelque sorte théologique (qui serait le « message » de l'Auteur-Dieu), mais un

87 Janet Aikins notes that Locke himself justifies this undertaking: "In his final paragraph, Locke declares that his book is not a 'complete Treatise' on education and concludes by advancing the more modest 'Hope' that it 'may give some small light to those [women perhaps?], whose Concern for their dear little Ones makes them so irregularly bold, that they dare to venture to consult their own Reason, in the Education of their Children, rather than wholly to rely upon Old Custom' (265)" ("Pamela's Use of Locke's Words" 84).
espace à dimensions multiples, où se marient et se contestent des écritures variées” (“La Mort de l'auteur” 65).

Diderot's narrator is forever bringing the gaps to our attention, discussing them, defending them. He not only uses the blank, but also expects to be congratulated for it: "Si vous me savez peu de gré de ce que je vous dis, sachez-m'en beaucoup de ce que je ne vous dis pas” (23). The resulting gaps give the reader creative freedom: the narrator of Jacques le fataliste fades out from time to time in order to invite or coerce the reader into contributing to the text. This strategy corresponds to what Barthes calls "[l']éloignement de l'Auteur” (“La Mort de l'auteur” 64). Barthes uses a textile metaphor to explain:

L'Auteur une fois éloigné, la prétention de « déchiffrer » un texte devient tout à fait inutile. [...] Dans l'écriture multiple, en effet, tout est à démêler, mais rien n'est à déchiffrer; la structure peut être suivie, « filée » (comme on dit d'une maille de bas qui part) en toutes ses reprises et à tous ses étages, mais il n'y a pas de fond; l'espace de l'écriture est à parcourir, il n'est pas à perce [...]

("La Mort de l'auteur” 65-6)

Samuel Richardson practises an écriture multiple in a somewhat different sense than Diderot. Clarissa's reader is necessarily active, for the novel's constituent letters often adumbrate many takes on a given action. Terry Castle notes that Clarissa's reason for going off with Lovelace remains mysterious: "Her flight baffles, not because it is an intrinsically inexplicable event, but because it seems to have too many explanations" (Clarissa's Ciphers 165). Castle attributes this indeterminacy to the form chosen by Richardson: "the multiple-correspondent epistolary form, unlike other modes of narration, has no built-in authorial rhetoric" (167). The reader must make interpretive choices in the absence of a clear authorial stance.

88 An echo perhaps of Don Quijote II.44, where Sidi Hamid asks his readers "to praise him, not so much for what he has written, as for what he has refrained from writing."
Nor was Richardson unconscious of practising an *écriture multiple*. He responded to a letter by a lady "who was solicitous for an additional volume to the History of Sir Charles Grandison; supposing it ended abruptly" (3.467). Richardson defends his decision to leave unresolved the issue of whether Clementina will marry the Count of Belvedere:

Do you think, Madam, I have not been very complaisant to my Readers to leave to them the decision of this important article? I am apt to think, from what I have already heard from several of them, of no small note, and great good sense, that a considerable time will pass before this point will be agreed upon among them: And some of my correspondents rejoice that Clementina is not married in the book, hoping that she will never marry; while others express their satisfaction in the time given her, and doubt not but she will. (*Grandison* 3.468)

This explicit invitation to complete the text echoes the dying Clarissa's request to her mother to fill up her textual lacunae: "If when I apply to you, I break off in half-words, do you supply them—The kindest are your due—Be sure take the kindest, to fill up chasms with, if any chasms there be—" (*Clarissa* 1339). Despite Richardson's occasional attempts to control interpretation, both the readers within his novels and the readers of his novels are encouraged to approach texts actively.

Roland Barthes declares in *S/Z* that all texts are plural because no text is a whole: "*en même temps que rien n'existe en dehors du texte, il n'y a jamais un tout du texte*" (12). Works like *Tristram Shandy* and *Jacques le fataliste* underscore the incompleteness of the text by continually deferring stories that the reader is impatient to hear. The narrator of *Jacques le fataliste* is fertile in excuses for his textual lacunae. At times he pleads ignorance or a faulty memory. Certain gaps he blames on elements of the story itself. Near the end of the novel, the narrator recognizes that the reader is impatient to hear the story of Jacques's love-affair, long promised and eternally deferred like so many stories in *Tristram Shandy*. But the narrator absolves himself of responsibility by

---

89 Richardson's reply is appended to Jocelyn Harris's edition of *Sir Charles Grandison* (see pp. 3.467-73).
referring to Jacques's temporary inability to speak: "Les amours de Jacques, il n'y a que Jacques qui les sache; et le voilà tourmenté d'un mal de gorge" (246).

Once again, Richardson gives us in understated form the characteristics which Sterne and Diderot will push to the limit. Clarissa's massive size—and Richardson's oft-quoted remark that he is "a sorry pruner" (Selected Letters 61)—can blind us to the fact that Clarissa is a heavily abridged work. The longest novel in the English language, Clarissa covers just under one year. In spite of this leisurely pace, Richardson makes extensive use of the summary and the ellipsis. The fictitious "editor" both summarizes letters and indicates that he is omitting letters. Florian Stuber suggests that these indications correspond to actual revisions on Richardson's part: "At one time or other, Clarissa must have been much longer than any version we have: all the letters merely summarized, paraphrased or quoted by different characters or by the Editor in the various printed editions of Clarissa seem to have been at some time written out in full" (8). Richardson's editorial activity is mimicked by his characters, as when Lovelace pacifies Morden with an abridged selection of his letters to Clarissa, or suppresses several of Anna Howe's letters to Clarissa. Abridgement may take place on yet another level, for given Clarissa's great length, readers may do what Cervantes feared his readers would do with parts that interested them little: "simply skip over or just skim rapidly through them" (Don Quijote II.44).

The practice of abridgement distorts the texts that the characters—and we, the readers—receive. Equally distorting is the opposite practice of textual expansion, as when Aunt

---

90 The phrase appears in Richardson's reply to a letter of Edward Young's dated 8 December, 1744. Richardson's letter was printed in the Monthly Magazine, xxxvi (1813).

91 In Figures III's chapter on "Durée," Gérard Genette indicates that the summary and ellipsis are means of shortening the temps de récit relative to the temps d'histoire. (Figures III 129)
Selby concludes from "several hints in [her] letters" (1.212) that Harriet is nursing a great passion for Sir Charles Grandison. Sometimes textual abridgement and expansion are used as complements, as when the Grandison sisters tell Harriet the story of their rakish father: "it was beautiful to observe with what hesitation and reluctance they mentioned any of his failings, with what pleasure his good qualities; heightening the one, and extenuating the other" (1.311). Here Harriet is a model of the reader, for like her, we receive a story which has been distorted by abridgement and expansion—and consequently feel justified in making our private rectifications.

In Richardson's novels, the multi-level abridgement and expansion nudge the reader into recognizing that he or she does not have the complete and seamless story. If the text is a piece of fabric, it is one which has been snipped in parts and stretched in others. This awareness of imperfections (if we can posit an imaginary texte intégral perfect in its completeness) pushes the reader into an active role. We must reconstitute the story which is given to us only in "distorted" form.

Richardson thus shares with Sterne and Diderot an awareness of the text as a fabric into which the reader is to weave his own thoughts. It is Sterne who goes farthest in visually representing the incompleteness of his text. Barthes speaks of the "décrochage[s]" ("La Mort de l'auteur" 61) of a text which give the reader creative freedom, and in Tristram Shandy, we actually see these gaps in the fabric: a glance at almost any page reminds us that we have to do our bit, for there are white spaces to be filled in. Sometimes we are asked to replace asterisks with letters, as when Uncle Toby explains Mrs. Shandy's preference for a female midwife by suggesting "That mayhap his sister might not care to let such a Dr. Slop come so near her * * * *" (2.10.82). At other times, the

---

92 Florian Stuber notes that "Richardson's first revisions of Clarissa had apparently taken the form of elaborations of the text; in 1744, he had told Young that he was 'apt to add three pages for one I take away!'" (7).
delirious proliferation of blanks asks a more creative participation on our part. Sometimes the blanks are represented by asterisks:

——and the queen (who was but a woman) being of a pitiful disposition,—and her ministers also, they not wishing in their hearts to have the town dismantled, for these private reasons,  * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *  

and sometimes by dashes. The latter case is particularly suggestive, for the rows of long dashes suggest the warp stretched out on a loom, awaiting the woof:


The greatest challenge occurs when, the blank stretching to the size of a full page, Tristram asks each reader to paint the Widow Wadman according to his "own fancy" (6.38.356).

Samuel Richardson understood the use of the blank to encourage reader participation. In *Pamela*, Part II, undertaking a commentary on Locke at her husband's request, Pamela declares,
"I shall leave one Side of the Leaf blank for your Corrections and Alterations" (II.4.361). She was but imitating her creator, for Richardson sent Aaron Hill's daughters copies of Pamela with interleaved pages to be filled in with criticisms and suggestions (The Rape of Clarissa 11). Other readers found sufficient scope in the margins and between the lines of Richardson's novels. Lady Bradshaigh liberally annotated her presentation copy of Clarissa, and showed the resulting text to Richardson (Fulton).

More interestingly, we find in the text of Clarissa itself a discreet forerunner of Sterne's use of the blank to solicit reader participation. When Clarissa draws up a will near the end of her life, she leaves blanks which she hopes to fill in with the names of family members who have forgiven her (1420). Clarissa uses the blank to instigate a dynamic collaboration between writer and reader: her fantasy is that several of her relatives will help finish the will. The will is never completed in the manner she had hoped, for her relatives prove obdurate. Yet after Clarissa's death, they doubtless fill in the gaps with guilt, remorse, or uneasy self-justification.

Richardson places in Clarissa another image of the textual blank which invites the reader's participation. To do so, he slides from the text to that other kind of textus, the article of clothing. Clarissa gets rid of her rich garments when living at Mrs. Smith's (1082). At the end of her life, she appears in "a white satin nightgown" (1345), and it is dressed "in her virgin white" (1351) that she dies. Clarissa turns herself quite literally into a blank, like the white spaces that pepper her will. The imagery of the white garment suggests that Clarissa is a blank page on which both characters

---

93 The Pamela, Part II quotations are from The Shakespeare Head edition. In this edition, Volumes One and Two contain the original Pamela, and Volumes Three and Four contain Pamela, Part II. References to Part II are given as follows: in the case of (II.4.361), the "II" indicates that the quotation is from Pamela, Part II, the "4" indicates that the quotation is drawn from Volume 4 of the Shakespeare Head edition, and the "361" indicates the page number.
and readers project their desires and interpretations.\textsuperscript{94} Clarissa herself recognizes that she is treated like a text: "As commentators find beauties in an author which the author perhaps was a stranger to, so [Lovelace] sometimes compliments me in high strains of gratitude for favours, and for a consideration, which I never designed him" (128).

*Clarissa* thus establishes a graceful link between two kinds of textus, the text and the dress. If Clarissa produces a text with blanks, the novel also uses clothing to present a curious image of her as a blank, reminding us of the extent to which each reader creates his own Clarissa—and his own *Clarissa*.\textsuperscript{95} Such linking of the textile and the textual is central to Richardson's first novel. An offhand sentence is suggestive: "I can't cloathe my Thought suitably to express what I would express" (II.3.405), writes Pamela to Polly Darnford. The comment fits into a long tradition of seeing the written word as a kind of clothing. Having contrasted the spoken word's ethereality with the written word's materiality, Derrida continues,

\begin{quote}
*L'écriture, matière sensible et extériorité artistificielle: un « vêtement ». On a parfois contesté que la parole fût un vêtement pour la pensée. Husserl, Saussure, Lavelle n'y ont pas manqué. Mais a-t-on jamais douté que l'écriture fût un vêtement de la parole?* (De la Grammatologie 52)
\end{quote}

In *Pamela*, however, the written word is less a "vêtement de la parole" than a "vêtement de la pensée": Pamela expresses in her journal private thoughts which have never crossed her lips. But for Pamela, the metaphor of writing as a clothing takes on a new meaning, for she expresses her thoughts and forges her identity as much through actual clothing as through writing. The textual

\textsuperscript{94} Terry Castle suggests that in wearing white, Clarissa "makes herself unavailable to interpretation according to dress—that very process which has provided her with so many deceptive pieces of information" (*Clarissa's Ciphers* 125). However, the reference to Clarissa's final garment as her "virgin white" (*Clarissa* 1351) makes it difficult to maintain that white is devoid of significance.

\textsuperscript{95} If necessary, Richardson could make this point in more economical fashion. Terry Eagleton notes that "[o]n receiving letters from two young women about Clarissa, one accusing her of prudery and the other of coquettishness, he sent each woman's letter to the other" (*The Rape of Clarissa* 11).
and the textile, united by their shared etymology, are again brought together in *Pamela*.

Richardson establishes an intimate link between Pamela and her dress on the one hand, and Pamela and her text on the other. Since Pamela's text becomes, in Lincolnshire, quite literally a part of her dress, a fluid continuum is established between three poles:

Pamela's adjuncts—both the textile and the textual—modulate her story in intriguing ways. On the surface it seems that Pamela escapes Clarissa's cruel fate, for she is never raped by her persecutor. Yet it is more precise to say that Pamela is raped in a different way from Clarissa. Clarissa endures physical rape, while Pamela is raped metonymically: having conflated his servant-girl with both her clothing and her text, Richardson subjects her first to a textile, then to a textual rape. The textile rape shows us the tragic path that her story could have taken. The textual rape, on the other hand, changes the very course of her story.

*
In Pamela, Part II, Mr. B.'s uncle Sir Jacob objects strenuously to his nephew having married a creature named Pamela: "But, Pamela—did you say?—A queer sort of Name!—I have heard of it somewhere!—Is it a Christian or a Pagan Name?—Linsey-wolsey—half one, half t'other—like thy Girl—Ha, ha, ha" (II.3.315). We might forget this passing reference to Pamela as "linsey-woolsey"—a coarse cloth made of linen and wool interwoven—were it not for the fact that Pamela later makes Sir Jacob's metaphor her own. In a letter to Lady Davers, Pamela writes that she will avoid assuming "Airs and Dignities" to which she was not born:

By this means, instead of being thought neither Gentlewoman nor Rustick, as Sir Jacob hinted, (Linsey-wolsey, I think, was his Term too), I may be look'd upon as an Original in my Way; and all Originals pass Muster well enough, you know, Madam, even with Judges. (II.4.39)

The term "linsey-woolsey," which acquired a figurative sense of "strange medley" (OED s.v. 2), is well suited to this heroine who faces the delicate task of reconciling two social identities. More, it is peculiarly fitting that Sir Jacob's metaphor should be drawn from the textile, for Pamela's story merges with the story of her dress.

The entire plot of Pamela is governed by a kind of sartorial determinism: Mr. B. starts off by giving Pamela clothing above her station, and ends by elevating her to this lofty station. He is but doing her justice, for in the interim he learns of Pamela's inner beauty, and it is fitting that her outer habit should be as exquisite as the inner. Mr. B. himself makes explicit the notion—pervasive in Pamela—of inner and outer habit. When Pamela's father expresses shame at his poor clothing, B. rebukes him gently: "I wish I had as good a Habit inwardly, as you have" (264). Pamela offers a

---

96 Gillian Beer explains that the name Pamela would have seemed "highly surprising" in Richardson's day: "As an ordinary Christian name it had some vogue only after the appearance of Richardson's Pamela" (36-7). In "Pamela and Arcadia: Reading Class, Genre, Gender," Beer explains that in baptizing his heroine "Pamela," Richardson established a "riddled accord" (37) between his novel and Sidney's Arcadia: "the name sets up disturbances in the hierarchies represented in the older text: hierarchies of class and of language, of social and material power" (37).
variation of the correspondence of inner and outer habit. When Mr. B. offers her jewellery to become his mistress, she replies with a reference to "the best Jewel, [her] Virtue": "What should I think, when I looked upon my Finger, or saw, in the Glass, those Diamonds on my Neck, and in my Ears, but that they were the Price of my Honesty; and that I wore those Jewels outwardly, because I had none inwardly?" (166).

The notion of the correspondence of inner and outer habit underlies much of Pamela's thinking. Shocked at Mr. B.'s freedoms, Pamela in effect reproaches him for not living up to his outer habit: "Let me ask you, Sir, if you think this becomes your fine Cloaths!" (72). When plotting something yet more unworthy of himself, Mr. B. will adopt a completely foreign garb: in Lincolnshire, he disguises himself as the maid Nan to gain access to Pamela's bedchamber and body (175-6). The logic will be continued in Pamela, Part II, for B.'s infidelity begins with his adopting a disguise at a masquerade.

Pamela assumes that others share her belief that the outer habit reflects the inner. This assumption informs her decision to leave off wearing her fine clothing in order to appear in the simple dress she has made herself. She knows that if she returns home wearing cast-off finery, she herself will be seen as a discarded bauble: "for how should your poor Daughter look with a Silk Night-gown, Silken Petticoats, Cambrick Head-cloaths, [...] and fine Stockens! And how in a little while must they have look'd, like old Cast-offs indeed, and I look'd so for wearing them!" (52; italics added).

Mr. B. teasingly suggests that his "pretty Preacher"'s (71) outer habit should be changed to match the inner: "when my Lincolnshire Chaplain dies, I'll put thee on a Gown and Cassock" (71). Though Pamela is "vex'd at his Jeer" (71), she herself will ensure that her outer wardrobe matches her inner ideal of honest independence. The scene in which she divides her clothing into three
bundles and rejects two of them shows which aspects of her virtual identity she is rejecting (78-80). Later modifications of her wardrobe will reflect new circumstances in her life. When she is deprived of her liberty in Lincolnshire, this change is reflected on the level of garb: Mrs. Jewkes orders Nan to pull off her shoes (106).

Mr. B. will come to understand the importance of the outer garment in revealing the inner self. Engaged to Pamela, and wishing to acquaint his neighbours with her uniqueness, he can do no better than to tell them "the Story of [her] present Dress, and how [she] came by it" (233). Polly Darnford is sensitive to the fact that to know Pamela's dress is to know the woman herself.97 About to make Pamela's acquaintance, she asks as a favour if B.'s fiancée might appear in her customary garb. Yet Pamela will not wear this garb forever. Significantly, she tells Mr. B. that he may dress his wife as he pleases: "I told him, I was unable to express my Gratitude for his Favours and Generosity; and as he knew best what befitted his own Rank and Condition, I would wholly remit myself to his good Pleasure" (297-8). Having previously asserted her independence from B. by wearing only clothes of her own making, Pamela now relinquishes to her husband the construction of her wardrobe and her being.

If Pamela's entire history is traced through a parallel sartorial story-line, the textile is associated in particular with her erotic self. We get our first hint that Pamela loves the man who persecutes her when, permitted to return to her parents, she postpones leaving B.'s house until she has finished flowering a waistcoat for him—"I never did a prettier Piece of Work" (51), she says of this garment.98 One is reminded of another literary heroine who expresses her love obliquely through

97 See pp.233 and 243.

98 Cecilia Macheski draws a parallel between Pamela's embroidery and Penelope's weaving: "Like the Greek queen's weaving which was unraveled at night and used to preserve chastity, Pamela's stitching also comes between her and Mr. B.'s illicit advances; Richardson uses the flowered waistcoat as Homer uses the burial shroud. But in the
textile means:

La princesse de Clèves était sur un lit de repos, avec une table devant elle, où il y avait plusieurs corbeilles pleines de rubans; elle en choisit quelques-uns, et M. de Nemours remarqua que c'étaient des mêmes couleurs qu'il avait portées au tournoi. Il vit qu'elle en faisait des noeuds à une canne des Indes, fort extraordinaire, qu'il avait portée quelque temps et qu'il avait donnée à sa soeur, à qui Mme de Clèves l'avait prise sans faire semblant de la reconnaître pour avoir été à M. de Nemours. (La Princesse de Clèves 366)

Embroidery is a multi-layered means of self-expression for Pamela. She confirms her status as a model servant by working on the waistcoat, for she is "up early and late to get it finish'd" (51), and B. is compelled to acknowledge the quality of her work (49). However, the task of embroidery does not brand Pamela a servant, for, as Rozsika Parker explains in The Subversive Stitch, "[b]y the eighteenth century embroidery was beginning to signify a leisured, aristocratic lifestyle" (11). Embroidery is an activity which Pamela will be able to pursue in her "exalted condition"; indeed, Richardson's better-born heroines, like Clementina and Clarissa, are expert needlewomen.

Most importantly, through embroidery Pamela is able to throw a feminine veil over potentially unfeminine behaviour. Pamela's century looked askance at the woman who openly avowed her love; readers of Grandison criticized Harriet Byron for acknowledging that she loved Sir Charles before he had declared his love. As woman and servant, Pamela is doubly debarred from avowing love and attraction. She instead covertly expresses her love through embroidery, which is "from the eighteenth century onwards, repeatedly used to signify femininity" (The Subversive

---

For evidence that she does so, see for example pp.111.3.165 and 11.3.389.

Harriet herself struggles long between candour and feminine delicacy. In the first volume, she writes, "It is, I hope, a secret to myself, that never will be unfolded, even to myself, that I love a man, who has not made professions of Love to me" (1.386).
Stitch 7). Through an activity which enhances her femininity, Pamela expresses an emotion which, as a exemplary woman of her time, she cannot avow even to herself.

Clothing frequently gives us information about Mr. B.'s attraction to Pamela. After his mother's death, B. assures Pamela that she will not lose her employment: "you shall take care of my Linen" (25). This statement is an avowal of lust through metonymic means: he of course hopes that she will take care of the body and the bed which the linen covers. Mr. B. continues to express lust through the textile. Jocelyn Harris notes the erotic resonance of his early generosity: "[g]ifts of his mother's clothes allow Mr. B. to show his awareness of the body he desires" (Samuel Richardson 9). The Oedipal subtext of these gifts requires no commentary.

Pamela herself recognizes that Mr. B. is establishing a kind of intimacy through his gifts, particularly when, alone with her, he gives her fine stockings:

I was quite astonish'd, and unable to speak for a while; but yet I was inwardly asham'd to take the Stockens; for Mrs. Jervis was not there: If she had, it would have been nothing. I believe I receiv'd them very awkwardly; for he smil'd at my Awkwardness; and said, Don't blush, Pamela: Dost think I don't know pretty Maids wear Shoes and Stockens? (31)

Such scenes as this, establishing intimacy through the textile, prepare us for the moment when Mr. B.'s assault on Pamela's body is translated into a kind of sartorial rape. When Mr. B. thrusts his hand into Pamela's bosom, indignation gives her the strength to break free and flee:

the next Chamber being open, I made shift to get into it, and threw-to the Door, and the Key being on the Inside, it locked; but he follow'd me so close, he got hold of my Gown, and tore a Piece off, which hung without the Door. (42)

Since Pamela's essential being is intimately associated with the textile, this tearing off of a piece of her dress has the resonance of a tearing of her hymen. The undertones of rape are confirmed by Mrs. Jervis's reaction when she finds Pamela unconscious on the floor: "Poor Mrs. Jervis thought it was worse, and cry'd over me like as if she was my Mother" (42). Mr. B. himself will allude to
Mrs. Jervis's assumption that Pamela had been raped: "Did you not think, when you saw the Girl in the way you found her in, that I had given her the greatest Occasion that could possibly be given any Woman? And that I had actually ruin'd her, as she calls it? Tell me, could you think any thing less?" (44).

Before Clarissa, Pamela suggests that the Richardsonian heroine cannot long outlive her rape. When loss of chastity seems almost inevitable, Pamela asserts, "long I shall not survive my Disgrace" (164). It is not surprising, then, that Pamela's textile rape should be followed by a textile suicide. When Pamela plots her escape from Lincolnshire, she intends her clothing to play a key role:

So what will I do, but strip off my upper Petticoat, and throw it into the Pond, with my Neck-handkerchief; for, to be sure, when they miss me, they will go to the Pond first, thinking I have drowned myself; and so, when they see some of my Cloaths floating there, they will be all employ'd in dragging the Pond, which is a very large one [...]] (149)

We briefly fear that sartorial determinism is again at work, for Pamela will later be tempted to make the textile suicide real: when her escape attempt fails, Pamela considers throwing herself into the pond (151). But this temptation is overcome, and it is only on the textile level that Pamela experiences the worst—rape and suicide—that could befall her.

Pamela's dress tells us both what she is, and what she could have become. Yet it is important to recognize that in many cases we learn not from Pamela's clothing itself, but from her written description of it. Helpful here is the distinction Roland Barthes makes in *Système de la mode* between three kinds of clothing: the vêtement réel, the vêtement-image, and the vêtement écrit. The vêtement réel is of course present only in theatre versions of the *Pamela* story. Barthes defines the vêtement-image as the "[vêtement] qu'on me présente photographié ou dessiné" (13); the illustrated
version of Pamela which Richardson commissioned\(^{101}\) contains such vêtements-image. But the reader of modern editions of Pamela is confronted only with what Barthes calls the "vêtement écrit": "c'est ce même vêtement, mais décrit, transformé en langage" (13). Pamela has a gift for turning one kind of textus (clothing) into another kind of textus (text). Her precise descriptions of garb reveal much about her personal development.

The early pages of Pamela give an example of the rich information which can be gleaned from the vêtements écrits. Persecuted by B., Pamela expresses her nostalgia for simpler times in sartorial form: "O how I wish’d for my grey Russet again" (36). In Système de la mode, Barthes analyzes the way a physical garment is freighted with meaning: "Dans notre société, la diffusion de la Mode repose donc en grande partie sur une activité de transformation: il y a passage [...] de la structure technologique aux structures iconique et verbale" (16). Such a transformation is at work when Pamela turns her "grey Russet" (36) into an icon of the simpler (and less erotically charged) life she used to know. However, another vêtement écrit will suggest that Pamela does not truly wish to go back to her tranquil existence with her parents, for when she makes the symbolic decision to leave off wearing the fine clothing B. has given her, she does not make herself a replica of the longed-for "grey Russet." Instead, she makes a new outfit described in great detail:

I trick’d myself up as well as I could in my new Garb, and put on my round-ear’d ordinary Cap; but with a green Knot however, and my homespun Gown and Petticoat, and plain-leather Shoes; but yet they are what they call Spanish Leather, and my ordinary Hose, ordinary I mean to what I have been lately used to; tho’ I shall think good Yarn may do very well for every Day, when I come home. A plain Muslin Tucker I put on, and my black Silk Necklace, instead of the French

\(^{101}\) Richardson’s de luxe octavo edition (released on May 8, 1742) contained illustrations by Hubert François Gravelot and Francis Hayman. Richardson also commissioned Hogarth to illustrate the second edition, but the illustrations, now lost, were not used (see Eaves and Kimpel’s Samuel Richardson: A Biography 125-7). In "Representing the Body in Pamela II," Janet Aikins argues that the Gravelot and Hayman illustrations, “through their self-reflective powers, give us a fresh understanding of Richardson’s beliefs about the substance of both bodies and books” (154).
Necklace my Lady gave me, and put the Ear-rings out of my Ears; and when I was quite 'quip'd, I took my Straw Hat in my Hand, with its two blue Strings, and look'd about me in the Glass, as proud as any thing. (60)

This garb is a more complex *structure iconique* than the grey Russet. Pamela is clearly expressing her choice of virtuous poverty by discarding B.'s finery for the clothing she has made or bought herself. But there is a second layer of meaning signalled in the concessive structures which punctuate Pamela's "*vêtement écrit*" (13). Repeatedly, what is described as plain and ordinary is then revealed to be not-so-plain-and-ordinary:

- my round-ear'd ordinary Cap; *but with a green Knot however*
- plain-leather Shoes; *but yet they are what they call Spanish Leather*
- ordinary Hose, *ordinary I mean to what I have been lately used to*

(italics added)

The example of the hose is representative. Pamela has rejected the "Stockens" (31) that B. made bold to give her, and has asserted her independence by wearing her own "ordinary blue Worsted Hose" (53). Yet she clearly has no intention of renouncing her status as a desired and desirable woman: these hose "make a smartish Appearance, with white Clocks" (53). Various reactions confirm that Pamela's new garb entrenches, rather than negates, her status as the most attractive of girls. She herself confesses, "To say Truth, I never lik'd myself so well in my Life" (60). Mr. B. uses the new outfit as a pretext to take new liberties: "you are a lovelier Girl by half than *Pamela*; and sure I may be innocently free with you, tho' I would not do her so much Favour" (61).

---

102 Pamela, whose literary achievements often define her, is perhaps a bluestocking *avant la lettre*. The term, which came to designate a learned woman, was originally associated with the literary conversations held at Montagu House in London about 1750, some ten years after *Pamela* was first published. At these assemblies, "some of the men wore the blue stockings of ordinary daytime dress" (*Shorter Oxford s.v. 2*).

103 Mr. B. will accuse Pamela of having put on this new garb to trick him: "you little Villain! [...] Who is it you put your Tricks upon?" (62). Interestingly, this accusation of trickery echoes the term which Pamela uses in the
Jervis concedes that Mr. B.'s passion for Pamela is comprehensible: "I never saw you look more lovely in my Life, than in that same new Dress of yours. And then it was such a Surprize upon us all!—I believe truly, you owe some of your Danger to the lovely Appearance you made" (66).

The vêtement écrit, or clothing-transmuted-into-text, forms a bridge between the two types of textus central to Pamela's identity. Richardson's metaphors suggest that Pamela is in two senses a woven thing (textus). He figures her not only as a fabric ("linsey-woolsey"), but also as a text.\(^\text{104}\)

When Mr. B. encounters Mr. Williams reading Boileau's *Lutrin*, he tells the clergyman that he is studying an English text of even greater beauty: Pamela herself (258). Mr. B. has learned that Pamela constructs her identity in and through text, a fact which is essential to the novel's happy ending. Because Pamela's very being is inseparable from text, a textual rape of Pamela permits Mr. B. to "know" her intimately, and leads him to make her his wife.

We learn early in the novel that Pamela is no ordinary servant-girl. She is distinguished from her fellow domestics by a love of reading and writing. Mr. B. comments on Pamela's surprising acuteness: "You have a great deal of Wit, a great deal of Penetration, much beyond your Years; and, as I thought, your Opportunities" (183). Pamela's reading compensates for her lack of experience, giving the fifteen-year-old girl a salutary touch of worldliness: "Well, but, Mrs. Jervis, said I, let me ask you, if he can stoop to like such a poor Girl as I, as may be he may, for I have read of Things almost as strange, from great Men to poor Damsels; What can it be for?" (49; boldface added).

\(^\text{104}\) There are indications that Richardson places clothing and writing—textile and text—on the same plane. Pamela is fond of giving lists of clothing items: "two pretty enough round-ear'd Caps, a little Straw Hat, and a Pair of knit Mittens, turn'd up with white Calicoe; and two Pair of ordinary blue Worsted Hose [...] and two Yards of black Ribbon for my Shift Sleeves, and to serve as a Necklace" (52-3). She is equally fond of giving lists of writing materials: "[Longman] gave me three Pens, some Wafers, a Stick of Wax, and twelve Sheets of Paper" (56).
When Mr. B. begins his outright assault on her chastity, Pamela's reading bolsters her virtue and prudence. Meditating on her trying situation, she frequently prefaxes her comments with "I have read": "I have read, that many a Man has been asham'd at a Repulse, that never would, had they succeeded" (50). Often it is her reading of the Bible which she calls upon. She knows, for example, that yielding to B. would not bring her happiness: "we read in Holy Writ, that wicked Amnon, when he had ruin'd poor Tamar, hated her more than ever he lov'd her, and would have turn'd her out of Door!" (59). The nature of Pamela's bookish knowledge evolves in successive editions of Pamela. In the first edition, Pamela knows that she is liable to be turned away if seduced by Mr. B.: "even wicked Men, I have read, soon grow weary of Wickedness of one Sort, and love Variety" (49). Later editions of Pamela refine this knowledge, suggesting that books have taught Pamela what she will learn by bitter experience in Pamela, Part II—that men have a distressing tendency toward polygamy: "even wicked men, I have read, soon grow weary of wickedness with the same person, and love variety" (Carpenter edition 1.45; italics added).

Pamela's religious readings play a particular role in her self-defense. Her position is delicate because her would-be seducer is also the master to whom she owes obedience. Mrs. Jewkes exemplifies the servant who abdicates personal moral responsibility in favour of unquestioning obedience: "Look-ye, said she, he is my Master, and if he bids me do a Thing that I can do, I think I ought to do it, and let him, who has Power, to command me, look to the Lawfulness of it" (104). But Pamela's scriptural reading encourages her to flout the social hierarchy which places B. infinitely above her, both as her master and as a justice of the peace. She knows that she is his equal in the eyes of God, and thus the Bible justifies her decision to disobey a merely temporal

\[\text{105 Cf. p.64, where a distraught Pamela writes, } "\text{Is there no Constable nor Headborough, tho', to take me out of his House? for I am sure I can safely swear the Peace against him: But, alas! he is greater than any Constable, and is a Justice himself [...]}"\]
master: "my Soul is of equal Importance with the Soul of a Princess; though my Quality is inferior to that of the meanest Slave" (141).

Pamela continually conceives of her experience in literary terms. She is the grasshopper in one of Aesop's fables (77), the mouse in another (78), the sheep in yet another (162); her jaileress Jewkes is at one moment an Argus (113), at another a Jezebel (116), and at another a wolf from one of Aesop's fables (162). Pamela's reading not only helps her make sense of her experiences, but also shapes her attitudes and actions. A particularly enticing hint suggests that Pamela is given strength by the fact that she casts herself in the glorious, though painful, role of martyr:

I have read of a good Bishop that was to be burnt for his Religion; and he try'd how he could bear it, by putting his Fingers into the lighted Candle: So I, t'other Day, try'd, when Rachel's Back was turn'd, if I could not scour the Pewter Plate she had begun. I see I could do't by Degrees; tho' I blister'd my Hand in two Places. (77-8)

In later editions Richardson reinforces Pamela's uncomplaining-martyr identity by changing a few words: "I see I could do't by Degrees; tho' I blister'd my Hand in two Places" (78; italics added) becomes "I see I could do't by degrees: It only blistered my hand in two places" (Carpenter edition 1.95; italics added).

The scene in which Mr. B. tries to force Pamela to sit on his knee again shows her reliance on textual models of conduct. Delightfully, the readings of the previous night become Pamela's script: "O how I was terrify'd! I said, like as I had read in a Book a Night or two before, Angels, and Saints, and all the Host of Heaven, defend me! And may I never survive one Moment, that fatal one in which I shall forfeit my Innocence" (41-2). Mr. B. recognizes how crucial text is in shaping

---

106 Richardson published an edition of Aesop's *Fables* (dated 1740) in 1739, one year before publishing the first part of *Pamela*. If Aesop left his mark on *Pamela*, Richardson in turn gave his unique moral stamp to the *Fables*. Richardson used Sir Roger L'Estrange's version, but explains in the Preface that he "presumed to alter, and put a stronger Point to several of the Fables themselves, which we thought capable of more forcible Morals" (see Eaves and Kimpel's *Biography* 76-7.)
Pamela's behaviour. Having the gift of a lie which contains a grain of truth, he will allege to Pamela's father that she is deeply influenced by her readings: "In short, the Girl's Head's turn'd by Romances, and such idle Stuff, which she has given herself up to, ever since her kind Lady's Death" (90).

Pamela's use of text in self-defense goes beyond echoing the heroine of the previous night's reading. In attacking Pamela's virtue, Mr. B. does not scruple to use and abuse texts to further his ends. He invokes the story of Lucretia to soften Pamela's resolve: "Who ever blamed Lucretia, but the Ravisher only? and I am content to take all the Blame upon me; as I have already borne too great a Share for what I have deserv'd" (42). Mr. B. is doubtless disconcerted to learn that his late mother's maid can use the text he invokes to rebut his arguments: "May I, said I, Lucretia like, justify myself with my Death, if I am used barbarously?" (42). Pamela will use the Lucretia reference against B. a second time when, in front of Mrs. Jervis, he claims that she is wildly exaggerating the freedoms he took. An indignant Pamela protests: "But your Honour went further, so you did; and threaten'd what you would do, and talk'd of Lucretia, and her hard Fate" (44).

Pamela's writing strengthens her virtue as much as her reading. She continues to write even when she has no way of sending her letters to her parents, for it is through writing that she affirms her sense of self in the alienating surroundings of Lincolnshire. Pamela's "editor" suggests that Pamela is constructing a textual self which will later serve as the raw material for an examen de conscience: she pursues her journal, "as was her constant View, that she might afterwards thankfully look back upon the Dangers she had escaped, when they should be happily over-blown, as in time she hoped they would be; and that then she might examine, and either approve of, or repent for, her own Conduct in them" (94).

Mr. B. understands how key Pamela's writing is to her sense of self, for his desire to break
down her virtue is closely linked to his opposition to her "scribbing" (34, 37). We see to what extent Pamela's identity is text-dependent when she is presented with a different textual version of herself. The many insults in B.'s scathing letter to Jewkes make Pamela momentarily doubt her own worthiness: "The bad Names, Fool's Plaything, artful Creature, painted Bauble, Gewgaw, speaking Picture, are hard things for your poor Pamela; and I began to think, whether I was not indeed a very naughty Body, and had not done vile Things" (145). *Pamela*, Part II similarly gives us an example of how Pamela's identity, textually constructed in large part, can be threatened by a contrary text. A stranger leaves Pamela some verses which suggest that he thinks of her with "impure Notions": "it gives me the less Opinion of myself, that I should be so much as thought of, as the Object of any wicked Body's Wishes. I have called myself to Account upon it, Whether any Levity in my Looks, my Dress, my Appearance, could embolden such an affrontive Insolence" (II.3.231).

*Pamela*, Part II confirms that Pamela's writing helped her create and confirm a virtuous self during her trials. Lady Davers comments to Pamela that her "Itch of Scribbling" has greatly improved her: "having a natural Fund of good Sense, and a Prudence above your Years, you have, with the Observations [your writings] have enabled you to make, been Flint and Steel too, as I may say, to yourself" (II.3.54). In the continuation of this passage, Lady Davers uses a gardening metaphor to convey the happy effect of reading and writing:

So that reading constantly, and thus using yourself to write, and enjoying besides the Benefit of a good Memory, every thing you heard or read became your own; and not only so, but was improved by passing thro' more salubrious Ducts and Vehicles; like some fine Fruit grafted upon a common Free-stock, whose more exuberant Juices serve to bring to quicker and greater Perfection the downy Peach,
or the smooth Nectarine with its crimson Blush.\(^{107}\) (II.3.55)

Meeting Pamela for the first time, the Countess of C. invokes another gardening metaphor: "'Twould have been strange (excuse me, Mrs. B. for I know your Story) if such a fine Flower had not been transplanted from the Field to the Garden" (II.3.167). The imagery of transplanting and grafting permits us to situate Richardson relative to the logocentric tradition. Derrida explains that this tradition sees writing as inherently unnatural: "la parole étant naturelle ou du moins l'expression naturelle de la pensée, la forme d'institution ou de convention la plus naturelle pour signifier la pensée, l'écriture s'y ajoute, s'y adjoint comme une image ou une représentation. En ce sens, elle n'est pas naturelle" (De la Grammatologie 207). Richardson would seem to agree that writing is not a natural thing—but his gardening imagery suggests that he sees the written word as uniquely capable of improving upon nature. Naturally exquisite, Pamela has been brought to the height of perfection by her exposure to reading and writing, just as a fine plant is brought to the height of perfection through grafting and transplanting.

Pamela's text is intimately linked to her very being; like her reading, her writing helps her construct a virtuous self. Revealingly, when Mr. B. proposes to Pamela a radically new identity—that of his kept mistress—he does so in writing, and expects an answer in kind. In his detailed contract (164-7), B. creates a new textual identity for Pamela's consideration. Not content merely to reject this virtual self, Pamela creates point-by-point an alternative identity. The physical layout of the page, with its left and right hand columns, neatly juxtaposes the two Pamelas. The left, sinister column is the sinful identity which must be rejected. The right column sketches out the righteous, pure Pamela the heroine chooses instead.

\(^{107}\) This seems to echo Andrew Marvell's "The Nectarine, and curious Peach, / Into my hands themselves do reach" ("The Garden" ll.37-8), perhaps because Lady Davers sees reading and writing as essential to regaining an Edenic state.
Richardson emphasizes the link between Pamela and text from the first pages of the novel, and from the beginning B.'s quest for Pamela is conflated with a quest for her text. The first freedom Mr. B. takes with Pamela is a textual freedom:

I have been scared out of my Senses; for just now, as I was folding this Letter, in my late Lady's Dressing-room, in comes my young Master! Good Sirs! how was I frightned! I went to hide the Letter in my Bosom, and he seeing me frighted, said, smiling, Who have you been writing to, Pamela?—I said, in my Fright, Pray your Honour forgive me!—Only to my Father and Mother. He said, Well then, Let me see how you are come on in your Writing! O how I was sham'd!—He, in my Fright, took it, without saying more, and read it quite thro' [...] (26)

Pamela's parents are made uneasy by the literary intimacy Mr. B. establishes with their daughter: "Why should he stoop to read your Letter to us; and commend your Writing and Spelling? And, why should he give you Leave to read his Mother's Books!" (27). They begin to fear that he is after Pamela's "Jewel" (27)—her chastity. But the first jewel which B. steals is a letter of Pamela's (34). This textual violation prefigures the bodily violations which are to come; both represent a culpable desire to "know" the pretty servant-girl. Pamela herself senses that sexual and textual violations are broadly similar: "I fear he that was mean enough to do bad things, in one respect, did not stick at this" (34).

We have seen that Pamela's clothing is associated particularly closely with her sexual being, and the same is true of her text. When Pamela slips her letter into her bosom (26), Mr. B.'s attention is naturally drawn to this part of her anatomy. Again surprised by Mr. B., Pamela will again thrust her letter into her bosom (40)—and moments afterwards he is thrusting his hand where she

108 Temma Berg, who notes that Pamela's gesture establishes "the connection between her person and her writings," offers an elegant explanation: "She attempts to hide the letter in her bosom because she has already traced what is hidden in her bosom onto the paper" ("From Pamela to Jane Gray" 119). Berg also suggests that Mr. B.'s reading of this hastily-concealed letter was not entirely disagreeable to Pamela: "One other point can be made about this letter. Why is Pamela writing in her late lady's dressing room anyway? She must have had a room of her own. Why does she not wait to write her letter until she has returned to the safety of her own room? Probably because she wanted what happened to happen. She wanted Mr. B. to read her words and to want to read more of them" (119).
had thrust the letter (42). Pamela's text is eroticized from the first pages of the novel, and the conflation of sexual desirability and textual desirability will prove crucial to the course of her story. Mr. B. himself is aware of the erotic potential of the letter. He tries to sully Pamela's reputation by pretending that she is carrying on "a sort of Correspondence, or Love Affair" (90) with a clergyman—and later becomes madly jealous when he discovers that she has indeed engaged in a clandestine correspondence with Mr. Williams. Richardson exploits the fact that the word "correspondence" spans the sexual and the textual. Our century is familiar with the meaning of "communication by letter" (OED s.v. 6a); Richardson's time knew in addition the now-obsolete meanings of "communications of a secret or illicit nature" (s.v. 5b) and "sexual intercourse" (s.v. 5e).

After Pamela is abducted and taken to Lincolnshire, the link between her text and body becomes even closer: "I stitch [my writings] hitherto in my Under-coat, next my Linen" (120). This strategy of course has a practical aim: she is seeking to keep her journal from Mr. B.'s eyes. Yet since Pamela's behaviour is continually modelled on her knowledge of the Bible, it is worth noting that wearing bits of text on the body is an established biblical tradition. Deuteronomy 11:18 exhorts, "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes." Taking this exhortation literally, orthodox Jews from pre-Christian times strapped phylacteries—"black leather boxes containing scriptural passages" (Fagen 5.368)—onto their arms and foreheads. Wearing these scraps of text on the body served as a reminder of the obligation to keep the law.

---

109 Bible quotations are from the King James Version unless otherwise specified.

110 This religious merging of text and body is not unique of its kind. The Anchor Bible Dictionary notes that there is "alleged evidence for a widespread custom among Ancient Near Eastern religions of tattooing or branding various parts of the body with the name of a deity, particularly the forehead and hands, as a prophylactic measure."
Jesus alludes to the wearing of phylacteries in Matthew 23:5: "they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments." Unlike the ostentatiously righteous Pharisees in this passage, Pamela does not make broad her phylacteries; hers are worn discreetly out of sight. The wearing of phylacteries kept the Law ever-present to the individual. Pamela's wearing of text serves a similar function, for her journal expresses her pious resolution to remain strong in the face of persecution. Carrying this "law" about her person constantly reminds Pamela of the textual ideal she must live up to. Richardson's novel gives us a curious image of the spiritual nourishment which Pamela derives from her phylacteries, for Pamela's journal quite literally sustains her. Though one would hesitate to speak of the word made flesh, there is a curious equivalence of the two in *Pamela*. A near-starvation diet in Lincolnshire melts Pamela's flesh away, but in compensation the texts she wears about her grow in bulk.

A second meaning of "phylactery" is also relevant to Pamela's story. The word is derived from the Greek meaning "a watchman's post, a safeguard, an amulet" (*OED* XI:739), and this etymology is remembered in the more general meaning of phylactery as an "amulet, charm, safeguard" (*OED* s.v. 2). The letters which Pamela wears are a safeguard which literally (in a double sense) saves her from rape. If traditional phylacteries are worn on the wrist and the forehead, Pamela's preferred hiding places for her text are "in [her] Bosom" (210), and "about [her] Hips" (198); the fact that Pamela's letters are associated with her sexual body suggests the crucial role they will play in safeguarding her virtue. When Pamela begins to hide her journal on her person, text and body

Hints of such a practice can be found in the Bible, such as the sign on Cain's forehead (Gen 4:15) which placed him under divine protection (see also Ezekiel's cross, Ezek 9:4, 6; cf. Rev 7:3; 14.1)" (Fagen 5.369).

111 Another relevant image is that of Ezekiel literally feeding on text: "Then [God] said to me, 'Son of man, eat this scroll I am giving you and fill your stomach with it.' So I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey in my mouth" (NIV, Eze 3:2).
become one. Mr. B. begins to plot the destruction of Pamela's textual chastity, and this displacement preserves Pamela's virginity until her wedding night with him.

To understand the importance of the written word in *Pamela*, it is necessary to consider the strange ineffectiveness of Pamela's spoken word. Pamela has a considerable range of oratorical skill; she can respond to Mr. B. either by moving declarations of her preference for death before dishonour, or by a tart and incisive "Sawciness" (*passim*). However, her eloquence is continually sabotaged by her physical beauty. In an early confrontation with B., Pamela defends her right to flout her master's wishes: "it is impossible I should be ingrateful to your Honour, or disobedient, or deserve the Names of Boldface and Insolent, which you call me, but when your Commands are contrary to that first Duty, which shall ever be the Principle of my Life!" (41). Mr. B. is momentarily swayed by Pamela's passionate words: "He seem'd to be moved, and rose up, and walked into the great Chamber two or three Turns, leaving me on my Knees" (41). However moving, Pamela's spoken word cannot sway him from his purpose: "At last he came in again, but, alas! with Mischief in his Heart!" (41). A moment later, he is using force to pull Pamela onto his lap.

Mr. B. is so bewitched by Pamela's physical beauty that he cannot respond objectively to her words, and treat her with the dignity she deserves. She is as tyrannized by her too-seductive body as Cyrano and Eugenia by their repulsive bodies. And just like Cyrano and Eugenia, Pamela escapes the tyranny of the body through writing.112 Pamela's textual body will replace her physical

---

112 The parallel between Pamela and Cyrano becomes closer in *Pamela*, Part II when Pamela risks catching smallpox from her infant son. Like Rostand's Roxane, Mr. B. claims that physical deformity would not compromise his love: "I love you more for your Mind than for your Face. That and your Person will be the same; and were that sweet Face to be cover'd with Seams and Scars, I will value you the more for the Misfortune" (II.4.237). Pamela does catch the disease, but Lady Davers, sceptical of her brother's fine professions, is relieved to learn that she will retain her physical as well as her mental beauty: "I began to be afraid, that when it was hardly possible for both conjoined to keep a roving Mind constant, that one only would not be sufficient" (II.4.242).
body as object of desire—a natural substitution since Pamela's letters, promising knowledge of her secret inner recesses, are invested with a powerful erotic charge. Pamela's textual body will draw B. in instead of her physical body.

Pamela comes closest to being raped when Mr. B. infiltrates her bedchamber by disguising himself as Nan. She escapes only because her fits alarm Mr. B., who fears he may have killed her (176). After this near rape, Mr. B. shifts his attention from Pamela's body to her text.113 Interestingly, this is not the first time that Mr. B. has pursued a woman to find himself with her text instead. Long before his involvement with Pamela, Mr. B. seduces and impregnates a young woman named Sally Godfrey, but refuses to marry her. After the birth of their daughter, he pursues Sally, who is determined to flee to Jamaica to start afresh. Finally he persuades her to accept a rendez-vous: "on Saturday I went to the Place appointed, at Woodstock; but when I came there, I found a Letter instead of my Lady" (397; boldface added). Sally has adroitly substituted textual body for physical. Pamela expresses admiration for this "pious Contrivance" (397) which ensured that Sally would hold to her resolution of starting a new, virtuous life. A substitution of text for body will similarly safeguard Pamela's own virtue.

Pamela's treatment of rape invites comparison with Richardson's later novel in which rape plays so central a role. In Clarissa, Lovelace rapes Clarissa less out of sexual desire than out of a desire to penetrate the mystery of her being. He believes that carnal knowledge of her will also permit him to know her in a deeper sense: "have I not known twenty and twenty of the sex, who have seemed to carry their notions of virtue high; yet, when brought to the test, have abated of their severity? And how should we be convinced that any of them are proof, till they are tried?"

113 Cf. Temma Berg in "From Pamela to Jane Gray": "The taking of Pamela's papers becomes a substitute for the taking of her maidenhead" (118).
(Clarissa 886). Perhaps Lovelace does gain a measure of knowledge of Clarissa through the rape, but part of what he learns is that she must abhor a man guilty of this violation, and that she cannot long outlive such a crime against her. If Clarissa ends in tragedy, Pamela has a joyful, optimistic ending—not because there is no rape in this earlier novel, but because textual rape, unlike physical, proves to be only a venial sin.

When Mr. B. was pursuing Pamela's body, Mrs. Jewkes had acted as his "wicked Procuress" (102). B.'s object of desire changing, she is given the role of textual procuress, her essential task to gain possession of Pamela's private writings. Jewkes's moment of glory comes when she seizes the packet of letters which Pamela has just dug up from under the rose-bush (197), and delivers it to Mr. B. The appropriation of these letters is clearly a violation of Pamela, and already Richardson is putting sexual metaphors into place; there is a pun on the act of "deflowering" when B. breaks open the rose-bush letters in order to know Pamela against her will.

B.'s desire to procure Pamela's text takes on manifest sexual overtones. B. knows he does not have all the letters, and threatens to punish Pamela if she does not confess to their whereabouts: "let me know where they are, and you shall escape the Question, as they call it abroad" (203). He is perhaps thinking of the question de l'eau, in which the person interrogated lies on his back, and suffers torments as water is forcibly poured into his mouth. This form of torture would have sexual resonance in the context: a forcible invasion of the body, an injection of liquid which causes a swelling of the belly. B. is hinting that he will not hesitate to rape Pamela to gain the knowledge

---

114 In The History of Torture, George Ryley Scott quotes the Scotsman William Lithgow's account of the tortures he endured when he was mistakenly arrested as a spy in 1620 in Malaga. One of the torments he experienced was the question de l'eau: "[the tormentor] went to an earthen jar standing full of water, a little beneath my head: from whence carrying a pot full of water, in the bottom whereof there was an incised hole, which being stopped by his thumb, till it came to my mouth, he did pour it in my belly; the measure being a Spanish sombre which is an English pottle; the first and second devices I gladly received, such was the scorching drought of my tormenting pain, and likewise I had drunk none for three days before. But afterwards, at the third charge perceiving these measures of water
Pamela parries B.'s threat: "Sir, said I, the Torture is not used in England; and I hope you won't bring it up" (203). B. concedes the point—but comes up with a British alternative whose sexual resonance is equally clear: "Admirably said! said the naughty Gentleman.—But I can tell you of as good a Punishment. If a Criminal won't plead with us here in England, we press him to Death, or till he does plead" (203). This evocation of the peine forte et dure, in which the accused lies on his back and is pressed with heavy weights, is suggestive of rape. The sexual sub-text becomes more explicit when Mr. B. begins to suspect that Pamela's letters are hidden on her person: "Now, said he, it is my Opinion they are about you; and I never undrest a Girl in my Life; but I will now begin to strip my pretty Pamela; and hope I shall not go far, before I find them" (204). The next day, B. will lament that he did not take advantage of this "glorious Pretence" (207) to search Pamela: "I have been vexing myself all Night, that I did not strip you, Garment by Garment, till I had found them" (207). The text is so intimately associated with the body that physical and textual violation become one.

Faced with a strip-search, Pamela promises that if left to herself, she will remove the letters and give them to B. But alone in her closet, she is dismayed at the prospect of losing the precious part of her body which Mr. B. covets: "[I] could not bear the Thoughts of giving up my Papers" (204). She is also repelled to realize that she must strip if she is to give Mr. B. satisfaction: "I must all undress me in a manner to untack them" (204). She writes a letter to him in the hopes that he will change his mind: "most hardly do you use the Power you so wickedly have got over me" (204).

to be inflicted upon me as tortures, O strangling tortures! I closed my lips again-standing that eager cruelty. Whereat the Alcaide enraged, set my teeth asunder with a pair of iron cadges, detaining them there, at every several turn, both mainly and manually; whereupon my hunger-clunged belly waxing great, grew drum-like imbolstred, for it being a suffocating pain, in regard of my head hanging downward, and the water reinsorging itself, in my throat, with a struggling force, it strangled and swallowed up my breath from yowling and groaning" (174-5).
Pamela even hints that the threat of textual rape, like that of physical, could push her to the brink of desperation: "I have Heart enough, Sir, to do a Deed that would make you regret using me thus" (204).

When this letter fails to sway B., Pamela makes a decision which suggests that her attitude toward her textual chastity is different from that toward her physical chastity. Pamela had refused to submit to Mr. B. even when he indicated that her defeat was inevitable, and that she could soften her lot by gracefully accepting what she could not avoid. She writes to her parents, "tho' I fear there will be nothing omitted to ruin me, and tho' my poor Strength will not be able to defend me, yet I will be innocent of Crime in my Intention, and in the Sight of God" (164). Her response to the kept-woman contract shows her valiantly refusing to collude with Mr. B. in the destruction of her virtue:

I know, Sir, by woful Experience, that I am in your Power: I know all the Resistance I can make will be poor and weak, and perhaps stand me in little stead: I dread your Will to ruin me is as great as your Power: Yet, Sir, will I dare to tell you, that I will make no Free-will Offering of my Virtue. [...] I hope, by God's Grace, I shall have nothing to reproach myself, for not doing all in my Power to avoid my Disgrace; and then I can safely appeal to the great God, my only Refuge and Protector, with this Consolation, That my Will bore no Part in my Violation. (166)

In contrast, when her text is at stake, she shows herself willing to compound with her persecutor in the face of apparently ineluctable defeat: "I Remember what he said, of not being obliged to ask again for my Papers; and what I was forced to do, and could not help it, I thought I might as well do, in such a manner as might shew I would not disoblige on purpose" (206).

When Pamela gives the packet of letters to Mr. B., the imagery of the breaking of the seal suggests a symbolic violation of her chastity:

I took out my Papers; and said, Here, Sir, they are. But, if you please to return them, without breaking the Seal, it will be very generous: And I will take it for a great
Favour, and a good Omen.
He broke the Seal instantly, and open'd them. So much for your Omen,¹¹⁵ said he. (207)

The omen, however, does prove to be good, for Pamela will soon begin to understand that textual rape brings with it considerable compensations. Pamela describes Mr. B. reading a particularly touching part of her narrative: "[he] seemed so mov'd, that he turn'd away his Face from me; and I bless'd this good Sign, and began not so much to repent at his seeing this mournful Part of my Story" (208). Mr. B.'s turning away of his face is also a symbolic gesture. The text he reads causes him to avert his gaze from Pamela's body, until now his central preoccupation. Instead, Pamela's text is awakening in him a fascination with her inner self.

Pamela will be rewarded for the admirable qualities her correspondence reveals. Pamela's violation is simultaneously her revenge: "I have paid so dear for my Curiosity in the Affection [your papers] have rivetted upon me for you, that you would look upon yourself amply reveng'd, if you knew what they have cost me" (214), writes Mr. B. when he sends Pamela back to her parents. And Pamela's revenge is simultaneously her triumph, for, having sent her away, Mr. B. discovers that he cannot live without her.¹¹⁶

Pamela triumphs through her text, for her story literally changes the course of her story. The letter in Pamela is, to borrow Gérard Genette's phrase, "à la fois medium du récit et élément de l'intrigue" (Figures III 229). Pamela is a prime example of Genette's narration intercalée, which

¹¹⁵ One is tempted to transpose a few letters and read, "So much for your Hymen."

¹¹⁶ In "P/B: Pamela as Sexual Fiction," Terry Castle interprets differently Pamela's handing over of her papers. Castle posits that Pamela's story traces out the female child's transition from the pre-Oedipal to the Oedipal stage. In the idyllic early period, Pamela, deeply attached to a series of mother-figures, is ignorant of the anatomical difference between the sexes. She later comes to accept that she lacks the penis (here Castle draws our attention to Pamela's description of herself as "maimed"), and is consequently drawn to Mr. B. as possessor of the penis. The moment at which Pamela hands over her journal to B. represents her relinquishing of the fantasied female penis.
he calls "a priori [le type de narration] le plus complexe, puisqu'il s'agit d'une narration à plusieurs instances, et que l'histoire et la narration peuvent s'y enchevêtrer de telle sorte que la seconde réagisse sur la première" (Figures III 229). Intriguingly, Mr. B. (and by extension Richardson) is fully aware of the interpenetration of histoire and narration. B. justifies in the following terms his desire to see more of Pamela's journal: "there is such a pretty Air of Romance, as you relate them, in your Plots, and my Plots, that I shall be better directed in what manner to wind up the Catastrophe of the pretty Novel" (201).

Long aware of Pamela's physical beauty, B. discovers in her journal the "Beauties of her Mind" (335). Pamela's letters teach B. both of her true virtue, and of her subterranean affection for him—an irresistible combination which compels him to defy worldly opinion and marry her. In B.'s own words, "her Person made me her Lover; but her Mind made her my Wife" (390). Nor is it the contents alone of Pamela's letters which move B. He is won over by the fact that her sentiments for him are "expressed in so sweet, so soft, and so innocent a manner" (216). Elsewhere, he declares himself charmed by the fact that she has "so beautiful a manner" (201) as an author.117 We have seen that from the original meaning of "thing woven," textus evolved to mean "style or texture of a work"—and in this sense too Mr. B. has been won over by Pamela's textus.118

Pamela learns not only to forgive the textual rape, but even to be thankful for it: "when I see

117 See also p.232: "for the sake of the sweet manner in which you write your Sentiments"; p.240: "you are very happy, said he, my beloved Girl, in your Style and Expressions"; and p.255: "[what an] easy and happy Manner of Narration this excellent Girl has!"

118 In a kind of mirror image, Pamela's discovery of a letter of Mr. B.'s plays a crucial role in the development of her feelings for him. On the road back to her parents, Pamela persuades Robin to give her the letter Mr. B. had told him to deliver to her the next day: "This Letter, when I expected some new Plot, has affected me more than any thing of that Sort could have done. For here is plainly his great Value for me confess'd, and his rigorous Behaviour accounted for in such a Manner, as tortures me much. [...] I must own to you, that I shall never be able to think of any body in the World but him!" (214). In Pamela's persuading Robin to give her the letter a day early, we even have a pale echo of Mr. B.'s illicitly breaking into her text.
that God has brought about my Happiness by the very Means that I thought then my great Grievance; I ought to bless those Means, and forgive all that was disagreeable to me at the time, for the great Good that has issued from it" (255). Pamela may also be mollified by the fact that the textual rape is followed by Mr. B.'s gaining knowledge of her in a more decorous fashion. Mr. B. has not read all of Pamela's journal, for she had already sent a portion of it to her parents. B. is thus obliged to request the rest of the journal from Mr. Andrews, who hands over Pamela's text much as a father gives away his daughter in the marriage ceremony (251-2). The sexual metaphor is continued, for the next morning, Mr. B. looks "a little heavy" (254). Having received his beloved's textual body from her father, he has spent the better part of the night gaining knowledge of her.

Pamela comes to see her textual rape almost as a divine gift: "God has wonderfully brought about all these Things, by the very Means I once thought most grievous" (384). Textual rape takes on a different significance when Voltaire turns his hand to the Pamela story. Voltaire transforms Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded into a three-act comedy called Nanine, ou le préjugé vaincu. Sensitive to the importance of the textile in Richardson, Voltaire exploits the fact that the theatre permits him to use what Barthes calls the "vêtement réel." The spectator actually sees Nanine in her initial finery, and in her humble homespun garments when she is sent away in disgrace. And although textuality cannot play the same role in a stage play as in an epistolary novel, Voltaire makes the written word a catalyst to his plot—but in a manner quite different from Richardson.

It would be an exaggeration to speaks of textual "rape" in Nanine, for Voltaire does not conflate his heroine's body and text as Richardson does. But if there is no viol, there is a definite violation. The comte d'Olban wishes to marry his beautiful, orphaned servant Nanine, who feels unworthy. Jealous, the baroness de l'Orme intercepts a tender letter Nanine has written to a certain Philippe Hombert, and shows it to the count. A second letter seized by the count confirms his
suspicions, for he learns that Nanine is declining his proposal of marriage. Furious, he sends her away in disgrace. Learning shortly thereafter that Philippe Hombert is Nanine's long-lost father, the count is filled with self-loathing:

Quel jour vient m'éclairer?
J'ai fait un crime, il le faut réparer.
Si vous saviez combien je suis coupable!
J'ai maltraité la vertu respectable. (III.VI.261-4)

In Richardson, textual rape resolves the conflict between hero and heroine. In Voltaire, textual violation is the very source of this conflict.

Though Voltaire judges textual violation more harshly than Richardson, Richardson's later novels acknowledge obliquely that it is a black deed. *Pamela*, Part II, in which Richardson whitewashes Mr. B.'s character, contains an episode which reprises and modifies Part I's textual rape scene. Part I shows Mr. B. breaking the seal of Pamela's packet of letters against her express wish (207). The sequel's parallel scene, in which Mr. B. seeks to see the letter which Pamela had written for him in the event that she should not survive childbirth, has a distinctly different ending:

Will you give me Leave, my Dear, said he, to break the Seal? If you do, Sir, let it not be in my Presence; but it is too serious. Not, my Dear, now the Apprehension is so happily over: It may now add to my Joys and my Thankfulness on that Account. Then do as you please, Sir: But I had rather you would not.

Then here it is, Miss Darnford; I had it from you: It was put into your Hands; and there I place it again. (II.4.123)

If the reformed Mr. B. of *Pamela*, Part II is above textual rape, it goes without saying that Richardson's ideal man would never countenance such an act. Sir Charles Grandison confirms that one truly knows a woman by reading her letters. In an echo of Mr. B.'s "her Person made me her Lover; but her Mind made her my Wife" (390), Sir Charles says of his wife Harriet "that the Letters he had been favoured with the sight of, had given him deeper impressions in her favour, than even
her Beauty" (3.249). But unlike Mr. B., Sir Charles respectfully solicits the privilege of reading his beloved's letters. Such is his delicacy that before reading a word, he makes Harriet a distinctly un-Mr. B.-like promise: "He assured me, that he would not wish to see a line that I was not willing he should see; and that if he came to a word or passage that he could suppose would be of that nature, it should have no place in his memory" (2.71). Richardson's "good man" has so great a respect for his beloved's textual body that he refuses to see its private parts.

* *

When Pamela rejects the role of Lucretia, B. responds by trying to cast her in a different textual role: "O my good Girl! said he, tauntingly, you are well read, I see; and we shall make out between us, before we have done, a pretty Story in Romance, I warrant ye!" (42). But Pamela resists ceding textual control. If she is a heroine in a romance, she pens the script herself, creating a textual self so beautiful and pure that to read it is to be inspired with honourable love. At one point, Pamela cries in despair, "what is left me but Words?" (182). Her words prove entirely sufficient. Pamela's letters—"à la fois medium du récit et élément de l'intrigue" (Figures III 229)—change the course of her story: B.'s textual rape of Pamela leads to their marriage. But what of life after Pamela has vowed not only to love and honour, but also to "serve" and "obey" (289) Mr. B.? There are several suggestions that the man whom Pamela calls the "Author of [her] Happiness" (296) also becomes the author of her very being.

A trivial incident has symbolic value. At her husband's request, Pamela writes a letter to Mrs. Jervis: "and had no Difficulty till I came to sign my Name; and so I brought it down with me, when I was called to Supper, unsigned" (301). Mr. B. is puzzled by the omission, but Pamela explains

---

119 In yet another formulation of the belief that letters give privileged access to a woman's inner self, Arthur Williams writes to Pamela, "Give me Leave to say, that I had heard much in your Praise, both as to Person and Mind; but I think greatly short of what you deserve: My Eyes convince me of the one, your Letter of the other" (118).
that she did not wish to "seem over-forward" (302) in using the name to which she now has a right:
"He then took a Pen himself, and wrote after Pamela, his most worthy Surname" (303). She had
written her first name, for "Pamela" is a being whose identity she had created through text. But now
that she is married, her husband will play a large role in penning her identity; he is the one who
picks up a pen to complete her name.

B. creates a textual identity for Pamela in a quite literal sense: he secludes himself in his library
to draw up a document which will preserve his wife's status and privileges if he should die before
her (404). But B.'s re-creation of Pamela goes beyond conferring his social status upon her. When
Mr. B. was the wicked would-be seducer, Pamela used her journal to define herself in opposition
to his desires. When he turns virtuous husband, Pamela sees it as her duty to conform to his will:
"I hope I shall, more and more, shew you that I have no Will but yours" (294), she says to her new
husband.120 After B.'s lengthy lecture on what he expects from his wife, Pamela writes in her
journal forty-eight injunctions she feels "should be so many Rules for [her] future Conduct" (369).
The journal is still Pamela's principal means of self-definition, but now it is Mr. B. who dictates
the ideal it contains.

Thus Pamela's relationship to her text changes radically after her marriage: the journal in which
she had previously defined herself in opposition to B. becomes the means of her annihilating her
will to him. The husband-wife relationship promises to be more oppressive than ever the master-
servant relationship was; after her engagement, Pamela says, "I shall think myself more and more
his Servant" (257). But even in the act of transcribing Mr. B.'s injunctions, Pamela cannot resist
adding a personal commentary. The sixth injunction, stating that Pamela must bear with B. even

---
120 Cf. p.233: "after all that has pass'd, I should be unworthy if I could not say, that I can have no Will but yours [...]"
when he is in the wrong, provokes a mild rebellion: "This is a little hard, as the Case may be!" (370). We foresee that in spite of Pamela's best intentions, Pamela, Part II will be no mere record of Pamela subordinating her will to her husband's.
"Pleasant Fruits": Textual Insemination in *Pamela*, Part II

Engaged to Pamela, B. worries that her days may seem long after their marriage since she is likely to be snubbed by the ladies: "how will you bestow your Time, when you will have no Visits to receive or pay? No Parties of Pleasure to join in?" (225-6). Pamela replies by listing the many activities that will keep her occupied. Naturally writing is among them: "And then, Sir, you know, I love Reading, and Scribbling" (227). Mr. B. permits himself to complete Pamela's list:

> And, let me tell you, my *Pamela*, that I can add my Hopes of a still more pleasing Amusement; and what your bashful Modesty would not permit you to hint; and which I will no otherwise touch upon, lest it should seem, to your Nicety, to detract from the present Purity of my good Intentions, than to say, I hope to have superadded to all these, such an Employment, as will give me a View of perpetuating my happy Prospects, and my Family at the same time; of which I am almost the only Male. (227-8)

This passage looks forward to a central aspect of Richardson's sequel to *Pamela*. Formerly prized and fêted as a producer of texts, Pamela is now defined as a producer of both texts and children, and Richardson is at pains to establish parallels between Pamela's creation of textual and physical bodies.

In the original *Pamela*, Richardson develops a gardening motif which prepares us for *Pamela*, Part II's twinning of sexual and literary fertility. When persecuted in Lincolnshire, Pamela does not hide all her texts on her person. Many of her letters are hidden in the garden. Pamela buries a section of her journal under a rose-bush. She feigns an interest in smelling sunflowers and planting horsebeans in order to facilitate her correspondence with Mr. Williams, carried out by means of letters left in the garden. The garden harbours a number of Pamela's textual offspring long before

121 For convenience, in this chapter the original *Pamela* will be referred to as "Part I," and *Pamela*, Part II as "Part II."
it is peopled with her children.

Richardson establishes a link between gardening and literary creation by having Pamela "plant" her texts in the earth. In addition, there is a traditional link between gardening and human reproduction, as Mrs. Jewkes's crude jokes remind us. Pamela looks at the horsebeans she had planted the previous day: "Here, said I, having a Bean in my Hand, is one of them; but it has not stirr'd. No, to be sure, said she; and turn'd upon me a most wicked Jest, unbecoming the Mouth of a Woman, about Planting, &c" (122).

Though Pamela is offended by Jewkes's joke, a source close to her heart associates human sexuality and planting: the Bible itself. The Song of Solomon is rich in erotic gardening imagery: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. [...] Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits" (Song of Solomon 4:12,16). The Psalms frequently associate human fertility and gardening, as when Psalm 144:12 asks "[t]hat our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth." In Richardson, gardening thus becomes the median term linking creation and procreation:
Richardson's tripartite association of text, plant and child invites us to see *Pamela*’s letter-planting episode as an original rewriting of the New Testament parable of the sower and the seed. When Pamela buries her letters in B.’s garden, she is the sower whose seed "fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold" (Mt 13:8), for these literary plantings prove extraordinarily fertile. Her texts win her B.’s love, which leads to both the textual and physical offspring he has her produce as his wife. Significantly, Pamela uses the metaphor of a gardener tending flowers to describe her mothering duties: "their watchful Mamma will be impoy'd, like a skilful Gardener, in assisting and encouraging the charming Flower thro' its several hopeful Stages to Perfection, when it shall become one of the principal Ornaments of that delicate Garden, your honour'd Family" (II.4.304), she writes to Mr. B. Pamela—herself a 'transplanted Flower' (II.3.167)—will return to this imagery when expounding upon the pleasures of motherhood:

> to prepare the sweet Virgin Soil of their Minds to receive the Seeds of Virtue and Goodness so early, that as they grow up, one need only now a little Pruning, and now a little Watering, to make them the Ornaments and Delights of the Garden of this Life! (II.4.349-50)

Pamela is expanding on the 128th Psalm: "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table" (Psalm 128:3). Revealingly, Richardson applies pruning metaphors not only to child-rearing, but also to writing: he describes himself as "a sorry pruner, though greatly luxuriant" (*Selected Letters* 61).

Another biblical tale of planting underlies this part of Pamela’s story. Her burying of her text is a slightly subversive retelling of the parable of the talents. In Matthew 25, a man travelling to a far country entrusts five talents to one of his servants, two to another, and one to yet another. The first two servants put the money to work, and have doubled their talents by the time the master
returns. The third servant digs a hole and hides his talent in the earth. He is chastised by his master as "wicked and slothful" (Mt 25:26), for the talent does not multiply when thus buried.

Like the third servant, Pamela hides her talent—in this case, her *literary* talent—in her master's garden. But here her story diverges from the parable, for this buried talent wins her her master's praise. The praise is well deserved since the burying of Pamela's talent causes it to multiply many times over: B.'s unearthing of Pamela's literary talent inspires him to marry her, and marriage both further brings forth her literary talent, and reveals her talent as a mother. On a pecuniary level, the buried talent is also multiplied many times over, for the penniless Pamela becomes a wealthy woman when she marries B.

Richardson's reconfiguration of the parable implies that writing is true, fruitful work. Early in Part II, Pamela's parents ask if they might hire some relatives to work on the estate they are managing for B. Pamela rejects this nepotism, for she "would not wish any one of them to be lifted out of his Station, and made independent, at Mr. B.'s Expence, if their Industry will not do it" (II.3.21). Terry Castle sees hypocrisy in this response: "Yet it is of course a similar 'lifting up' the heroine herself has experienced, and not entirely on account of her industry" (*Masquerade and Civilization* 147). However, by having Pamela rewarded for the literary talent buried in the garden, Richardson suggests that writing is genuine industry and ought to be acknowledged as such. Pamela has indeed been 'lifted up' through her own talents.

Part I's use of gardening imagery prepares us for the dual productivity—biological and literary—which follows Pamela's marriage. This twinning of child and text suggests that in Part II, Richardson will expand and develop the correlations between body and text which he sketched out in his first novel. Marriage means that Pamela must radically redefine her relationship to both her physical and textual body. She must exercise greater ingenuity than ever before to continue
defining herself through *textus* once she passes from being B.'s object of desire to his lawfully wedded wife.

* 

Richardson’s novels acknowledge that rape can have a number of consequences. Lovelace dearly hopes that his rape of Clarissa will have the "charming, charming consequence" (*Clarissa* 916) of pregnancy: "Oh Jack! had I an imperial diadem, I swear to thee that I would give it up, even to my *enemy*, to have one charming boy by this lady" (916). The rape leads instead to a death so willed as to appear almost a suicide; Clarissa announces shortly after the rape that "she shall live but a little while" (916). We saw that in Part I, rape does lead to suicide, for B.'s textile rape of Pamela is followed by her textile suicide.¹²² In Part II, the two-pronged outcome of rape is again relevant:

---

¹²² See page 145 of the previous chapter.
As we have seen, B.'s textual rape of Pamela brings about Part I's happy ending: B. "knows" Pamela by reading her letters, and to know Pamela is to wish to marry her. But this analysis does not exhaust the consequences of the rape. Indirectly, textual rape almost leads to textual suicide: once married, Pamela begins to have children, and this new creative endeavour risks leaving her little time and inclination for writing. In Polly Darnford's words, "She has so much Delight in her Nursery, that I fear it will take her off from her Pen" (II.4.126). Lady Davers had similarly assumed that motherhood would put an end to Pamela's writing. Having instructed the newly-married Pamela to correspond with her regularly, she adds,

And thus, and with Reading, may your Time be filled up with Reputation to yourself, and Delight to others, till a Fourth Imployment puts itself upon you; and that is, (Shall I tell you in one Word, without mincing the Matter?) a Succession of brave Boys, to perpetuate a Family that has for many Hundred Years been esteem'd worthy and eminent [...] (II.3.42; italics added)

However, Pamela's putative literary suicide is averted, and instead B.'s textual rape of Pamela leads to her textual insemination.

Textual rape has made B. Pamela's husband, and as such he has great control over what Pamela is and does. This control extends to her writing endeavours. Shortly after Pamela gives birth to their first child, B. asks her to undertake an ambitious literary project. Pamela writes to Lady Davers, "Mr. B. has just put into my Hands Mr. Locke's Treatise on Education, and he commands me to give him my Thoughts upon it in Writing" (II.4.133). Much occupied with her newborn son, Pamela is reluctant to take on the task: "I asked, If I might not be excus'd Writing, only making my Observations here and there, to himself, as I found Occasion?" (II.4.133). B. is not to be swayed. His answer indicates that he will "inseminate" Pamela textually when he pleases, just as he inseminates her physically when he pleases:
But he said, You will yourself, my Dear, better consider the Subject, and be more a Mistress of it, and I shall the better attend to your Reasonings, when they are put into Writing: And surely, Pamela, added he, you may, in such an important Point as this, as well oblige me with a little of your Penmanship, as your other dear Friends. (II.4.133)

This answer "cuts [Pamela] to the Heart" and leaves her with "not another Word to say" (II.4.133). Mr. B. is signalling his desire to control Pamela's production of textual bodies as surely as he controls her production of physical bodies.

With the Lockean project, B. asks his wife to bring forth a very particular offspring. There is also a more general way in which B. inseminates Pamela textually. He is Pamela's tutor as well as her husband, instructing her in both literature and languages, and "furnish[ing] [her] out a little pretty Library" (II.4.3-4). In this manner, he plunges her into a fertile environment for literary production. The scenes of tutoring have erotic overtones, for we learn that the lessons take place in the context of physical intimacy. Says Pamela, "I am no Dunce: How inexcusable should I be, if I was, with such a Master, who teaches me on his Knee, and rewards me with a Kiss, whenever I do well" (II.3.93). The image of Pamela being tutored on her husband's lap suggests the degree to which textual and sexual insemination are superimposed.

Pamela is daunted at the prospect of the Lockean commentary. Just as she had protested her unworthiness to marry such a lofty personage as B., so does she now fear appearing "presumptuous" (II.4.297) if she accepts the literary coupling with Locke which B. has arranged for her. She writes to Lady Davers, "But how shall I do, Madam, if in such a renowned Author, I see already some few things, which I think want clearing up? Won't it look like intolerable Vanity, in such a one as me, to find Fault with such a Genius as Mr. Locke?" (II.4.133). Having married above her station, Pamela worries in a letter to B. that she may now be writing above her station:
"I begin to be afraid I am out of my Sphere, writing to your dear Self, on these important Subjects" (II.4.304).

Mr. B. will quash Pamela's resistance, insisting that she undertake the ambitious project. His success signals a change in their relationship, for he has not always been in control of Pamela's textual output. Early in Part I, he tries to curtail the amount of time Pamela spends writing (37), and to censor her subject matter: "you may only advise her," he says to Mrs. Jervis, "[...] if she stays here, that she will not write the Affairs of my Family purely for an Exercise to her Pen and her Invention" (39-40). He would naturally prefer it if there were no written record of the various injustices he practises against her. Pamela does not hesitate to disobey him, as always when she feels his commands are unjust or immoral. Against his will, a body of evidence against him grows and takes shape. This body is quite literally gestated in Pamela's own: as she hides her clandestine letters against her lower body while imprisoned in Lincolnshire, her hips and belly begin to swell.

The image is clear: Pamela is a textually pregnant woman.

In creating a heroine whose belly is literally swollen with letters, Richardson gives visual expression to the topos of the writer as great with text.\footnote{123} He even sketches out precise parallels

\footnote{123} The image of the writer/poet/musician as being "pregnant" and "giving birth" to his creations is quite common in classical literature. In Plato's \textit{Symposium}, Diotima notes that "Those whose creative instinct is physical have recourse to women, and show their love in this way, believing that by begetting children they can secure for themselves an immortal and blessed memory hereafter for ever; but there are some whose creative desire is of the soul, and who long to beget spiritually, not physically, the progeny which it is the nature of the soul to create and bring to birth" (208e-209a). The following are examples of the topos in Latin literature: Cic. \textit{Orat.} 114, "\textit{qui dialectici dicuntur spinosiora multa pepererunt.}" Lucr. 5.334, "\textit{organici melicis peperere sonores.}" Gel. 17.10.3, "\textit{Amici inquit (sc. Favorinus philosophus) famesaresque P. Vergili f in his, quae de ingenio moribusque eius memoriae tradiderunt, dicere eum solitum ferunt parere se versus more atque urstino. Namque ut illa bestia fetum ederet in effigiatum informenque lambendoque id postea, quod ita edidisset, conformaret et fingeret, prainde ingenii quoque sui partus recentes rudi esse facie et imperfecta, sed deinceps tractando colendoque reddere iis se oris et vultus liniamenta.}" Hor. \textit{Ars} (136-9): "nec sic incipies ut scriptor cyclicus olim: /\textit{fortunam Priami cantabo et nobile bellum.} /quid dignum tanto feret hic promissor iatu?/parturiae montes, nasceretur ridiculus mus." We saw in Chapter One that \textit{The Golden Ass} plays with the idea of textual pregnancy and physical pregnancy in ingenious ways. Cervantes takes up the topos in the prologue to \textit{Don Quijote}: "Leisurely reader, you don't need me to swear that I longed for this book, born out of my own brain, to be the handsomest child imaginable, the most elegant, the most sensible. But could I contradict the natural order of things? Like creates like" (3).
between Pamela's two types of pregnancy. As her captivity in Lincolnshire lengthens, Pamela hides more and more letters against her body; at one point, she expresses alarm at the fact that her texts "grow large" (120), and may draw attention to themselves. This fear is parallel to her anxiety in Part II when her swelling belly begins to reveal her pregnancy to the world. She laces tightly to conceal her condition for as long as she can, and is mortified when people take notice of her protruding form.

Pamela has much the same reasons for being alarmed by her growing physical belly in Part II, and her growing textual belly in Part I. When the Countess sees Pamela at the masquerade, she comments that "her Person shews some Intimacies have passed with somebody" (II.4.210). Uncomfortable with a body which gives the world information about her "Intimacies," Pamela is anxious to maintain her maidenly silhouette as long as possible. Similarly, in Part I Pamela's swelling textual belly threatens to reveal information about her personal life: she fears that if B. notices the new bulk of her lower body, he will confiscate her letters, and thus become privy to her intimate secrets.

The image of Pamela as textually pregnant invites another interpretation of the overdetermined scene in which Pamela hands over her letters to B. This episode, which we have called textual rape, can also be seen as a textual accouchement: Pamela delivers up her text to B., just as she will deliver up babies to him in Part II. Pamela grows fearful as her time of labour draws near: "I am a sad Coward, and have a thousand Anxieties, which I cannot mention to any body" (II.3.397). She

---

124 Lady Davers criticizes Pamela for excessive modesty in this sphere: "as People who see you at this time, will take it for granted, that You and Mr. B. have been very intimate together, I should think you need not be ashamed of your Appearance, because, as he rightly observes, you have no Reason to be ashamed of your Husband" (II.4.43).
apologizes to Polly for a gloomy letter: "It was owing to a Train of Thinking which sometimes I get into, of late" (II.3.412). Described by Polly as "exceedingly apprehensive" (II.4.114), Pamela is fully aware that she could die giving birth (II.3.398). These sentiments echo Pamela's apprehensiveness and reluctance in Part I when she realizes that, against her will, she must deliver up her textual child to B.: "I can hardly bear it" (204), she writes, and hints that this imposition may be the death of her (204). The literary accouchement, like the physical, is a momentous event not to be accomplished without pain and misgivings.

English vocabulary lends itself to the link Richardson draws between epistolary creation and human procreation, for one "delivers" both letters and babies. Mr. B. reacts to Pamela's two types of delivery in much the same way. Reading the letters Pamela delivers up to him in Part I, B. is filled with new admiration and love; Pamela's suffering at her textual violation is seen as well worth the attention and affection it wins her from B. Similarly, a renewal of B.'s tenderness and esteem recompenses Pamela for the pain of childbirth. Polly Darnford writes after Billy's birth,

Mrs. B. had a very sharp Time. [...] But [Mr. B.'s] Endearments and Tenderness to his Lady, his thankful and manly Gratitude and Politeness, when he was admitted to pay his Respects to her, and his Behaviour to Mrs. Andrews, and to us all, tho' but for a Visit of Ten Minutes, was alone worthy of all her Risque! (II.4.120)

A detail in Part II further strengthens the parallel between text and child. The pregnant Pamela writes a letter to B. which she instructs Polly Darnford to give him if she does not survive the birth of her first child. Pamela refuses to let him read it after Billy's birth. B. has had the baby safely delivered to him, and thus does not need the letter. This arrangement by which B. is to receive the baby or the letter highlights the interchangeability of body and text in Richardson's world.

125 Though watching Pamela's pregnancy and delivery makes Polly vow never to have children, she will eventually die giving birth to her fourth child (II.4.454).
Mr. B. falls in love with Pamela because of the illegitimate textual body—illegitimate because unauthorized by himself—which she gestates against her own body. Nonetheless, once they are married he wishes to control and legitimate both the physical and literary bodies she produces. In Part I, Pamela's writings are generally clandestine, scribbled in haste and torn from her with injustice. These writings are her secret offspring. They have much the same status that her children would have had if she had become B.'s mistress, for B. acknowledges to Pamela in Part I that any children born out of wedlock would have to remain secret productions: "if you should have a dear little one, it would be out of my own Power to legitimate it, if I should wish it to inherit my Estate" (230).

In marrying Pamela, B. legitimates both her literary and physical conceptions. Pamela's childbearing is highly public, as she acknowledges in a letter to Lady Davers: "how does it contribute to my Joy and my Glory, that I am deemed, by the noble Sister of my best Beloved, not wholly unworthy of being the humble Means to continue, and, perhaps, to perpetuate, a Family so antient and so honourable!" (II.4.33).126 Her first-born, Billy, has to be doubly god-mothered and god-fathered in order to avoid squabbles (II.4.30). When B. brings his near-mistress to visit Pamela, she glories in her son, public proof of her consecrated relationship with B. The visitors asking to see the infant, she rings for the maid: "Polly, bid Nurse bring my Billy down—My, said I, with an Emphasis" (II.4.162). The presence of her baby strengthens her:

I sat down with my Baby on my Lap, looking, I believe, with a righteous Boldness,

---

126 In Part I, Pamela challenges and unsettles the class structure by marrying Mr. B. Ironically, in Part II she becomes the agent by which the class structure is perpetuated, for her prime function is to continue the B. name. Lady Davers, who most strenuously opposed Pamela's incorporation into the family, now informs her that her raison d'être—and her means of redeeming herself—is its continuance: "or else, let me tell you, (nor will I balk it) my Brother, by descending to the wholesome Cot—Excuse me, Pamela—will want one Apology for his Conduct, be as excellent as you may" (II.3.42).
(I will call it so; for well says the Text, The Righteous is as bold as a Lion!\textsuperscript{127}) now on my Billy, now on his dear Papa, and now on the Countess, with such a Triumph in my Heart! (II.4.164)

Pamela's position as the beloved of B.'s heart may be threatened, but she alone can give him publicly-acknowledged offspring.

The textual bodies which B. fathers are just as public as the physical. Having banished her initial misgivings, Pamela seriously undertakes the Lockean project—and tells her husband that she plans to offer the world the literary offspring which results: "while I follow Mr. Locke, whose Work is publick, I must be consider'd as if I was directing myself to the Generality of the World" (II.4.336). Nor is the public nature of this writing an exception. In Part II, Pamela writes with the constant awareness that her letters will be circulated among many readers. Even her letters to her husband are not confidential in nature. When B. asks her to begin writing to him, Pamela agrees—but indicates that her letters will not be reserved for his eyes alone: "altho' I may write nothing to the Purpose, yet if Lady Davers is desirous to give it a Reading, will you allow me to transmit what I shall write, to her Hands, when you have perus'd it yourself?" (II.4.298).

Although B. manifests his desire to control his wife's production of physical and textual bodies, Pamela would like to retain more control in both creative spheres. One of her arguments in favour of breastfeeding is a wish to avoid perpetual pregnancy: "Then, dear Sir, said I, there is another Point, respecting the Health of our Sex: Great Hurts to one's Constitution may arise from too frequently being in this Way" (II.4.11). B. does not permit her to breastfeed, and she complains gently to Polly of the consequence: "If, my dear Lady G. it were not for these frequent Lying-ins!" (II.4.385), she writes, and later mentions "a Circumstance I am, I think, always in" (II.4.392).

\textsuperscript{127}Proverbs 28:1.
When it comes to her literary productions, she must similarly yield to B.'s exigencies: barely over her delivery of Billy, he asks her to spawn an ambitious textual commentary.

Both B. and Pamela are briefly distracted from the Lockean project by B.'s flirtation with the Countess—a flirtation which involves textual infidelity, for Pamela is shocked to learn that the two of them are engaged in a clandestine correspondence. But once he has mastered his adulterous desires, B. once again turns his attention to the textual insemination of his wife. He prods her:

I'll tell you, said he, what you shall do. You have not shew'd me anything you have written for a good while. I would be glad, you would fill up your Leisure-time, since you cannot be without a Pen, with your Observations on that Treatise, that I may know what you can object to it [...] (II.4.297)

The Lockean project admirably unites human reproduction and literary production, for Pamela embarks on a parallel generation of body and text. She plans to write her commentary as she watches her children grow and develop: "now reading a Chapter in the Child, and now a Chapter in the Book, I shall be enabled to look forward, and with Advantage, into the Subject" (II.4.135). The tandem generation of body and text is a theme that Laurence Sterne will later treat comically. Inspired by Xenophon's Cyropaedia, Mr. Shandy embarks on a Tristra-paedia to ensure that his son Tristram will have the most enlightened of upbringings. However, Mr. Shandy discovers that his son grows more quickly than his educational treatise:

This is the best account I am determined to give of the slow progress my father made in his Tristra-paedia; at which (as I said) he was three years and something more, indefatigably at work, and at last, had scarce compleated, by his own reckoning, one half of his undertaking: the misfortune was, that I was all that time totally neglected and abandoned to my mother; and what was almost as bad, by the very delay, the first part of the work, upon which my father had spent the most of his pains, was rendered entirely useless,—every day a page or two became of no consequence.— (Tristram Shandy 5.16.283-4)

More productive than Mr. Shandy, Pamela will at times have to slow down her writing to let her
children catch up: "since you confine me not to Time or Place," she writes to her husband, "perhaps, I shall be three or four Years in completing it, because I shall reserve some Subjects to my further Experience in Childrens Ways and Tempers" (II.4.299). She later reiterates her intention to hold back the writing until her children have advanced sufficiently: "And as, possibly, I may be Years in writing it, as the dear Babies improve, and as I myself improve, by the Opportunities which their Advances in Years will give me, and the Experience I shall gain, I shall then, perhaps, venture to give my Notions and Observations on the more material and nobler Parts of Education, as well as the inferior" (II.4.362).128

B.'s renewed interest in the Lockean project calms Pamela's jealousy, for she sees his attention shift from the Countess back to her. Curiously, with this same project B. is seeking to alleviate his own jealousy—in this case, textual jealousy. Proud though he is of his wife's double fertility, B. has an ambivalent attitude towards both her human and literary offspring. As he makes his case against breastfeeding, he frankly admits that he will be jealous if Pamela's child takes up too much of her time and attention:

Let [the nurse's office] have your Inspection, your Direction, and your sole Attention, if you please, when I am abroad: But when I am at home, even a Son and Heir, so jealous am I of your Affections, shall not be my Rival in them: Nor will I have my Rest broken in upon, by your Servants bringing to you, as you once propos'd, your dear Little-one, at Times, perhaps, as unsuitable to my Repose, and your own, as to the Child's Necessities [...] (II.4.14)

Nor does he care to see Pamela's writing divert too much of her attention from him. His textual jealousy is manifest when he comments pointedly that Pamela seems more eager to write for her

---

128 In "Pamela's Use of Locke's Words," Janet Aikins notes that Pamela's physical and literary production are closely coordinated: "She starts her commentary on Locke shortly after her second lying-in, and she concludes it just as she gives birth to a third child who turns out to be her first daughter. The nine months of pregnancy are those in which Pamela also produces her response to Locke so that divisions in her narrative text now correspond to the generative phases of her body" (85).
"other dear Friends" (II.4.133) than for him. Sensitive to this jealousy, Pamela reassures him that he is "[her] dearest, [her] best beloved Correspondent of all" (II.4.305).\(^{129}\)

A minor episode hints at the textual jealousy which leads B. to seek to control Pamela's literary production. In Part I's first letter, Pamela, surprised by B., hides the letter she had been writing in her bosom. B. reads the letter, for as a servant Pamela has no right to textual privacy. Part II offers a parallel scene, but with a different ending:

I put [this letter] in my Bosom, when he came up: He saw me do so. Are you writing, my Dear, what I must not see? I am writing to Miss Darnfard, Sir; and she begg'd, you might not, at present. This augments my Curiosity, Pamela. What can Two such Ladies write, that I may not see? If you won't be displeased, Sir, I had rather you would not, because Miss desires you may not see her Letter, nor this my Answer, till the latter is in her Hands. Then I will not, return'd Mr. B. (II.3.416)

Now a "Lady" rather than a servant, Pamela has the right to pursue a confidential correspondence. She writes to Polly Darnford, "I could give you many respectful Instances [...] of his receding, when he has desir'd to see what I have been writing, and I have told him to whom, and begg'd to be excus'd" (II.3.416). Pamela is gratified by this evidence that Mr. B. does at times back down when their wills differ. The reader is more likely to be struck by the fact that Mr. B.'s desire to read Pamela's creations is repeatedly balked in Part II. Foreseeably, Mr. B. is frustrated at not having full access to Pamela's writings. He had gained knowledge of Pamela by reading her private writings. Now that, as his wife, she again has textual secrets from him, she regains something of her troubling mystery and independence.

B.'s desire to see Pamela "fill up [her] Leisure-time" (II.4.297) with the Lockean project

\(^{129}\) See also p. II.4.300: "the most honour'd and best beloved of all my Correspondents, much honour'd and beloved, as they all are."
suggests that he is seeking greater textual fidelity on his wife's part. He decides that "since [Pamela] cannot be without a Pen" (II.4.297), he will have her write for him. B.'s jealousy is not groundless, for Part II shows that Pamela is textually violated—and textually inseminated—by others than her husband.

If Mr. B. impregnates his wife both sexually and literarily, his headstrong sister takes an almost equal interest in Pamela's dual fertility. Impatient to see more of her writings, Lady Davers applies pressure by withholding the name of "sister." The following is the close of one her letters to Pamela:

But we'll tell you all our Judgments, when we have read the rest of your Accounts.
So pray send them, as soon as you can, to (I won't write myself Sister till then)

Your affectionate, &c.

B. DAVERS. (II.3.31)

Herself childless, Lady Davers is equally impatient to see Pamela have children, and makes it clear that she will not fully accept and love her until she is pregnant. The pressure-tactics she uses are familiar:

—And if you will but give me Hope, that you are in the Way I so much wish to have you in, I will then call myself your affectionate Sister; but, till then, it shall only barely be,

Your Correspondent,

B. DAVERS. (II.3.56)

Nor will she be satisfied with any child. Lady Davers specifically wants Pamela's first child to be a male who will perpetuate the family name. In fact, Lady Davers commissions Pamela's first seven
children:

No, Child, we will not permit, may we have our Wills, that you shall think of giving us a Girl, till you have presented us with half a dozen fine Boys. For our Line is gone so low, that we expect that human Security from you in your first Seven Years, or we shall be disappointed, I can tell you that.

And now, Pamela, I will give you their Names, if my Brother and you approve of them: Your First shall be BILLY, [...] Your Second shall be DAVERS; be sure remember that—Your Third shall be CHARLEY; your Fourth, JEMMY; your Fifth, HARRY; your Sixth—DUDLEY, if you will—and your Girl, if you had not rather call it PAMELA, shall be BARBARA—The rest you must name as you please.—

(II.4.30-1)

Lady Davers is no less peremptory in commissioning texts from Pamela. She commands Pamela to correspond with her, and specifies the terms:

So, Pamela, you see I put myself upon the same Foot of Correspondence with you.—Not that I will promise to answer every Letter: No, you must not expect that.—Your Part will be a kind of Narrative purposely designed to entertain us here; and I hope to receive Six, Seven, Eight, or Ten Letters, as it may happen, before I return One [...] (II.3.40)

Lady Davers frequently commissions texts on specific topics: "I charge you, when you get to Town, let me have your Remarks on the Diversions you will be carried to by my Brother" (II.3.238). Like her brother, Lady Davers refuses to let Pamela's maternal duties excuse her from the assigned writing task: "she will not let even her Nursery excuse her from proceeding upon those Subjects" (II.4.128), notes Polly Dardenford. If B.'s textual insemination produces Pamela's book on child-raising, Lady Davers's textual insemination produces her book on the London theatre.

Since Lady Davers is as active as her brother in textually inseminating Pamela, it comes as no surprise that she too engages in textual violations of Pamela. In his sequel, Richardson once again puts into effect the sequence established in Part I:
However, it is no longer Mr. B. alone who rapes Pamela. In Part II, the heroine experiences nothing less than a literary gang-rape. Pamela wins over an entire circle of people at the price of her textual chastity.

Lady Davers, who had great difficulty accepting B.'s marriage to Pamela, hints in Part I that she may be won over by the same means her brother was:

But I understand, Child, says she, that you keep a Journal of all Matters that pass, and he has several times found means to get at it: Should you care I should see it? It could not be to your Disadvantage; for I find it had no small Weight with him in your Favour; [...] For it must be a rare, an uncommon Story; and will not only give me great Pleasure in reading, but will entirely reconcile me to the Step he has taken. (374)

Pamela had endured textual rape at the hands of Mr. B., and discovered afterwards that she was to be compensated by love and marriage. Unlike her brother, Lady Davers establishes the terms of the transaction up front, promising approval in exchange for textual favours. Pamela agrees to surrender her textual chastity provided that her husband agree: "if he gives me Leave, I will shew them to your Ladyship with all my Heart; not doubting your generous Allowances, as I have had his" (375).

Part II shows us the results of Lady Davers's textual solicitation. Pamela has sent her sister-in-law most of her journal, and as promised, Lady Davers gives her love and approval in exchange. But not for nothing is Lady Davers the sister of B. Going beyond the terms of the agreed-upon transaction, she subjects Pamela to new textual violations.
Lady Davers does not keep to herself the journal in which Pamela's private life is, to use Pamela's own words, "so nakedly set forth" (II.3.32). Instead she shares this naked textual body with a circle of intimates. Pamela is concerned to learn that two men—Lord Davers and Jackey H.—are part of this circle. She writes to Lady Davers, extremely anxious to know whether the men have seen all parts of her text: "give me Leave to hope, that some of the Scenes, in the Letters your Ladyship had, were not read to Gentlemen: Your Ladyship must needs know which I mean" (II.3.35). Richardson is pursuing the theme of the eroticization of Pamela's text: there are secret, sexual parts of the text which Pamela desperately wishes to keep from male eyes. She emphasizes how great her shame would be if she thought Lord Davers had seen all—"I should never dare to look his Lordship in the Face" (II.3.35)—and keeps returning to her unease at the thought that men may be privy to all her textual secrets: "for the Decency of the Matter, one would not, when one shall have the Honour to appear before my Lord and his Nephew, be look'd upon, methinks, with that Levity of Eye and Thought, which perhaps hard-hearted Gentlemen may pass upon one, by reason of those very Scenes [...]" (II.3.36).

In responding to this letter, Lady Davers continues the cruel treatment of Pamela which she displayed in Part I. Knowing that Pamela is desperately anxious about whether the men have seen the private parts of her journal, Lady Davers keeps her hanging by making no mention of the matter in her next letter. Finally, at the close of the lengthy letter which she writes after it, she alludes to Pamela's anxiety: "O but this puts me in mind of your Solicitude for fear the Gentlemen should have seen every thing contain'd in your Letters.—But this I will particularly speak to in a Third Letter, having fill'd my Paper on all Sides" (II.3.43). She is being deliberately sadistic, for the space she took to tell Pamela she cannot answer her question would have sufficed to answer that same question. Lady Davers plunges Pamela into an anxious suspense which echoes a moment in Part
I. Pamela had lost consciousness when B. tried to rape her in Mrs. Jewkes's bed. Coming to, she faced the horrible anxiety of not knowing whether she had been violated or not:

Your poor Pamela cannot answer for the Liberties taken with her in her deplorable State of Death. And when I saw them [B. and Jewkes] there, I sat up in my Bed, without any Regard to what Appearance I made, and nothing about my Neck; and he soothing me, with an Aspect of Pity and Concern, I put my Hand to his Mouth, and said, O tell me, yet tell me not, what I have suffer'd in this Distress!

(Pamela 177)

Lady Davers, who has recently read this episode in Pamela's journal, instills a similar anxiety in her. By refusing to answer Pamela's question, Lady Davers prolongs her ignorance of whether she has been violated—in this case, textually violated—by two men.

We need not look far for the cause of Lady Davers's vindictiveness. She had written to Pamela requesting her to send the balance of her engrossing journal. In the same letter in which she anxiously asks if the men have seen all parts of her journal, Pamela refuses Lady Davers's request. The continuation of the journal describes Lady Davers's visit to Lincolnshire during B.'s absence, and Pamela naturally does not want her to read such lines as "I expected bad Treatment from her Pride and violent Temper; but this was worse than I could have thought of" (Pamela 323). Lady Davers confesses herself "out of Humour" (II.3.36) with Pamela at this refusal, and savours a little revenge. Even when she finally condescends to answer Pamela's pressing question, Lady Davers adopts a singularly cavalier tone: "And so, Pamela, you are very solicitous to know, If the Gentlemen have seen every Part of your Papers? I can't say but they have" (II.3.43).

Pamela will have to reconcile herself to the fact that more people—both male and female—will be added to the circle privy to her letters. Lady Davers later informs her that "the Earl, and Lord John, and Lady Jenny" (II.4.41) have joined the privileged group. Modern-day readers face the uncomfortable realization that they are the last in a series of Pamela's textual violators. The
uncontrolled dissemination of Pamela's letters serves to illustrate Plato's observation that "once a thing is committed to writing it circulates equally among those who understand the subject and those who have no business with it" (Phaedrus 275e). Pamela is powerless to control who reads her letters, and this powerlessness points up another parallel between text and child. Textual offspring, like human, are initially in close contact with the body of the creator; both text and child depend on this body for their generation. However, once they have been brought into existence, they have a body of their own, and become independent of their creator.

Pamela's letters circulate without her control, causing her worry and distress. Part II suggest that children similarly develop an autonomy troubling to their creator. We learn that the youthful B.'s uncontrolled circulation caused his mother much anxiety:

Ay, poor Lady, continued he, she used now-and-then to catechize me; and was sure I was not so good as I ought to be:—For, Son, she would cry, these late Hours, these all-night Works, and to come home so sober, cannot be right.—I am not sure, if I were to know all, (and yet I'm afraid of inquiring after your Ways) whether I should not have Reason to wish you were brought home in Wine, rather than to come in so sober, and so late, as you do. (II.3.190)

B. will later say of his deceased mother, "All my Pleasure now is, that she knew not half my wicked Pranks" (II.3.202).

We learn little about the escapades of Pamela's own children, for they are young when the book ends. We can be fairly certain, though, that trials await her as a mother. She recognizes that her "dear bold Boy" (II.4.373) Billy has inherited more than his father's name and "manly Aspect" (II.4.123): "every one sees how greatly he resembles his Papa in his dear forward Spirit" (II.4.373). Sally Goodwin too is said to have "a little of her Papa's Spirit" (II.4.278).

---

130 Cf. p. II.4.381, where B. notes that "[Billy's] Temper wants looking after," and Pamela concurs: "Poor little Dear! he has indeed a little sort of Perverseness and Headstrongness, as one may say, in his Will [...]"
Pamela does what she can to minimize the dangerous autonomy of both her human and literary offspring. She tells her children stories which paint the rewards of virtue and the pitfalls of vice. Similarly, she tries to minimize the pain that her future writings might cause her. Pamela can do nothing when she learns that various men have seen all parts of her journal, but she does have more control over the letters she is yet to write. She takes care to create a textual body which can be exposed to the gaze of others without causing her humiliation. The spontaneity and candour of her letters in Part I give way to a stiffer, sometimes starchier tone which goes far to explain why Part II did not enjoy the success of its predecessor. Yet this new tone is wholly consistent with Pamela's history of textual rape. She may give thanks for the "grievous" (384) means which brought such a happy outcome ("It was good for me, that I was afflicted" (II.3.321) she quotes), but she nonetheless does not wish to subject herself endlessly to further violations. The private moments and deeply personal insights are rarer in Part II, and when Pamela does include intimate parts—as when she confides in Lady Davers about her husband's infidelity—she begs her not to reveal them: "Dear my Lady, let no Soul see any Part of this our present Correspondence, for your dear Brother's sake, and your sake, and my sake" (II.4.155).

Somewhat illogically, Lady Davers orders Pamela to be utterly spontaneous in her letters: "Now then, this is what I insist upon: That you correspond with me in the same manner you did with your Parents, and acquaint me with every Passage that is of Concern to you" (II.3.37). Pamela warns her tactfully of the impossibility of her request:

I will proceed to obey your Ladyship, and write with as much Freedom as I possibly can: For you must not expect, that I can entirely divest myself of that Awe, which will necessarily lay me under a greater Restraint, than if I was writing to my Father and Mother, whose Partiality for their Daughter, made me, in a manner, secure of their good Opinions. (II.3.58)

In reality, Pamela deliberately reduces the personal in her letters to Lady Davers, as we see when
she warns her parents—who read her correspondence to others—of an impending change in tone in her writing: "I am to renew my Correspondence with Lady Davers; with whom I cannot be so free, as I have been with Miss Darnford" (II.3.431). Pamela censors even what she writes to her parents since her letters are now widely circulated. This shift in tone from the spontaneous and private to the ceremonious and public has its logical culmination in Pamela's becoming the bona fide author of two books.

Pamela's readers recognize that her letters have become more formal and studied. From time to time they request her to include more private parts in her now discreetly veiled textual body. Lady Davers writes,

Yet, as we are sure, there cannot be such a Character, in this Life, as has not one Fault, altho' we could not tell where to fix it, the Countess made a whimsical Motion:—Lady Davers, said she, pray do you write to Mrs. B. and acquaint her with our Subject; and as it is impossible, that one who can act as she does, should not know herself better than anybody else can do, desire her to acquaint us with some of those secret Foibles, that leave room for her to be still more perfect.

(II.4.42)

Lady Davers longs to learn of the imperfections that her sister-in-law must have. Polly Darnford too wishes for greater candour. She asks Pamela to make her privy to more intimate scenes between husband and wife:

Let me ask you, Mrs. B. Is your Monarch's Conduct to you as respectful, I don't mean fond, when you are alone together, as when in Company?—Forgive me, Madam—But you have hinted two or three times, in your Letters, that he always is most complaisant to you in Company; and you observe, that wisely does he act in this, because he thereby does Credit with every body to his own Choice.

(II.3.409)

In the continuation of this passage, Polly Darnford seems to be unconsciously angling for information about the B.s' sexual life:

What I want to know is, [...] Whether he acts the Part of a respectful, polite Gentleman, in his Behaviour to you; and breaks not into your Retirements, in the
Dress, and with the brutal Roughness, of a Fox-hunter?—Making no Difference, perhaps, between the Field or his Stud, (I will not say Kennel) and your Chamber or Closet? (II.3.409)

Miss Darnford's asking if B. treats Pamela's private chamber as if it were his "Stud" suggests a prurient interest in their intimacies; her question regarding whether he breaks in on her with "brutal Roughness" points in the same direction.

If Miss Darnford's letter obliquely asks about sexual matters, Pamela answers in kind. Her response highlights the eroticism of the act of writing, represented as a substitutive activity:

Mr. B. rode out early one Morning, within a few Days past, and did not return till the Afternoon, an Absence I had not been used to of late; and breakfasting and dining without him being also a new thing to me, I had such an Impatiency to see him, having expected him at Dinner, that I was forced to retire to my Closet, to try to divert it, by Writing [...] (II.3.417)

The continuation shows that B. does indeed break into his wife's chamber without ceremony. But we learn that Pamela is as impatient to see him as he her:

He return'd about Four o'Clock; and indeed did not tarry to change his Riding-dress, as your Politeness, my dear Friend, would perhaps have expected; but came directly up to me, with an Impatiency to see me, equal to my own, when he was told, upon Inquiry, that I was in my Closet. (II.3.417)

Though Pamela will claim elsewhere that their love is more spiritual than physical (II.3.422), Mr. B.'s approach stimulates a number of physiological responses—quickened heartbeat, blush, brightened eye—which she tries in vain to suppress:

I heard his welcome Step, as he came upstairs; which generally, after a longer Absence than I expect, has such an Effect upon my fond Heart, that it gives a responsive Throb for every Step he takes towards me, and beats quicker and faster, as he comes nearer and nearer; till, tapping my Breast, I say to it sometimes, Lie still, busy Fool, as thou art! Canst thou not forbear letting thy discerning Lord see thy nonsensical Emotions? I love to indulge thee in them, myself, 'tis true; but then let nobody else observe them; for, generous as thy Master is, thou mayst not perhaps meet with such favourable Interpretations as thou deservest, when thou art always fluttering thus as he approaches, and playest off all thy little joyful Frolicks into the glowing Cheek, and brighten'd Eye, of thy Mistress; which makes her look,
as if she were conscious of some Misdemeanour; when all the time, it is nothing in
the world but grateful Joy, and a Love so innocent, that the purest Mind might own
it. (II.3.417-8)

One wonders if Pamela privately considers physical desire to be a "Misdemeanour" unworthy of
the "purest Mind." We will see later that her bashfulness in the area of sexual love is in direct
contrast to the forwardness of her rival in B.'s affections, the Countess Dowager of ———.

Pamela's letter to Polly suggests that in Part II, intimate detail can creep into her letters in
veiled form. Moreover, the very measures Pamela takes to depersonalize her text have the ironic
effect of introducing a new kind of textual eroticism. Pamela's determination to control access to
her text leads her to excerpt, summarize and excise various parts of her journal. As she fragments
her text, there develops a kind of fetishization of the dismembered textual body.

Marriage gives Pamela a new control over her textual body, for she now picks and chooses
which parts of her old journal various people will see. Faced with Lady Davers's request for the
balance of the journal, Pamela uses summary as a defensive tactic: "As to the Papers following
those in your Ladyship's Hands, when I say, that they must needs appear impertinent to such
Judges, after what you know, I dare say, your Ladyship will not insist upon them; yet I will not
scruple briefly to mention what they contain" (II.3.32). Elsewhere Pamela will suppress parts of
the journal altogether, as when she asks Polly Darnford to burn the history of Mr. B.'s illegitimate
daughter on the grounds that it could harm his reputation (II.3.388). Pamela uses abridgement and
ellipsis to give her text the shape she wants it to have. She does something analogous on the level
of body when she "laces tight" during her first pregnancy: she whittles down her body in certain
places, just as she whittles down her text in certain places.\footnote{\textsuperscript{131}}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{131} Pamela's corsetted form is a complex \textit{vêtement écrit}. J.A. Fleming notes the contradictory value of tight-lacing: "According to the moral standards of the day, an uncorsetted woman was a wanton, and yet the erotic appeal of tight lacing was clearly at play" ("Vestimentary Expectations: Dress Codes and the Classical Nude in Nineteenth...\textit{écrit}.)}
Lady Davers is vexed by the new control that Pamela exercises over her physical and textual bodies. She is angry when Pamela refuses to send the continuation of her journal: "For I cannot bear Denial, when my Heart is set upon any thing" (II.3.32). Similarly, she scolds Pamela for "lacing tight" to hide her swelling belly. Lady Davers's parallel criticisms highlight the fact that Pamela's textual body, like her physical, is susceptible to being remoulded or fragmented.

Part I shows that Pamela's admirers tend to isolate parts of her body for particular praise. Mr. B. lauds her "fair soft Hands" (71), her "lovely Skin" (71), her tiny "Waste" (312), her "sweet Shape" (312). When the newly-engaged Pamela meets Mr. B.'s Lincolnshire friends, her body is again divided up into delectable morsels: "My Master told me afterwards, that I left the other Ladies, and Sir Simon and Mr. Peters, full of my Praises; so that they could hardly talk of any thing else: one launching out upon my Complexion, another upon my Eyes, my Hand" (245).

Part II shows B. continuing his fragmentation of his wife's person as he waxes eloquent about her hair, forehead, brow, complexion, eyes, cheek, nose, lips, teeth, chin, ears and neck (II.4.223-7). The scene is a vile variant on the blazon in which Mr. B. systematically compares Pamela's features and body parts with the Countess's. Felicity Nussbaum notes the levelling effect of B.'s words: "The former chambermaid and the countess, reduced to body parts as they compete for the polygamous male, are interchangeable women in spite of social class differences" ("Polygamy, Pamela, and the Prerogative of Empire" 87).

Pamela's tight-lacing forms what Fleming calls a "cuirasse esthétique" whereby the reality of the body is sublimated into an aesthetic ideal. In Pamela's case, the cuirasse esthétique forms a hard, impenetrable surface which resists interpretation (i.e. of her pregnancy). One can compare this to the text which Rousseau tried to weave so tightly as to leave the reader no room for interpretation. (See pages 129-30 of the previous chapter.)

See pp. II.3.167 and 168. Lady Davers's concern about Pamela's tight-lacing is well founded. Mel Davies argues that the practice of tight-lacing "significantly affected the marriage fertility rate of the middle classes through extensive distortion of the female physical form which in turn affected conception, coital frequency, and survival of the foetus" ("Corsets and Conception" 616). Davies notes that "[e]ven pregnant ladies were induced to compress with corsets, a practice which, according to some contemporaries, led to complications during pregnancy and birth" (627).
Just as various parts of Pamela's body were signalled out for ecstatic praise, so are discrete parts of her textual body. Lady Davers praises her for her justification of her behaviour toward Mrs. Jewkes (II.3.100). Polly begs a copy of an educational piece which has charmed her cousin Fielding (II.4.396). Various readers request her to write specific morsels that will give them pleasure. Moreover, we discover that some of Pamela's readers are in the habit of carrying around parts of Pamela's textual body. Lady Davers is fascinated by a particularly erotic part of her sister-in-law's corpus: Pamela's account of Mr. B.'s attempt to rape her in Mrs. Jervis's presence. She confronts her brother with the material evidence:

I have the Representation of that Scene in my Pocket, said my Lady; for I was resolved, as I told Lady Betty, to shame the wicked Wretch with it, the first Opportunity I had; and I'll read it to you: Or, rather, you shall read it yourself, Boldface, if you can.

So she pulled those Leaves out of her Pocket, wrapp'd up carefully in a Paper. (II.3.183)

What follows is an uncomfortably libidinous scene which highlights the voyeuristic aspect of reading: Lady Davers forces her brother to explain his sexual "Rogueries" (II.3.182) to her in front of several friends and relatives, all of whom are intently focussed on the textual fragment she has produced to great effect.

Mrs. Jewkes, who had felt a thwarted lesbian attraction for her charming prisoner, succumbs to the pleasures of textual fetishization. She treats the letter Pamela writes her almost as a holy relic—or perhaps a phylactery. Polly Darnford writes to Pamela,

It seems, she has written a Letter to you, which passed Mr. Peters's Revisal, before she had the Courage to send it; and prides herself, that you have favoured her with

---

133 See p. 102 of Part I: "Every now-and-then she would be staring in my Face, in the Chariot, and squeezing my Hand, and saying, Why, you are very pretty, my silent Dear! and once she offer'd to kiss me. But I said, I don't like this Sort of Carriage, Mrs. Jewkes; it is not like two Persons of one Sex.

She fell a laughing very confidently, and said, That's prettily said, I vow; then thou hadst rather be kiss'd by the other Sex?"
an Answer to it; which, she says, when she is dead, will be found in a Cover of black Silk next her Heart: For any thing from your Hand, she is sure, will be efficacious to her keeping her good Purposes; and for that Reason she places it there: And when she has any bad Thoughts, or is guilty of any faulty Word, or passionate Expression, she recollects her Lady's Letter; and that recovers her to a Calm, and puts her again into a better Frame. (II.3.78)

Even death will not part Mrs. Jewkes from her cherished textual fragment.

Since Mr. B. is one of the most fervent admirers of Pamela's various body parts, it comes as no surprise to learn that he too participates in the fetishization of Pamela's text. His autobiographical piece in Part II, which tells of the beginning of his interest in his mother's waiting-maid, shows him practising bibliomancy with Pamela's commonplace book. He admires the passages he isolates:

I observ'd the Girl wrote a pretty Hand, and very swift and free; and affixed her Points, or Stops, with so much Judgment, (her Years consider'd) that I began to have a high Opinion of her Understanding. Some Observations likewise upon several of the Passages, were so just and solid, that I could not help being tacitly surprised at them. (II.3.197)

Since B.'s mother is present, he closes the commonplace book "with great Indifference" (II.3.197)—he carefully hides from her his admiration for parts of Pamela's textual body, just as he conceals from her his admiration for parts of her physical body.

As Pamela grows older and lovelier, B.'s interest in pieces of her textual body intensifies. He describes how jealousy compelled him to take the letter which she had just slipped into her bosom when he surprised her in his mother's dressing room (II.3.205). And though he "struggled hard" (II.3.205) to overcome his unworthy inclinations, he could not resist taking measures to ensure his possession of further texts:

[I] form'd a Stratagem, and succeeded in it, to come at her other Letters, which I sent forward, after I had read them, all but Three or Four, which I kept back, when my Plot began to ripen for Execution; altho' the little Slut was most abominably free with my Character to her Father and Mother. (II.3.205)
Even after marrying Pamela, B.'s desire to come at her textual fragments persists. He must struggle to suppress his curiosity on the occasions when his wife tells him she would prefer not to show him what she is writing.

Evidence of the fetishization of Pamela's text thus exists in Part I, and this trend is intensified in Part II when Pamela deliberately begins to fragment her journal. In Freud's view, fetishism is based on the individual's "not recognizing the fact that females have no penis—a fact which is extremely undesirable to him since it is a proof of the possibility of his being castrated himself. [...] He takes hold of something else instead—a part of the body or some other object—and assigns it the role of the penis he cannot do without" ("An Outline of Psycho-analysis" 202-3). In the context of the fetishization of Pamela's textual body, one recalls that Terry Castle believes the journal Pamela hides against her body to be a representation of the female phallus:

"Throughout the discourse, we realize, Pamela's "writings" themselves—manufactured compulsively, "artfully," in secret, with stolen materials and against the wishes of Mrs. Jewkes—have been perhaps her primary means of reconstituting the fantasy object, the object of desire. For much of the narrative, she hides her papers in an odd place, under her girdle at groin-level, where, she says "they grow large." The wish for the phallus is thus extended and given form in the shape of the narrative itself. She gives intellectual expression to the fantasy content within her discourse; yet this discourse, in its physicality, takes its place in her world as material object, as fetish. It veils that very portion of her anatomy which is the hidden subject of the text." ("P/B: Pamela as Sexual Fiction" 485)

If one accepts Castle's reading of the bulge in Pamela's lower body, the fetishization of her journal becomes quite literally a fascination with a representation of the female phallus.

---

134 One could argue that the term "part object" is more proper in this context than "fetish." Laplanche and Pontalis define the part object thus: "Type d'objets visés par les pulsions partielles sans que cela implique qu'une personne, dans son ensemble, soit prise comme objet d'amour. Il s'agit principalement de parties du corps, réelles ou fantasmées (sein, fesses, pénis), et de leurs équivalents symboliques" (Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse 294). The part object plays an important role in the Lacanian theory of desire. Laplanche and Pontalis explain that in Lacan's view, "[la relation aux objets partiels] continue à jouer un grand rôle une fois établie la relation aux objets totaux" (295). This last is clearly the case with Pamela—for example, Mr. B.'s interest in various parts of Pamela's physical or textual body does not preclude his relating to his wife as a whole.
With respect to Part II, fetishization also occurs on an extratextual level. Castle says of the sequel's critics, "Even as they despair of the whole, they gravitate to the part: one scene in the sequel, they allow, does gratify us after all, does stand out (however briefly) as a moment of excitement, color, pleasure" (*Masquerade and Civilization* 132). After the fashion of so many of its characters, Part II's commentators fragment Pamela's textual body: "Like eighteenth-century aestheticians, modern critics fetishize the masquerade sequence, extract it and preserve it as the single beauty in a singularly unbeautiful book, a capsule of narrative delight in a narrative of few delights" (*Masquerade and Civilization* 132).

The twin fetishization of Pamela's physical and textual bodies suggests that in Part II, Richardson is at pains to expand the analogy between body and text established in the first book. Another aspect of the body-text matrix which merits closer attention is Pamela's parallel generation of child and book. Though Pamela's commentary on Locke springs from her husband's initiative, the choice is peculiarly suited to Pamela's own philosophical position.

Locke uses a writing metaphor to convey one of his key ideas, calling the newborn child a *tabula rasa*. Pamela's metaphors suggest that she too conceives of children as texts. For her Lockean commentary, she "now read[s] a Chapter in the Child, and now a Chapter in the Book" (II.4.135). Pamela describes the illegitimate Sally Goodwin as a child who has remained *tabula rasa* for an unusually long time: "the first Four Years in the dear Child were a perfect Blank, as far as I can find, just as if the pretty Dear was born the Day she was Four Years old" (II.4.362-3). Better to be a *tabula rasa* than an ink-blotted text, a fate to which many girls succumb. Pamela explains that in most cases, a lowly girl would be spoiled by a marriage above her sphere: "to what a Blot, over all the fair Page of a long Life, would this little Drop of dirty Ink spread itself?"
Pamela herself has of course avoided this pitfall: Mr. B. notes at one point that the blank page before Pamela is "as spotless as [her] Mind" (II.3.420). Pamela also refers to herself as a text when describing her attempts to hide her distress from Mr. B.: "I am not a finish'd Hypocrite, and he can read the Lines of one's Face, and the Motions of one's Heart, I think" (II.4.151).

Pamela believes that since there is an intrinsic similarity between children and books, children must be susceptible to being moulded and influenced by books. More than simply penning a child-rearing treatise, Pamela also literally writes her children, constructing stories to shape their natures as she wishes:

Let me acquaint you then, that my Method is, To give Characters of Persons I have known in one Part or other of my Life, in feigned Names, whose Conduct may serve for Imitation or Warning to my dear attentive Miss; and sometimes I give Instances of good Boys and naughty Boys, for the sake of my Billy, and my Davers; and they are continually coming about me, Dear Madam, a pretty Story now, cries Miss: And, Dear Mamma, tell me of good Boys, and of naughty Boys, cries Billy.

(II.4.437)

More sophisticated strategies are called for with older children whose slates, no longer clean, need to be rewritten. Pamela is called in to straighten out three young women tempted by dangerous liaisons. One of them has been led astray by injudicious reading: "Miss STAPYLTON is over-run with the Love of Poetry and Romance, and delights much in flowery Language, and metaphorical Flourishes: Is about Eighteen, wants not either Sense or Politeness; and has read herself into a Vein, that is more amorous (that was Lady Towers's Word) than discreet" (II.4.403-4).

135 In "Pamela's Use of Locke's Words," Janet Aikins argues that "Pamela's extension of Locke's metaphor into her own vision of a spreading 'Drop of dirty Ink' makes print technology the controlling metaphor for the process of human generation and cultural continuation" (88). In Aikins's view, Pamela's statement that she values herself only because of her capacity for childbirth "proposes an alternative dynamic for plot centered on women's generative power" (76). Another author to have shown the richness of Pamela, Part II's often-dismissed Lockean commentary is Lois Chaber, who argues that this commentary plays a role in Mr. B.'s religious conversion: "'Mr. Locke' virtually becomes a character in the novel, a foil to Mr. B in the theme and structure of the work" ("From Moral Man to Godly Man: 'Mr. Locke' and Mr. B in Part 2 of Pamela" 214).
4). To combat the pernicious effects of Miss Stapylton's readings, Pamela borrows the enemy's weapons:

I had been writing, (you must know, Lady G.) for the sake of suitting Miss Stapylton's flighty Vein, a little Sketch of the Style she is so fond of; [...] For even the best Instructions in the World, you know, will be ineffectual, if the Method of conveying them is not adapted to the Taste and Temper of the Person you would wish to influence. (II.4.409-10)

Pamela's strategy succeeds, and her victory is itself consecrated by text: "Miss Stapylton said, That Virtue itself spoke when I spoke; and she was resolv'd, when she came home, to recollect as much of this Conversation as she could, and write it down in her Common-place Book, where it would make a better Figure than any thing she had there" (II.4.425).

Miss Stapylton is "as good as her Word" (II.4.435): she transcribes the conversation, and shortly afterwards marries the man recommended by her parents. Other examples confirm that for Richardson, the act of transcription is rich in moral consequences. When Lady G. (née Polly Darnford) requests a copy of Pamela's edifying conversation with the three young ladies, Pamela says that she will "cheerfully cause [it] to be transcribed" (II.4.402):

I said, cause to be transcribed; because I hope to answer a double End by it; for, after I had reconsider'd it, I set Miss Goodwin to transcribe it, who writes a very pretty Hand, [...] and will be more affected, as she performs it, than she could be by reading it only [...] (II.4.402)

Grandison suggests that the act of transcribing a conversation can reinforce affection as well as virtue. Harriet reassures Lucy that she loves her better than ever: "Because I have been putting part of our conversation upon paper, and so have fastened your merits on my memory" (2.28). The logocentric tradition conceives of writing as the transcription of speech, and denigrates it because of this derivative status. Richardson suggests that even when writing is transcription, it is never mere transcription.
Nor is it children alone who are improved by writing. Both Clarissa and Pamela treat themselves as *tabulae rasae* to be filled in as admirably as possible. Clarissa writes to Anna, "You have often heard me own the advantages I have found from writing down everything of moment that befalls me; and of all I think and of all I do that may be of future use to me" (*Clarissa* 483). This practice improves both the literary and moral *textus*: "this helps to form one to a style, and opens and expands the ductile mind" (*Clarissa* 483).\(^{136}\) The logocentric tradition denigrates writing because the text, unlike thought and the spoken word, is a concrete, durable thing. For Clarissa, it is precisely this thing-like nature of the written word—the fact that the text is an object lasting in time—which makes it so precious an aid to moral self-improvement. Even the fact that one must labour to produce a text becomes positive:

> everyone will find that many a good thought evaporates in thinking; many a good resolution goes off, driven out of memory, perhaps, by some other not so good. But when I set down what I will do, or what I have done on this or that occasion; the resolution or action is before me, either to be adhered to, withdrawn or amended; and I have entered into compact with myself, as I may say; having given it under my own hand, to improve rather than to go backward, as I live longer. 

(*Clarissa* 483)

Pamela too uses writing to form her own nature, though in a somewhat different fashion. If Clarissa writes herself in accordance with an inner ideal of womanhood, Pamela after marriage seeks above all to internalize Mr. B.'s views: "I am glad of the Method I have taken of making a Journal of all that passes in these first Stages of my Happiness, because it will sink the Impression still deeper; and I shall have recourse to them for my better Regulation, as often as I shall mistrust

\(^{136}\) Clarissa believes that women are particularly apt to benefit from writing. After Clarissa's death, Anna writes to Belford, "If you mention the beauties and graces of her pen, you may take notice that it was always matter of surprise to her, that the sex are generally so averse as they are to writing; since the pen, next to the needle, of all employments is the most proper and best adapted to their geniuses; and this as well for improvement as amusement" (*Clarissa* 1467). Clarissa's linking of pen and needle suggests the particular applicability of the *textus* image to female writing.
my Memory" (369). Part II shows us that she makes a habit of transcribing B.'s words in order to make them her own: "every time I am pleas'd with a Conversation, and have Leisure, before it goes out of my Memory, I enter it down as near the very Words as I can" (II.4.324).

At times it seems that Pamela is almost more Mr. B.-like than Mr. B. himself. She offers to refresh his memory about his own position on choosing a tutor: "If you have forgot it, I will here transcribe it from my Records, as I call my Book of Memorandums; [...] now you have made me your Correspondent, I shall sometimes perhaps give you back some Valuables from your own Treasure" (II.4.324). Occasionally Pamela will initiate a textual insemination, as when B. explains his views on opera: "Be pleased, Sir, to give me your Observation on this Head in Writing" (II.4.92). Inseminated through text, Pamela will later deliver B.'s creation through the orifice of her mouth: "I will keep it by me, for my Instruction, if I should be led to talk of this Subject in Company" (II.4.92).

Pamela apparently strives to become her husband's clone in aesthetic matters. More troublingly, Part II gives evidence that she is often B.'s moral clone. Pamela's attitude toward others' texts is particularly revealing, for Part II brings an unexpected development: Pamela herself turns into a textual violator after the image of her husband and his agent Jewkes.

The very first pages of the sequel show Pamela acting as a textual procuress. She confesses to her parents that, without their consent, she has shown B. a letter they wrote her:

I have shew'd your Letter to my Best-beloved.—Don't be uneasy that I have;—for you need not be ashamed of it, since it is my Pride to have such honest and grateful Parents: And I'll tell you what he said to it, as the best Argument I can use why you should not be uneasy [...] (II.3.11)

Mr. Andrews's reaction on learning what Pamela has done confirms that a violation of privacy has taken place: "You cannot, my dear Child imagine how I was ashamed to have my poor Letter
shewn to him" (II.3.29). He hopes that this action will not become a habit: "don't shew him all I write" (II.3.29).

The excuse which Pamela gives for having adopted the role of textual procuress—that her parents need not worry because their letter contained nothing of which to be ashamed—would not have sat well with the Pamela of the first half of Part I. There she resented the violation of her textual privacy, regardless of the worthiness or unworthiness of what she had written. But her later history has weakened Pamela's principles. Now she finds textual rape acceptable if it serves to raise the violator's opinion of the violated. This is the case, for Mr. B. responds warmly to the letter which was not written for his eyes: "Dear, good Souls! said he, how does every thing they say, and every thing they write, manifest the Worthiness of their Hearts! No Wonder, Pamela, you love and revere such honest Minds" (II.3.11).

As Part II continues, Pamela progresses further in textual turpitude. From being a mere procuress, she becomes herself a textual rapist. Though her motive is beneficent, she nonetheless, like the early Mr. B., surprises and reads others' texts. The incident occurs when Pamela is trying to discover the state of Mrs. Jervis's financial affairs:

Come, I know your Debts, (dear, just, good Woman, as you are!) like David's sins, are ever before you: So come, putting my Hand in her Pocket, let me be a friendly Pick-pocket: Let me take out your Memorandum-Book, and we will see how all Matters stand, and what can be done. Come, I see you are too much moved; your worthy Heart is too much affected (pulling out her Book, which she always has about her): I will go to my Closet, and return presently. (II.3.89)

Relating the incident to her husband, Pamela again playfully uses a vocabulary of crime: "I have picked her Pocket of her Memorandum-Book" (II.3.89). She tells B. that she plans to relieve the

---

137 The term "textual rape" may seem a strong one for Pamela's action. However, the word "rape" derives from the Latin "rapere," meaning "to snatch away, to seize," and an archaic meaning of the noun "rape" is "the act of seizing." (See Klein's Etymological Dictionary, p.2.1301.) Pamela can certainly be said to rape in this broader sense.
housekeeper's debts. In breaking into a private text only to make easy the lot of its writer, Pamela is doing unto others as Mr. B. did unto her.

Pamela is guilty of yet another of B.'s textual crimes. In Part II, Mr. B. engages in a clandestine correspondence with the lovely Countess he met at the masquerade. Suddenly, Pamela's and Mr. B.'s roles are reversed, for now it is B. who has secret letters, and who fears that Pamela may be tempted to break into them:

next Day a Letter was brought by a Footman for Mr. B. He was out: So John gave it to me. The Superscription was a Lady's Writing: The Seal, the Dowager Lady's, with a Coronet. This gave me great Uneasiness: And when Mr. B. came in, I said, Here is a Letter for you, Sir; and from a Lady too!

What then?—said he with Quickness.
I was balk'd and withdrew. For I saw him turn the Seal about and about, as if he would see whether I had endeavour'd to look into it. (II.4.148-9)

But the role reversal goes farther, for Pamela too will engage in a clandestine correspondence with a member of the opposite sex. Her correspondent is none other than Jackey H., the bumbling nephew of Lord Davers.

Jackey is deeply smitten with Pamela: "I'd give all I'm worth in the World, and ever shall be worth, for such another Wife" (II.3.310). At one point, he aspires to have what Richardson elsewhere calls "an Intercourse by Letters" (II.4.291)138 with Pamela—provided her husband does not object. Lady Davers writes,

Nay, Jackey, for that matter, who was the most thoughtless, whistling, sauntering Fellow you ever knew, and whose Delight in a Book ran no higher than a Song or a Catch, now comes in with an inquiring Face, and vows he'll set Pen to Paper, and turn Letter-writer himself; and intends (if my Brother won't take it amiss, he says) to begin to you, provided he could be sure of an Answer. (II.3.55-56)

One thinks that, as is often the case in Richardson, "Intercourse by Letters" may replace intercourse

---

138 The Countess uses the phrase when explaining to Pamela the nature of her relationship with B.: "we had an Intercourse by Letters, to the Number of Six or Eight" (II.4.291).
of a more carnal nature. However, Jackey is not one for cerebral sublimation, and he finds another method of having Pamela by displacement: he seduces her lovely maid Polly Barlow. Pamela discovers and breaks up the incipient affair. Choosing not to disclose the matter to her husband, she writes and receives a certain number of letters which she keeps from his eyes. At one point, B. notes that she has been writing:

To whom were you directing your Favours now? May I not know your Subject?
Mr. H.'s Letter was a Part of it; and so I had put it by, at his Approach; and not chusing he should see that, I am writing, reply'd I, to Miss Darnford: But I think you must not ask me to see what I have written this time. I put it aside, that you should not, when I heard your welcome Step. (II.3.420)

Like B., Pamela is innocent of adulterous carnal congress. But again like B., she engages in a correspondence with a member of the opposite sex—more, with someone infatuated with her—which she strives to keep from her spouse's eyes.

Mr. B. commits another linguistic misdemeanour which is echoed in his wife's behaviour. In Part I he frequently spies and eavesdrops on private conversations. We realize just how much Pamela has cleaved to her husband when we see her stoop—quite literally—to apply her eye and ear to a keyhole in order to investigate the goings-on between Polly Barlow and Jackey H. (II.3.362). In Part II there is thus another way in which Pamela is text: she acts out the role of one of the characters in her own narrative. Pamela uses the power marriage has given her to carry out linguistic violations of others, just as Mr. B. had carried out linguistic violations against her.

The scene of Pamela spying on Jackey and Polly emphasizes that her identity has in some respects merged with her husband's. The onomastic similarity of *Pamela* and *Polly* is not coincidental, for Polly is Pamela's sinful double: the pretty servant-girl who, pursued by a man

---

139 Richardson elsewhere gives similar names to twinned characters: Mrs. Jervis is the good housekeeper, and Mrs. Jewkes the bad.
of quality, gives in to his demands. Pamela calls attention to both the similarity and the difference:
"I was once in as dangerous a Situation as you can be in: And I did not escape it, Child, by the
Language and Conduct I heard from you" (II.3.364).140 The parallel between the two women is
made closer by the fact that Polly's new identity as kept mistress has been consecrated by text:
Polly confesses to Pamela that she has given her honour "under [her] Hand" (II.3.369). Pamela had
rejected in writing Mr. B.'s kept-mistress contract (Pamela 164-68); Polly ratifies in writing her
agreement to become Mr. H.'s mistress.

If Polly is a second Pamela, then the person who spies and eavesdrops on her from the closet
must be... a second Mr. B. Like Mr. B., Pamela aspires to the whole truth about another woman,
and will not scruple to resort to threats in order to extort it. Pamela had been threatened first with
the question, and then with pressing. Polly is threatened with a yet more terrifying punishment:

Well, Polly, I see, continued I, that you will not speak out to me. You may have
several Reasons for it, possibly, tho' not one good one. But as soon as Lady Davers
comes in, who has a great Concern in this Matter, as well as Lord Davers, and are
answerable to Lord H. in a Matter of so much Importance as this, I will leave it to
her Ladyship's Consideration, and shall no more concern myself to ask you
Questions about it—For then I must take her Ladyship's Directions, and part with
you, to be sure.

The poor Girl, frightened at this, (for everybody fears Lady Davers) wrung her
Hands, and begg'd, for God's sake, I would not acquaint Lady Davers with it.
(II.3.367)

It is revealing that Pamela should bring up her sister-in-law's name, for she treats Polly much as
Lady Davers had treated her in Part I. When Lady Davers pays Pamela an unexpected visit in

---

140 Terry Castle asserts that Richardson here shows Pamela "in a compensatory role, actively obstructing
repetitions of her own history" (Masquerade and Civilization 146). Castle sees Part I as carnivalesque in its portrayal
of a "joyfully destabilized fictional world" (136) in which a maid can metamorphose into a mistress. In Part II,
however, Pamela paradoxically becomes the defender of the social status quo, and this role is particularly evident
in her quashing of Polly's and H.'s incipient affair: "Just as the sequel threatens to reproduce the socioerotic scandal of
Part I, a liaison between gentleman and maid, Pamela appears, to prevent the dangerous coupling and reassert the
inviolability of social boundaries" (147). For Castle's argument that decarnivalization is the "covert ideological project
shaping Part 2" (137), see Chapter 4 of Masquerade and Civilization.
Lincolnshire, she badgers her mercilessly. In particular, she repeatedly tries to find out if Pamela has been "whor'd yet" (316):

Why now tell me, *Pamela*, from thy Heart, hast thou not been in Bed with thy Master? Ha Wench!—I was quite shock'd at this, and said, I wonder how your Ladyship can use me thus!—I am sure you can expect no Answer; and my Sex, and my tender Years, might exempt me from such Treatment, with a Person of your Ladyship's Birth and Quality, and who, be the Distance ever so great, is of the same Sex with me. (320-1)

Shortly afterwards, Lady Davers returns to the same subject: "Have you not been a-bed with my Brother? tell me that.—Your Ladyship, reply'd I, asks your Questions in a strange Way, and in strange Words" (329).

Pamela objects to Lady Davers crude interrogations, and opines that they are unworthy of a woman of her "Quality" (321). Yet when marriage has endowed her with a quality comparable to Lady Davers's own, Pamela will engage in similar interrogations. Like Lady Davers before her, Pamela is determined to find out if the pretty servant-girl has lost her virginity. The difference is one of vocabulary. Lady Davers sought to discover if Pamela had been "whor'd" yet, while Pamela, more delicate, seeks to discover if Polly has been "ruin'd" yet:

Then, Madam, I own, said [Polly], I have been too faulty.
As how!—As what!—In what Way!—How faulty?—asked I, as quick as Thought: You are not ruin'd, are you?—Tell me, *Polly*.
No, Madam; but—
But, what?—Say, but what?
I had consented—
To what?
To his Proposals, Madam.
What Proposals?
Why, Madam, I was to *live* with Mr. *H*.
I understand you too well—But is it too late to break so wretched a Bargain?
Have you already made a Sacrifice of your Honour? (II.3.368-9)

Though in many ways a replica of her husband, Pamela turns to Lady Davers when she requires
a female model for her actions.  

Marriage risks turning Pamela into the clone of her husband and his female counterpart, Lady Daveners. There are strong textual forces pushing her to yield up her will. B.'s forty-six injunctions, dutifully transcribed by Pamela, demand acquiescence to his every wishes and caprice. Quoting the Apostle, Pamela acknowledges that the Bible too requires her submission:

he suffers not a Woman to teach, nor to usurp Authority over the Man, but to be in Silence.—And what is the Reason he gives? Why, a Reason that is a natural Consequence of the Curse, on the first Disobedience, that she shall be in Subjection to her Husband.—For, says he, *Adam was NOT deceived; but the Woman, being deceived, was in the Transgression.* As much as to say, "Had it not been for the Woman, *Adam* had kept his Integrity; and therefore her Punishment shall be, as it is said, *I will greatly multiply the Sorrow in thy Conception: In Sorrow shalt thou bring forth Children,—and thy Husband shall rule over thee." (II.3.398)

When B. was the menacer of her chastity, Pamela defined her identity in opposition to his sinful desires. As her husband, he has great freedom to create her identity as he wishes.

We should not, however, too hastily toll the bell for Pamela's individuality. She continues to create her identity through text, though this self-creation becomes a more delicate task in Part II. Pamela will occasionally refuse to "be in silence," and always when she feels her duty to her husband is in conflict with a higher duty: "As great as a Wife's Obligation is to obey her Husband, which is, I own, one Indispensable of the Marriage Contract, it ought not to interfere with what one takes to be a superior Duty: And must not one be one's own Judge of Actions, by which we must stand or fall?" (II.4.10). She will permit her will to deviate from her husband's when she has

---

141 Anna Freud's concept of "identification with the aggressor" is useful in understanding Pamela's behaviour. She calls this defence mechanism "one of the ego's most potent weapons in its dealings with external objects which arouse its anxiety" (*The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence* 117), and describes it thus: "A child introjects some characteristic of an anxiety-object and so assimilates an anxiety-experience which he has just undergone" (121). The mechanism of introjection can be combined with a second one: "By impersonating the aggressor, assuming his attributes or imitating his aggression, the child transforms himself from the person threatened into the person who makes the threat" (121).
scriptural justification to do so. Pamela is still *textus* as she weaves biblical examples into her life, just as she had once interwoven the story of her oppression with the 137th Psalm.

The first instance of disagreement between husband and wife springs from Pamela’s desire, despite B.’s opposition, to breastfeed her children. In “‘A Point of Conscience’: Breastfeeding and Maternal Authority in *Pamela 2,*” Toni Bowers notes that Pamela’s arguments echo the conduct-books of the day, while Mr. B.’s represent the position “associated in conduct-books with the morally debilitated aristocracy” (271). In Bowers’s view, Pamela’s arguments are so clearly superior as to suggest that the struggle is only ostensibly about maternal breastfeeding: “Instead, the struggle to determine whether Pamela should breastfeed is a struggle to define the relative authority of husband and wife over maternal behaviour and the status of maternal subjectivity within marriage; most fundamentally, what is being contested between Pamela and Mr. B. is the source of authority over a mother’s body” (260).

Pamela has textual justification for what she feels is "an indispensable Duty" (II.4.10): "For this was the Custom of old, of all the good Wives we read of in Scripture" (II.4.10). Mr. B. also appeals to text to support his arguments, but—and one thinks of his early attempt to enlist the Lucretia story to further his ends—Pamela senses that his textual commentary is flawed and biased: "the dear Gentleman has an odd way of arguing, that sometimes puzzles me. He pretends to answer me from Scripture; but I have some Doubts of his Exposition" (II.4.9). The debate begins to take the form of a disagreement about textual exegesis. Although Pamela habitually bows to her husband’s will, in the matter of biblical commentary she does *not* acknowledge his superiority:

It is no Compliment to him to be quite passive, and to have no Will at all of one’s own: Yet would I not dispute one Point, but in Supposition of a superior Obligation: And this, he says, he can *dispense* with.—But alas! my dear Mr. B. was never yet thought so intirely fit to fill up the Character of a Casuistical Divine, as that one may absolutely rely upon his Decisions in these serious Points: And, you
know, we must all stand or fall by our own Judgments. (II.4.19)

Mr. B. proves a dangerously cunning casuist after all. Pamela permits herself to disagree with him on the issue of breastfeeding because she believes her duty to God is even greater than that to her husband. Mr. B. rebuts with the argument that, according to the Bible itself, a female is a kind of moral half-being whose decisions are binding only if ratified by a man. He quotes Numbers 30 to show Pamela "of how little Force even the Vows of [her] Sex are" (II.4.16). While a man, as "Master of his own Will and Actions" (II.4.16), must live up to his word, a woman’s vows can be disallowed by her father or husband: 142 "nor is it distinguish’d at all, whether the Vow be just or unjust (II.4.16), concludes B. triumphantly. There is much more than breastfeeding at stake, for Mr. B. uses the Bible to attack Pamela’s concept of herself as an independent moral being who guides her conduct according to religious imperatives. Though she has gained wealth and prestige by marrying B., Pamela has forfeited much of her moral autonomy.

At another moment in the breastfeeding debate, Mr. B. again has recourse to the Bible to pressure Pamela into ceding to his wishes. When Pamela makes a case for breastfeeding by citing the example of biblical wives, Mr. B. brings up one of his favourite notions, polygamy:

Suppose I put you in mind, that while Rachel was giving her Little-one all her Attention, as a good Nurse, the worthy Patriarch had several other Wives.—Don’t be shock’d, my dearest Love.—The Laws of one’s own Country are a sufficient Objection to me against Polygamy; at least, I will not think of any more Wives, till you convince me, by your Adherence to the example given you by the Patriarch Wives, that I ought to follow those of the Patriarch Husbands. (II.4.15)

142 As a pious man and an author concerned with the female condition, Richardson was naturally interested in this biblical passage. When Clarissa alludes to it, he quotes the verses in a lengthy footnote, noting solemnly that it is "A matter highly necessary to be known, by all young ladies especially, whose designing addressers too often endeavour to engage them by vows, and then plead conscience and honour to them to hold them down to the performance" (Clarissa, footnote to p.361). Mr. B. makes the same point on p. II.4.17. In Grandison, Sir Charles alludes to the same biblical passage when he learns of the rash promise his sister Charlotte has made to Captain Anderson: "Your father, my dear (but you might not know that) could have absolved you from this promise" (I.408).
Mr. B. is using a kind of biblical blackmail to browbeat Pamela: "you must not plead one Text of Scripture in Behalf of your own Will; and refuse to another its due Weight, when it makes for mine" (II.4.26). ¹⁴³

Pamela is understandably distressed by this her first true disagreement with B., for he is challenging the very source of her identity by using the Bible against her. Shaken, Pamela appeals to her parents. Though they acknowledge the superiority of her arguments, they counsel her to fall in with Mr. B.'s wishes. Their final verdict is based less on moral than on pragmatic grounds: "Besides, it may disoblige the 'Squire; and it will signify nothing, after all; for he will have his Way, that's sure enough" (II.4.22-3).

Gone are the days when Pamela could reject Mr. B.'s specious textual arguments outright, as when she scorned his reading of the Lucretia story. After marriage, she no longer has the right to pen her own story in the same way, and she concedes the point: "as you know I made it always my Maxim to do what I could not avoid to do, with as good a Grace as possible" (II.4.23). The statement is false, for Pamela had refused such mollifying submission when her physical chastity was in question. However, the married Pamela will live increasingly in a world of moral compromise. Pamela had said that she would think herself "more and more [B.'s] Servant" (257) after marriage, and this statement takes on ominous overtones as we see her autonomy slipping away in Part II.

¹⁴³ No doubt with tongue in cheek, Richardson himself argued in favour of polygamy in his correspondence of the 1740's. He was also tempted by polygamy as an author. In a letter to Lady Bradshaigh, he discusses how to resolve the problem of Sir Charles Grandison's two loves, Harriet and Clementina: "I have hinted to your Ladiship, that all might be managed by [Sir Charles's] having them both, by Consent" (Selected Letters 270). Interestingly, Felicity Nussbaum sees the sequel to Pamela as originating in a kind of polygamous desire: "Pamela II is a response to the commodification of Pamela I and the need to purchase another book when the first has been consumed [...] The first version, like the first wife, is somehow not sufficient to the desire" ("Polygamy, Pamela, and the Prerogative of Empire" 83).
Toni Bowers notes that Pamela "equat[es] Mr B.'s deployment of his 'prerogative' in the breastfeeding crisis to his attempts at crude sexual force before they were married. 'Ah! thought I,' she writes in retrospect, 'this is not so very unlike your dear Self, were I to give the least Shadow of an Occasion; for it is of a Piece with your Lessons formerly' (4:49)" (276). But if B. shies away from rape in Part I, he fully exercises his power over Pamela's body in Part II by preventing her from breastfeeding. Bowers comments that "[c]rucially, it is the fact of their marriage that allows Mr. B. to perform this new violence on Pamela without seeming to violate her, since as his wife she can have no desires apart from his anyway" (276).

Pamela realizes with a shock that B. intends his own injunctions to be her ultimate textual authority: "I had forgotten, thro' Mr. B.'s past Indulgence for so long a Time, his Injunctions and Lessons; and this awfully-inforced Remembrance shews me, that the Rules he formerly prescribed, were not Words of Course, but that he intended to keep me up to the Letter of them" (II.4.28). B. gains his immediate point; Pamela will not breastfeed her child. According to Felicity Nussbaum, in winning the breastfeeding debate Mr. B. also realizes his desire for polygamy, for the female function is split between two different women:

In the sequel, Pamela (Mrs. B) becomes the ideal wife who limits the demands of maternity in order to remain sexually available to her husband. The wet nurse assumes those aspects of the maternal that threaten Mr. B's sexual prerogative, and she keeps the two functions of the breast distinct.

("Polygamy, Pamela, and the Prerogative of Empire" 84)

Yet Pamela's defeat is not complete, for she defends her right, in certain circumstances, to express a will different from her husband's. She objects to his saying that he forgives her for not bending to his will more quickly: "I am not fully convinc'd, whether it must be I that forgive you, or you me.—For indeed, till I can recollect, I cannot think my Fault so great in this Point, that was a Point of Conscience to me, as (pardon me, Sir) to stand in need of your Forgiveness" (II.4.27).
Pamela again exerts a will independent of B.'s when she feels she has textual justification to do so. The next example occurs when Pamela pursues her desire to have B.'s illegitimate daughter come to live with them. Pamela has long wished to become the girl's foster-mother, but after the second visit to the dairy-house, Mr. B. had instructed her to remain silent on this topic: "You must not talk to me of the Child's coming home after this Visit, Pamela; for how, at this rate, shall I stand the Reproaches of my own Mind, when I see the little Prater every Day before me, and think of what her poor Mamma has suffer'd on my Account?" (II.3.427).

Not permitted to broach the subject directly, Pamela cunningly leads Mr. B. to agree, in the abstract, that it would be good if there were an older child in their home. She then springs upon him that she knows just such an available child: his own daughter Sally. At first he is displeased by her machinations:

And have you thus come over with me, Pamela!—Go, I am half angry with you, for leading me on in this manner against myself. This looks so artful, that I won't love you!—Dear Sir!—And dear Madam, too! Begone, I say:—You have surpris'd me by Art, when your Talent is Nature, and you should keep to that! (II.4.136)

To justify her artful imposition of her own will, Pamela calls upon Scripture: "I took the Example of the Prophet, to King David, in the Parable of the Ewe-Lamb" (II.4.137). In this instance, Mr. B. bows to her use of religious text: "I remember it, my Dear—and you have well pointed your Parable, and had nothing to do, but to say, Thou art the Man!" (II.4.137-8).144

A third and more complex example occurs when B., after distressing Pamela with his frequent discourses in favour of polygamy "for Argument's sake" (II.4.15),145 is finally tempted to put theory into practice. Pamela enters a new period of trials when her husband begins his liaison with the

---

seductive Countess. Although oppression by B. is no novelty, Pamela cannot expect that a textual rape will end her suffering, as it did in Part I: now that Pamela is his wife, B. no longer breaks into her text to discover her private feelings. Nor can Pamela simply tell B. of her suffering and reproach him for his unworthy behaviour, because to do so would be to contravene his sixth injunction: "That I must bear with him, even when I find him in the wrong" (370). Pamela must make sensitive use of her scriptural knowledge in order to resolve a situation which threatens her very marriage.

Devastated by B.'s coldness and neglect, Pamela finally flouts his injunction never to break in on him when his temper requires solitude. Her disobedience is particularly courageous since she suffered greatly for a similar instance of temerity in Part I. But the boldness to exert a will independent of her husband's has a scriptural source. Pamela is aware of models which mitigate the Apostle's decree that a woman must obey her husband: "He open'd the Door: Thus poor Hester, to her Royal Husband, ventur'd her Life, to break in upon him unbidden. But that Eastern Monarch, great as he was, extended to the fainting Suppliant the golden Sceptre!" (II.4.172). She finds the courage to confront B. by invoking the example of Esther, the wife who became a biblical heroine through her very insubordination.

Other scriptural models embolden Pamela. Having briefly flirted with the identity of martyr in Part I, Pamela resumes this identity as she prepares to confront B. She is exalted by the thought that her exhortations may be the means of saving B.'s soul:

I impute to myself something of that kind of Magnanimity, that was wont to inspire the innocent Sufferers of old, for a still worthier Cause than mine; though their Motives could hardly be more pure in that one Hope I had, to be an humble Means of saving the Man I love and honour, from Errors that might be fatal to his Soul.

146 See pp. 358-61 of Part I.
Pamela had quoted Paul's oppressive passage in which he commands that a woman be silent and submissive to her husband. Here she shows that she is familiar with another of Paul's teachings on marriage. Paul believed that marriage could have the happy effect of converting an unbelieving spouse: "And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife" (1 Corinthians 7:13-14). Pamela turns to Corinthians to justify her refusal to be the silent and submissive wife advocated in 1 Timothy.

Though Pamela here makes an adroit use of Paul against himself, she will go beyond using his marital doctrines to justify her actions. Moving away from the husband-wife framework, she actually models her actions on Paul's own. Pamela inaugurates—and justifies—a compelling trial-scene by a reference to herself as the persecuted Paul:

But now, Sir, we are come directly to the Point; and methinks I stand here as Paul did before Felix; and, like that poor Prisoner, if I, Sir, reason of Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come, even to make you, as the great Felix did, tremble, don't put me off to another Day, to a more convenient Season, as that Governor did Paul; for you must bear patiently with all that I have to say. (II.4.185)

Pamela's strength of character renews her husband's love and fidelity. She vanquishes through text once again, yet this victory is no mere replay of her earlier story. In Part I, Pamela found happiness because, against her will, she suffered a textual rape; her rapist-husband was the "Author of [her] Happiness" (296). In Part II, Pamela takes an active role in ending her suffering: she is the author of her own happiness as she finds in textual models the courage eloquently to demand justice.

If text has such an important role in the infidelity episode, it comes as no surprise that the other

---

147 Though Pamela naturally believes 1 Timothy to be authored by Paul, it is now known that this book was written by a later disciple of Paul's who used his name.
kind of *textus*—clothing—should also come into play. Richardson uses clothing motifs to establish the seductive Countess as an anti-Pamela, and to explain why Mr. B. is drawn to an extra-marital liaison.

In Part II, Pamela makes direct statements about her belief in the correspondence of inner and outer habit. She advocates seeking a tutor who avoids "Foppishness of Dress" (II.4.323), for "the Peculiarities of Habit, where a Person aims at something fantastick, or out of Character, are an undoubted Sign of a wrong Head" (II.4.323). It is small wonder that Pamela should be made nervous by the idea of a masquerade, where people systematically adopt unfamiliar habits in both senses of the word. However, Mr. B. is determined that they shall go, and his determination is worrying. Pamela will caution her three young ladies to beware the man who takes too great a pleasure in dressing up:

> you hardly ever in your Life, Miss, saw a Gentleman who was *very* nice about his Person and Dress, that had any thing he thought of *greater* Consequence to himself, to regard. 'Tis natural it should be so; for should not the Man of *Body* take the greatest Care to set out and adorn the Part for which he thinks himself most valuable? And will not the Man of *Mind* bestow his principal Care in improving that Mind? (II.4.413)

For the masquerade, Mr. B. chooses a costume which shows off his person to best advantage: "The Habit Mr. *B.* pitch'd upon, was that of a Spanish Don, and it well befitted the Majesty of his Person and Air" (II.4.94). It is an early sign that trouble lies ahead, for according to Pamela's own theory, this attention to his appearance signals that Mr. B. is about to become once again the "Man of *Body*" (II.4.413) he was for much of Part I.

Though secretly abhorring the idea of a masquerade, Pamela cedes to her husband's wishes and agrees to attend. As she did after her wedding, she lets Mr. B. choose her clothing: "send for the Habits you like, and that you would have me appear in, and I will cheerfully attend you" (II.4.94).
In Part I, Mr. B. had responded to Pamela's preachy primness by teasing her that he would clothe her in a chaplain's "Gown and Cassock" (71). In Part II, B. chooses for his wife a masquerade costume which, like the chaplain's garb, has overtones of sobriety, morality and primness: a Quaker dress. Pamela herself recognizes that this outer habit harmonizes nicely with her inner habit: "I had imagin'd, that all that was tolerable in a Masquerade, was the acting up to the Character each Person assum'd: And this gave me no Objection to the Quaker's Dress; for I thought I was prim enough for that naturally" (II.4.94-5).

Mr. B.'s choice of costume for Pamela is a warning sign that he is ripe to stray. He selects a costume to highlight not her desirability and seductiveness, but rather her piety and sobriety—character traits which at times take on oppressive tones in Part II, where B. again calls Pamela his "pretty Preacher" (II.3.236).

The Quaker costume also accommodates Pamela's advanced pregnancy. During this period Mr. B. doubtless views Pamela more and more as the future mother of his children. In Part I, Mr. B. manifested his ambivalence about getting Pamela pregnant: "He was pleased to take Notice of my Dress, and spanning my Waste with his Hands, said, What a sweet Shape is here! It would make one regret to lose it; and yet, my beloved Pamela, I shall think nothing but that Loss wanting, to complete my Happiness!" (312). His displeasure at the thought of Pamela losing her exquisite figure again surfaces as he makes his case against breastfeeding:

> my Fondness for your personal Graces, and the laudable, and, I will say, honest Pleasure, I take in that easy, genteel Form, which every body admires in you, at first Sight, oblige me to declare, that I can by no means consent to sacrifice these to the Carelessness into which I have seen very nice Ladies sink, when they became Nurses. (II.4.13-14)

As Part II advances, the maternal body replaces the "sweet Shape" (312) that so strongly drew B. to Pamela, and the demure Quaker outfit which B. chooses for her acknowledges this change to her
Pamela's form reveals her marital status. In contrast, Mr. B. does not care to advertise that he is a married man—not for him the garb of the faithful Quaker husband. The Spanish Don attire permits him to masquerade as something he no longer is, but wishes he were: a bachelor, and perhaps even a Don Juan. Because his wife is in disguise, he can simultaneously lie and tell the truth when the Countess asks him about his marital status:

I fansy thy Wife is either a *Widow*[^148] or a *Quaker*?

Neither, reply'd I, taking, by Equivocation, her Question literally. (II.4.209)

Just as B. covers himself with a deceptive layer of clothing, so does he clothe himself in a deceptive layer of language. The Countess asks him straight out if he is married:

And art thou not a marry'd Wretch? Answer me quickly!—We are observ'd.

No—said I.

Swear to me, thou art not—

By St. Ignatius then: For, my Dear, I was no *Wretch*, you know. (II.4.209)

Curiously, B. is drawn to the one woman at the masquerade whose costume suggests chastity to a higher degree than Pamela's, for the seductive Countess is dressed as a nun. Pamela has little cause to be reassured, however. If Pamela strives for a harmony between inner and outer habit, the Countess plays with the gap between the two in a provocative way. She turns her very nun's veil

---

[^148]: Terry Castle sees more to Pamela's disguise. She analyzes Part II as a "decarnivalization"—the sequel tries to negate the fluidity of categories that permitted Pamela's metamorphosis in Part I. However, Castle sees the masquerade episode of Part II as a moment of "recarnivalization" in which categories once again become fluid and opposites can be united: "one feels a shock of familiarity, a kind of déjà vu, seeing Pamela here, in the midst of universal taxonomic chaos. Her body, appropriately enough, is an image of festive contradiction—a walking double entendre. She wears the dress of a 'prim Quaker,' yet she is visibly, even wildly, pregnant with Mr. B.'s child. She is the visual embodiment of carnival confusion. The spectacle brings to mind, obscurely, something else about her, something the rest of Richardson's untoward, evasive continuation has tried to make us forget: her double history, and its own gorgeous, theatrical violation of distinctions" (*Masquerade and Civilization* 130-1). While Castle's analysis of *Pamela*'s carnivalesque elements is compelling, she overstates the contradictory nature of Pamela's masquerade costume. There is surely no reason why a married Quaker should not be visibly pregnant; indeed, pregnancy would suggest that the Quaker woman is admirably fulfilling her duty.

[^149]: Polly Darnford, Pamela's companion at the masquerade, is dressed as a widow.
into an instrument of mystery and seduction, as Mr. B.'s later account to Pamela reveals:

> she said, in *Italian*, Why are my Retirements invaded, audacious *Spaniard*? Because, my dear Nun, I hope you would have it so.
> I can no otherwise, returned she, strike dead thy bold Presumption, than to shew thee my Scorn and Anger—thus—and unmasking, she surpris'd me, said Mr. *B.* with a Face as beautiful, but not so soft, as my *Pamela*'s. (II. 4.207-8)

The Countess is an anti-Pamela in the way she cultivates a titillating discrepancy between inner and outer habit. In other ways too, *textus* distinguishes her from Pamela. In Part I, Mr. B. had perpetrated both a textile and a textual rape against Pamela. The textile and the textual are associated with the Countess as well, but she will use them to indicate that she voluntarily offers herself up to Mr. B.

B.'s textile rape of Pamela, in which he forcibly tears off a piece of her garment, invites comparison with the scene in which the "nun" of her own free will surrenders up to him a part of her garb:

> She went again to the Side-board, put her Handkerchief upon it. Mr. *B.* follow'd her, and observed all her Motions. She drank a Glass of Lemonade, as he of Burgundy; and a Person in a Domine, who was supposed to be the King, passing by, took up everyone's Attention but Mr. *B.*'s, who eyed her Handkerchief, not doubting but she laid it there on purpose to forget to take it up. Accordingly she left it there; and slipping by him, he, unobserved as he believes, put it in his Pocket [...] (II. 4.210)

If the Countess symbolically yields herself up through the textile, she does the same through the textual, for Mr. B. discovers that the artfully-dropped handkerchief holds a bit of paper: "[Mr. *B.*] put it in his Pocket, and at one Corner found the Cover of a Letter, To the Right Honourable the Countess Dowager of -----" (II.4.210).

B. is attracted to this woman who holds out so much erotic promise. Pamela, we are told, has a natural chastity which persists after her marriage: "Mrs. *Jervis*, said my Master, this is an over-nice dear Creature; you don't know what a Life I have had with her, even on this side Matrimony"
(Pamela 383). In Part II, B. again mentions Pamela's "over-nice Behaviour" (II.3.419). When he expresses an opinion that after the first period of marriage, the wife's "Confidence in the Honour and Discretion of the Man she has chosen" should shake off her "Bridal Reserves" (II.3.419), Pamela is mildly scandalized:

Bridal Reserves! dear Sir; permit me to give it, as my humble Opinion, That a Wife's Behaviour ought to be as pure, and as circumspect, in degree, as that of a Bride, or even of a Maiden Lady, be her Confidence in her Husband's Honour and Discretion, ever so great. (II.3.419)

Pamela confesses to Polly a preference for "the Love of the Mind, rather than that of Person" (II.3.422).

The Countess's sexual aggression is in direct contrast to Pamela's bridal bashfulness. Once Mr. B. had the handkerchief, the Countess "seem'd so studiously to avoid him, that he had no Opportunity to return her Handkerchief" (II.4.210). In a later letter to Lady Davers, Pamela spells out the consequences of this factitious maidenly reserve: "And now, my Lady, you need not doubt, that so polite a Gentleman would find an Opportunity to return the Nun her Handkerchief!" (II.4.212). Having the Countess's name on the bit of paper in the handkerchief, Mr. B. visits her at the first opportunity. Pamela recalls that he was "dress'd very richly" (II.4.212) when he set out that day; again, this sartorial splendour suggests that Mr. B. is in his "Man of Body" mode. Pursuing the metonymic relationship between textile and body, B. kisses the handkerchief before returning it to the Countess: "He took the Handkerchief, from his Bosom, with an Air; and kissing it, presented it to her, saying, This happy Estray, thus restored, begs Leave, by me, to acknowledge its lovely Owner!" (II.4.213). The liaison has begun.

Clothing again becomes an issue when Pamela is forced to receive the Countess's visit. Pamela uses garb to define herself in contrast to her rival, placing the emphasis on simplicity and purity:
Now, my Lady, as I doubted not, my Rival would come adorn'd with every outward Ornament, I put on only a white Damask Gown, having no Desire to vie with her in Appearance; for a virtuous and honest Heart is my Glory, I bless God! I wish the Countess had the same to boast of! (II.4.161)

Pamela's clothing is eloquent in two ways. On one level, it expresses her deep piety as surely as the Quaker's garb. In rejecting gaudy apparel, she is conforming to the Apostle's strictures:

[I will] that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. (1 Timothy 2:9-10)\(^\text{150}\)

Yet this choice of garb also has another explanation. A tribute which is frequently made to Pamela's beauty is that in the simplest—even poorest—of garb, she outshines luxuriously adorned women. B. himself had told Pamela, "[you] make a much better Figure with your own native Stock of Loveliness, than the greatest Ladies do in the most splendid Attire, and stuck out with the most glittering Jewels" (233). Thus Pamela's choice of a simple white gown is paradoxically a way of proclaiming her beauty. In Mr. B.'s eyes, she apparently succeeds:

My Question to her Ladyship, continu'd Mr. B. at going away, Whether you were not the charming'st Girl in the World, which, seeing you together at one View, rich as she was dress'd, and plain as you, gave me the double Pleasure (a Pleasure she said afterwards I exulted in) of deciding in your Favour [...] (II.4.227-8)

In distinguishing herself from the Countess through clothing, Pamela challenges B. to compare her directly to the Countess, and to make his choice. Yet this challenge hides behind a submissive, self-abnegating surface. Pamela's plain garb foreshadows the declaration she will make to great effect in her trial scene: that she is willing to return to her parents should B. wish to install the Countess in her place. As in Part I, the resolution to return to her parents' simple life is accompanied by the donning of simple garb.

\(^{150}\) This passage from 1 Timothy is well known to Pamela, who quotes the verses directly following it to Miss Darnford (II.3.398).
The Countess is an anti-Pamela who uses both kinds of *textus*—text and dress—to offer herself up boldly to Mr. B. In the end, Mr. B. chooses the woman who defines herself through *textus* in subtler ways. Pamela's choice of a pure white gown proclaims at once her devoutness and her desirability. Her use of text chronicles a struggle for identity and self-expression within the framework of marriage. And when Mr. B. gives up the Countess to renew his bond with Pamela, he is doing more than expressing his love for the self she has fashioned out of text and textile. After Pamela confronts him in her mock trial, he makes the following request:

> If you write to Lady Davers, how the Matter has ended, let me see the Copy of it: And be very particular in your, or rather my Trial. It shall be a standing Lesson to me for my future Instruction; as it will be a fresh Demonstration of your Excellence, which every Hour I more and more admire. (II.4.200)

The trial brings about what Pamela has long and ardently wished for: Mr. B.'s desire to convert. Moreover, we see that B. plans to bring about this change by studying Pamela's written account of this seminal scene. The resolution is not without a certain delicate irony. After exploring at length B.'s textual insemination of his wife, Part II closes on an image of Pamela textually inseminating her husband.
In Book 3 of *Tristram Shandy*, Laurence Sterne places a multi-coloured marbled page which he has Tristram call the "motly emblem of [his] work" (3.36.168). Sterne encourages speculation about the meaning of his marbled page:

> without much reading, by which your reverence knows, I mean much knowledge, you will no more be able to penetrate the moral of the next marbled page (motly emblem of my work!) than the world with all its sagacity has been able to unravel the many opinions, transactions and truths which still lie mystically hid under the dark veil of the black one. (*Tristram Shandy* 3.36.168)

Sterne says that only "much reading" will unlock the mystery of the marbled page, and Rabelais was one of his favourite authors. If the *Quart Livre*’s *paroles gelées*—words frozen into concrete, transportable bodies—can be seen as an image of the written word, a new interpretation of Sterne’s marbled page opens up: this page looks for all the world as if a handful of half-thawed *paroles gelées* had been thrown at it. The *parole gelée* comes to life when thawed, just as the book comes to life in the warmth of the reader’s hands. Moreover, each copy’s marbled page is as unique as its reader’s interpretation of *Tristram Shandy*.

It would be only fitting if *Tristram Shandy* were to allude to the *paroles gelées*. These frozen words are beautiful not only in the language they harbour, but also as concrete, material things. Peter De Voogd explains that Sterne was closely involved in the material production of *Tristram Shandy*: "From the very beginning Sterne devoted almost excessive attention to matters of typographical detail. His letters to his publishers attest to his demands regarding format, quality of paper, type, and layout" (*Tristram Shandy as aesthetic object* 383). Himself a printer, Samuel Richardson had even greater control over the material production of his novels. *Clarissa* boasts a
fold-out score of the music Clarissa composed for the "Ode to Wisdom." The two-dimensional page literally becomes a three-dimensional thing with the fold-out page. Spinning a fanciful genealogy, we could imagine Richardson and Sterne to be the spiritual fathers of Blaise Cendrars, whose "Prose du Transsibérien" was inscribed on a 2-metre-long fold-out page coloured by painter Sonia Delaunay.

Richardson's fold-out score is an instance of his desire to extend the voice out from between the covers of the book and into the real space of the reader. He bequeaths to Lovelace this attention to sound: "one of my peculiars," Lovelace acknowledges to Belford, is to write language "as it was spoken" (Clarissa 882). When transcribing for Belford the confrontation between himself and Lord M., he strives to recreate its unique sound texture:

*Lord M.* What say you to this, SIR-R!—
Remember, Jack, to read all their sirs in this dialogue with a double rr, sirr!—denoting indignation rather than respect. (Clarissa 1030)

Despite Lovelace's reprehensible morals, one cannot help thinking that Tristram Shandy would approve of him. The rake's attention to vocal quality suggests that he is not one of those shallow people who "[know] nothing of musical expression, and merely [lend] their ears to the plain import of the word" (Tristram Shandy 4.27.240).

We have seen that Richardson experiments with the materiality of the page in order to enhance its acoustic precision. However, manipulations of mise en page are by no means limited to this function. Novelists like Sterne and Richardson disprove the logocentric notion that the written word is mere transcription of the spoken word by having their textual bodies signify in non-auditory ways. With Trim's flourish, Sterne uses the page to capture physical motion:
Clarissa's mad page captures a more abstract movement, the shock of topsy-turvy print suggesting that the heroine's world has been thrown off kilter.

Like Clarissa, Grandison's Clementina is a gifted artist accustomed to expressing herself through visual means; her relationship with Sir Charles is partly mediated through the embroidery which she modifies in response to his comments. After receiving the news of Grandison's engagement, Clementina produces a text significant in its mise en page:

Best of Men! } Be ye One.
Best of Women!  |
CLEMENTINA wishes it!

GRANDISON, Lady, will make you happy.
Be it your study to make Him so! —
Happy, as CLEMENTINA would have made him,
Had not obstacles invincible intervened.
This will lessen her regrets:
For
His Felicity, Temporal and Eternal,
Was ever the wish next her heart.
GOD be merciful to you both,
And lead you into his paths:
Then will everlasting Happiness be your portion.
Be it the portion of CLEMENTINA! —
Pray for Her! —
That, after this transitory life is over,
She may partake of Heavenly Bliss:
And
(Not a stranger to you, Lady, Here)
Rejoice with you both Hereafter!

CLEMENTINA della PORRETTA
Jeronymo sends this text to Grandison with the following comment: "Generous, noble creature! But does it not shew a raised imagination? especially in the disposition of the lines?" (3.164).

For Jeronymo, the text's content signifies Clementina's nobility of soul, while its *ligne* hints at her overwrought state. Nor is it merely the "disposition of the lines" which is significant, for text's variety of different characters hints at Clementina's artistic tendencies. *Clarissa*'s Elias Brand justifies his predilection for italics in the following terms: "to give a very *pretty*, though *familiar illustration*, I have considered a page distinguished by *different characters* as a *verdant field* overspread with *butter-flowers* and *daisies* and other summer flowers" (4.313).151 Though the pedantic Mr. Brand need be taken with a grain of salt, here his words have a grain of truth. Clementina's text, using italics and large and small capitals, creates a striking visual display much as her embroideries do.152 Logocentrism scorns the text because it is a concrete thing, yet authors like Sterne and Richardson take delight in crafting their textual bodies in ingenious and expressive ways.

Because of its physicality, the text is apt to enter into diverse relationships with the human body. In Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*, the heroine uses strands of her hair to form the intertwined initials P and V (165); here text is an extension of body. In *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, the tears which stain a letter reveal true love (278); here the mark of the body glosses the text. In

151 The reference is to the Everyman edition, which reprints the third (1751) edition of *Clarissa*. This letter of Brand's does not appear in the first edition.

152 The sampler provides a link between embroidery and text, for it often contained the alphabet (and, one can note, often both upper and lower case letters). Rozsika Parker notes that samplers "provided evidence of a child's 'progress' on the ladder to womanhood" (*The Subversive Stitch* 85). Certainly Clementina's text testifies to her having embraced the submissiveness and self-abnegation demanded of her as a woman.
La Religieuse, Suzanne eats an incriminating letter (84); here the textual body is incorporated into the physical. In Les Liaisons dangereuses, Valmont writes a letter on his mistress's back (102); here textual body is layered on physical.

Particularly interesting is the way some novels throw a twist into the logocentric notion of supplementarity, as in an example from Burney's Camilla. Guilt-stricken over Eugenia's disfigurement, Sir Hugh makes a new will in her favour, hoping the attraction of money will make up for her ugliness: "a guinea for every pit in that poor face will I settle on her out of hand" (Camilla 30). In this instance the written word is a supplément in quite literal fashion. Yet it is a supplement not for spoken language, as in the logocentric tradition, but for the physical body: the new will is designed to compensate for the deficiencies of Eugenia's body. For Sir Hugh at least, the strategy succeeds: "he could now bear to look at the change for the worse in Eugenia, without finding his heart-strings ready to burst at the sight" (32).

But a few letters separate 'supplement' from 'supplant,' and this thesis has been particularly concerned with the aptitude of text to replace body. The case of Cyrano de Bergerac is exemplary. Hindered by a body he believes repulsive to his beloved, Cyrano instead communicates and inspires love through the letters he writes to her. Cyrano learns what Apollinaire expresses with his habitual elegance—the fact that the textual body can replace the physical body:¹⁵³

¹⁵³ The illustration is a fragment of "Poème du 9 février 1915" (poem XXII of Poèmes à Lou).
A couple of eighteenth-century novels suggest that a truer understanding of character takes place when textual body replaces physical. Burney's Eugenia and Richardson's Pamela are truly appreciated through the written word, which lets them be known in the absence of their repulsive and seductive exteriors respectively. Logocentrism denigrates the written word as "le corps et la matière extérieure à l'esprit" (De la Grammatologie 52)—yet the examples of Cyrano, Eugenia and Pamela suggest that this particular corps is a privileged means of access to the coeur.

The Golden Ass and Pamela are complex explorations of the interchangeability of body and text. In both of these works, a substitution of textual for physical body proves a means of escaping grievous bodily harm. Faced with a life-threatening prostitution of his asinine body, Apuleius's Lucius decides instead to offer up his textual body to the public. In Pamela, a similar sleight-of-hand replaces carnal knowledge with textual knowledge. Physically and morally indissociable from her journal, Pamela suffers a textual rape at B.'s hands—and this displaced violation permits him to know her without defiling her.

Both The Golden Ass and Pamela revolve around metaphors suggestive of the physicality of text. The Golden Ass envisages the text as a corpus having much in common with the human body.
In Lucius's case, the two types of *corpus* are inseparable, for his ass-body reveals his personality to the reader as surely as his memoirs. *Pamela* focusses on the word *textus*, which suggests that the text is as concrete and tangible as a piece of fabric enclosing the body. Just as Richardson's metaphors point to the physicality of the book, so does one of the episodes he pens for *Pamela*'s sequel. Gout intensifying his natural peevishness, Sir Simon Darnford has recourse to a book "to correct a rebellious Child" (II.3.128): he throws Rabelais's *Pantagruel* at his favourite daughter's head. Janet Aikins notes that "Polly has been, quite literally, struck by a book" ("Re-presenting the Body in *Pamela II*" 151). The incident has emblematic value for this thesis, for it suggests that as a physical thing or *corpus*, the book is apt to function in relation not just to the mind, but also to the body.
Works Cited

Main Texts of Reference


---. *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded: In a Series of Familiar Letters from a Beautiful Young Damsel to her Parents: Afterwards, in her exalted Condition, between Her, and Persons of Figure and Quality, upon the Most Important and Entertaining Subjects, in Genteel Life*. 2 vols. Stratford-upon-Avon: Shakespeare Head Press, 1929. 154

Other Works Cited


154 Referred to in this thesis as *Pamela*, Part II.


Derchain, Ph. and J. Hubaux. "L'Affaire du marché d'Hypata dans la « Métamorphose » d'Apulée."

*L'Antiquité Classique* 27 (1958): 100-104.


