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Prodigality and Paternity in *Sartor Resartus*

Richard Thompson

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

English

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

January 1986

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ISBN 0-315-30668-8

ABSTRACT

Prodigality and Paternity in Sartor Resartus

Richard Thompson

A central thematic device of Sartor Resartus is the search for a lost paternity, represented in the biographical account of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh's mysterious "Genesis" and subsequent recognition of his Father in Nature, "the 'Living Garment of God.'" This journey toward a felt paternity is also reflected in the Editor's maturing sense of who Teufelsdröckh is. By means of the "foregrounded" editorial role Sartor presents itself as a mediation, a "garment" in the sense of Teufelsdröckh's paternal "Living Garment"; but this garment unfolds an experience so amorphous that it requires activity on the part of readers who hope to fathom its meaning and significance. The reader who meets the challenge of this activity is subjected to a process of bewilderment by means of the inconsistent reliability of the Editor and the other mediators of Teufelsdröckh and his Clothes Philosophy, and this progressive bewilderment is mirrored in Sartor, primarily in terms of the "reading" processes of Teufelsdröckh and the Editor. One of the predominant images of this bewilderment as it is reflected in the text is that of the wandering from home and father of the prodigal or lost son of Christian parable--a story whose incidents the account of the wanderings of Teufelsdröckh echoes, and whose parabolic structure it emulates.

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CHAPTER ONE: Recovering the Prodigal

Treatments of Sartor Resartus as a mediator, user, and reshaper of texts--a text in a textual universe--are many. One of the ways in which Sartor has directed the criticism is in its own dilation of the activity of symbolic play to the point where 20th century minds, hankering after theory, have treated this work of imagination almost as a work of formal aesthetics, the playful Philosophy of Clothes as a philosophy of symbolic form. It is not surprising that Sartor, in its ebullience which transforms every subject it touches into a seeming message "sent from the Infinite Unknown with tidings to us" (Works V: 45), has spawned a criticism which is superbly confident and articulate--sometimes to a fault. That criticism is the result, however, not only of the work's own confidence and assurance, but also of its self-consciousness. One of the most blatantly self-reflexive books of its own or any century, its two central figures--an Editor and a German philosopher--bait the scholar-critic with a pleasing sorcery. The baiting is not misguided; I will submit that it is deliberately effected.

Carlyle's experiences during the composition of Sartor have generated considerable scholarly comment; the bewilderment of many readers has been recorded, and several strategies for approaching the text have been forwarded. Primarily, though, Sartor criticism has focussed upon the book itself, and has been particularly conscious of the work

as literary artifact--the book as book. G. B. Tennyson's "Sartor" Called "Resartus", widely acknowledged as the definitive study of the work, emphasizes the links to and departures from various generic models--novel, Märchen, essay, sermon--of Carlyle's "only entirely imaginative full-length work" (5-6), and to Carlyle's early exercises in translation, the writing of encyclopedia articles, and the German criticism. Modern day critical studies have by turns dealt with Sartor Resartus as novel, as anatomy, and as persuasive essay;[1] it was received by many of Carlyle's contemporaries as prophecy, and was vulnerable to propaganda in the first half of this century as one piece of evidence for Carlyle's alleged proto-fascism and anticipation of the subsequent socio-political development of the German nation.[2] More has been written on the making and meaning, structure, texture and style of Sartor Resartus than I could hope to treat exhaustively in this introductory chapter; but I believe that an overview of this central critical tradition is necessary if I am to define with any clarity my own fundamentally ambiguous attitude regarding it.

Most criticism implicitly or explicitly "treats Sartor . . . as the climax of [Carlyle's] long literary apprenticeship." (Moore, "Thomas Carlyle" 357). Hill Shine has painstakingly documented the reading of the pre-Sartor period in Carlyle's Early Reading to 1834. G. B. Tennyson traces this apprenticeship in great detail in "Sartor" Called "Resartus". C. F. Harrold's Carlyle and German

Thought examines critically Carlyle's incorporation of German thought as well as style in his writing, and assesses Carlyle's own thought as fundamentally Calvinistic, a bias which decisively influences Carlyle's mediation of his adopted literature. Ronald Trowbridge's doctoral dissertation, "The Echoes of Swift and Sterne in Carlyle's Sartor Resartus," deals with an otherwise neglected aspect of the English tradition's influence on Carlyle, and several shorter articles have examined Carlyle's ambivalent relation to the English Romantics, especially Byron.[3] Albert J. LaValley's chapter in Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern, a judicious piece representative of much of the best of Sartor criticism, views "moments of Blakean insight" (86) militating against a more Wordsworthian subject-object dichotomy between man and nature. J. W. Smeed has assessed the specific influence of Jean Paul on the structure and style of Sartor in "German Influence on Thomas Carlyle," "Thomas Carlyle and Jean Paul Richter," and "Carlyles Jean-Paul-Übersetzungen." G. B. Tennyson has recently given a new twist to the study of the German influence with his essay "Carlyle as Mediator of German Language and Thought," which works suggestively with the idea "that the case for Carlyle as mediator of German language and thought could just as well be stated in the converse: German as the mediator of Carlyle's language and thought" (264-65).

Carlyle's Calvinist upbringing and its subsequent influence on his thought is traced in fine detail through

the critical, scholarly-critical, and of course the biographical work. Harrold's Carlyle and German Thought is the standard study of this aspect of Carlyle and his thoroughly annotated edition of Sartor Resartus is also extremely helpful here. On the Scottish background generally we have Ian Campbell's "Carlyle's Religion: The Scottish Background" and "Carlyle: Sage of Chelsea or Sage of Ecclefechan?" A study of Sartor's place in a specific Scottish literary tradition, with a notable comparison to Hogg's Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner, is Thomas C. Richardson's "Carlyle and the Scottish Tradition of the Double." Finally, in this area of what might be called biographical criticism is an essay that, while not directing itself exclusively to an exposition of Sartor, is nevertheless very pertinent to the reading of it. This is C. R. Vanden Bossche's "The Speech of God-Devils: Artist as Mason and Freemason in the Works of Thomas Carlyle." Drawing on Carlyle's portrait of his father as a stonemason in "Reminiscences," Vanden Bossche examines Carlyle's "use of the mason as metaphor to define both his sense of a genuine but lost authority and the possibility of a new artistic authority" (71).

Two smaller streams in the criticism are the exploration of Carlyle's evolving and ambivalent attitude toward science, to which Carlisle Moore has contributed strongly,[4] and the consideration of what John Lindberg refers to as "The Artistic Unity of Sartor Resartus." Daniel P. Deneau's

"Relationship of Style and Device in Sartor Resartus," published with Lindberg's under the heading "The Art of Sartor Resartus: Two Views," is denigratory. Such standard works as Tennyson's "Sartor" Called "Resartus" and the chapters on Sartor in Holloway's The Victorian Sage and LaValley's Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern have joined Lindberg in positing an oblique yet basic unity beyond a deliberately cultivated appearance of randomness in the work; most of these studies are characterized by close textual analysis throughout, as well as attention to Carlyle's theory of unconscious, organic art as formulated in "Characteristics," published in the same year as Sartor. So far only a trickle, but perhaps one with a future, is the computerized analysis of Carlyle's work, of which Robert L. Oakman's "Carlyle and the Machine: A Quantitative Analysis of Syntax in Prose Style," presented to the Carlyle Centenary Conference in Frankfurt in 1981, is one pioneering study.

A common attitude of these otherwise very diverse critical reckonings with Sartor seems to abide in an assurance that criticism is in a position to "do justice" in some way to the book: that it is, after all, a book and as such can be treated in a variety of ways. It may be held to be sacred writ; its historical progress may be covered and recovered by scholars from the point of conception to printing to critical reception; it may be held up, physically and metaphorically, to be scrutinized by the experts and amateurs of innumerable forms of art and ideology--to be

possessed and assimilated or reviled and burned. Most of these approaches have yielded useful insights into Carlyle's work, their chief "fault" lying in their formidable powers of persuasion. For the most part, the rhetoric of certitude that has dominated Sartor criticism for the last forty years has had a galvanizing effect, and since the early twentieth century clash of true believers and unbelievers gave way to what G. B. Tennyson calls the "Scholarly-Critical Period" ("Carlyle Today" 30), the criticism has kept remarkably close to the generally accepted authority and objectivity of historical method. Departures from this homogeneity tend also to be departures from the work itself, into other of Carlyle's writings. For instance, treatments of Sartor Resartus similar to William E. Buckler's "Past and Present as Literary Experience: An Essay in the Epistemological Imagination"--broadly speaking, an examination of the work as a didactic strategy that requires of readers a conscious act of perception and reflection on that perceptual experience--are rare, though Sartor is certainly the equal of Past and Present in terms of the refusal to generate a closed meaning. Sartor inducts its readers into the process of constituting meaning, an apparent abdication of responsibility toward readers which in fact radically directs their reading experiences by insisting that they consciously and conscientiously experience their readings.

A central thematic device of Sartor Resartus is the search for a lost paternity, represented in the biographical

account of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh's mysterious "Genesis" and subsequent recognition of his Father in Nature, "the 'Living Garment of God'" (II.ix.188). By means of this device, Diogenes Teufelsdröckh is presented as an inquirer into and wanderer in the ways of life--or, more accurately, of art. For Teufelsdröckh's wanderings are "the publishing of [a] Work of Art," namely "his Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh" (II.vi.156). The matter is Wertherean, symptomatic of a romantic tendency toward which Carlyle was highly ambivalent. He conceded that such a work seemed to noble souls almost to be a necessary rite of passage, "an Altercation with the Devil, before you begin honestly Fighting him" (II.vi.156); but he concludes that the happier soul is the one "who, like our Clothes-Philosopher, can write such matter, since it must be written, on the insensible Earth, with his shoe-soles only; and also survive the writing thereof!" (II.vi.157). And as has been argued repeatedly, the reader never encounters the life of Teufelsdröckh except as a work of art.[5] The Clothes Philosopher is presented in a patchwork of the Editor's arrangement, a striking emblem of the mediatory process of thought and writing which will not allow even an autobiographer to get himself unmediated.[6] Finally, the lack of a felt presence of an author and origin responds critically to a central literary problem since biblical times, the problem of true representation by "naming."[7] The voice that the reader encounters first in Sartor, that establishes its presence firmly before allowing

another to intrude and that asserts its control over the work at hand, refers to itself as an Editor. As such it asserts an organizational and executive function without laying claim to creativity. Eschewing the ultimate responsibility of a parent for a child, the voice provides a gap between its assumption of a role as mediator to readers of the contents of the discourse at hand and its total credibility in that role. This gap only widens in the course of Sartor, sometimes through statements that seem to fall unconsciously from the Editor's lips and at other times in moments of apparent self-consciousness and self-doubt on his part.

Teufelsdröckh's search for his paternity is reflected in the story of the Editor's unfolding sense of who Teufelsdröckh is; and it is by means of this narrative, the narrative of the editorial voice, that readers are integrated--woven--into the fabric of the elaborate Persian silk that is Sartor Resartus.[8] By means of the "foregrounded" editorial role Sartor presents itself as a mediation, a "garment" in the sense of Teufelsdröckh's paternal "Living Garment";[9] but this garment enfolds as an experience so amorphous that it requires activity on the part of readers who hope to fathom its meaning and significance. Its version of literary experience is like, yet unlike, Natural experience; whereas Nature educates men by means of wonder and sorrow (II.iii.107, II.ix.188-95), the tutelage of the literary work proceeds by bewilderment--the obverse of any usual paternal authority, whether benign or dictatorial.[10]

The Editor in Sartor is reliable and unreliable by turns; his insights are judicious and foolish; his suspicions of bad faith on the part of Teufelsdröckh and his mediators are a primary means of both establishing and undermining his own character and credibility. The Editor's account of a letter received from Teufelsdröckh's Weissnichtwo associate, Hofrath Heuschrecke, accompanying the biographical "documents" with which he had promised to supply the Editor, includes a suspicion of plagiarism or other literary imposture:

> "By this time, mein Verehrtester (my most Esteemed)," continues he, with an eloquence which, unless the words be purloined from Teufelsdröckh, or some trick of his, as we suspect, is well-nigh unaccountable, "by this time you are fairly plunged (vertieft) in that mighty forest of Clothes-Philosophy . . ." (I.xi.76)

Within the page-long quotation which follows, the consequences of the Editor's distrust are ironically commented upon by the letter itself, initiating the reader of Sartor into a dilemma which is, if anything, more his than the Editor's. For the passage attributes to Heuschrecke an awareness of the Editor's own plight--his "looking round, as all readers do, with astonishment enough" (I.xi.76)--that will immediately alert most if not "all readers" to the hopelessness of the Editor's position. He is a mediator of thought which he has, despite his criticisms, found

persuasive and with which he wishes to persuade in turn; but he is devoid of the reasonable claim to authority that any successful proselytizer must hold.

Heuschrecke's exhibition of a methodical biographical curiosity is somewhat surprising, given the chaos of materials he supplies for a biography's construction.

> Had Teufelsdröckh also a father and mother; did he, at one time, wear drivel-bibs, and live on spoon-meat? Did he ever, in rapture and tears, clasp a friend's bosom to his; looks he also wistfully into the long burial-isle of the Past, where only winds, and their low harsh moan, give inarticulate answer? Has he fought duels;--good Heaven! how did he comport himself when in Love? . . . (I.xi.76)

Heuschrecke's questions are useful to the biographical critic, as Elizabeth Waterston has demonstrated by example in "Past and Present Selves: Patterns in Sartor Resartus." But the Hofrath's anticipation of the Editor's function as well as his astonishment is only the beginning of a series of such underminings. The Editor ultimately appears to be an inept figure because in his endeavours to mediate his author he is forever a step behind the efforts of other mediators, other "editors," perhaps including the Professor himself. In Book III we find the Editor suspecting that Teufelsdröckh has "his own deeper intention; and laughs in his sleeve at our strictures and glosses, which indeed are

but a part thereof" (III.i.213). Indeed, as Meyer Abrams has observed, the increasing Teufelsdröckhisms of the Editor's style and his suggestion toward the end of his narrative that Teufelsdröckh has vanished from Weissnichtwo and may even now be in London go far to suggest that the Editor is in fact a persona for Teufelsdröckh himself (Natural Supernaturalism 133).

I have mentioned Albert J. LaValley's chapter on Sartor Resartus in his book Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern. The argument of that chapter is of special pertinence to the question of what I will call the authorial integrity of Sartor. In the first half of his argument LaValley addresses himself to the persistence in Sartor of the "self" as image. Tellingly enough--since he will later argue the case against the presence, except as metaphor, of Christianity in Sartor--LaValley begins the substance of his argument by considering Teufelsdröckh's spiritual rebirth in "The Everlasting Yea." Taking as his texts Teufelsdröckh's discovery that "[t]he Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres; but godlike, and my Father's" (II.ix.188) and his awakening to "a new Heaven and a new Earth" (II.ix.186), LaValley comments on the integrity of this climactic pair of events within the biographical portion and, further, within Sartor Resartus as a whole.

> This experience suddenly merges indistinguishably with the Clothes Philosophy itself, but not without contributing its quality of lived

> experience to that philosophy. The editor has discovered that Teufelsdröckh's autobiographical fragments are "partly a mystification . . . some more or less fantastic Adumbration, symbolically, perhaps significantly enough, shadowing forth the same," only "hieroglyphically" authentic, and not "literally so" [II.x.202]. While it is true that such an admission tends to collapse the hoax by indicating that both Teufelsdröckh and his philosophy are aspects of the author Carlyle, it is also true that it points to an archetypal, mythical, and paradigmatic quality of action in the life of Teufelsdröckh, pushing it further into the direction of philosophy instead of life, but with the suggestion that the new source of the new myth is within the self rather than external to it. (74)

LaValley speaks in terms of the "expansion" and "contraction" of the self reaching its ultimate state when Teufelsdröckh "has looked fixedly on Existence, till, one after the other, its earthly hulls and garnitures have all melted away; and now, to his rapt vision, the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed" (III.viii.255). But as LaValley illustrates by superimposing on this the image of the Fortunatus' hat carrying one instantaneously from "Fire-Creation" to "Fire-Consummation" of the world (III.viii.261), ultimate expansion collapses into identity

with its opposite, complete contraction. "Every action becomes miraculous . . . . and the self lives beyond time in a mystic, undifferentiated, almost fluid world . . ." (76). Finally, LaValley says, "this expansive universe ultimately finds its meaning in terms of a central self that seeks its own stability" (77).

So much suggestive material has been touched on here that it is difficult to avoid recapitulating much of it in order to define its place in this thesis. I believe LaValley's main point to be the full integrity of the self in Sartor, regarding both itself and "all experience [which] is referred" to it (77), "even at the moments when it feels itself in dissolution or seeks its own definition" (76-77). The Editor's "discovery" of that which he has suspected to some extent from early on--that the biographical documents are hieroglyphically rather than literally authentic (II.x.202)--does go a long way toward "collapsing the hoax" of biography altogether by calling an already tenuously elaborate fiction into question. This self-examination of the text is fascinating in terms of all the fictions being questioned, and also in terms of the appearance of generic discontinuity with the introduction of the "Life of Teufelsdröckh" in Book II.

Much of Sartor's integrity, its unity in the face of astonishing complexity, is attributable to its self-searching--its wandering, detailed scrutiny of its own generic underpinnings. Its meandering quest is evident

even in its syntax--its heavily periodic sentences, pulled up short by the appearance of the awaited object one step before the predicate, or indeed by premature closure, punctuating the sentence before the conclusion of its thought and carrying the thought over into a new syntactic structure. The relentlessness with which Sartor proceeds to lead its readers into apparent confusion might appear at first to be the natural supernaturalist version of the Spirit driving Christ into the wilderness (Mark 1:12). In Sartor's own terms, however, neither itself nor the reader is innocent enough to suit the analogy. Or rather, though it may await the coming of a reader who will complete its own wanderings, Sartor Resartus anticipates that eschaton by putting each reader to a test that only the "perfect" reader could pass. It creates for each new reader the environment which will encourage that "error"--wandering, like that of the Jews in the wilderness or of the Wandering Jew--which Patricia Parker portrays as one of the textural hallmarks of romance.[11] A related comparison, more apt for my purposes, is that of the wandering from home and father of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), and of that story's parabolic structure, which the account of the journeys of Teufelsdröckh echoes and emulates. George P. Landow states the point succinctly, though in passing on the way to a different formulation, in "'Swim or Drown': Carlyle's World of Shipwrecks, Castaways, and Stranded Voyagers": Landow observes that the Editor himself knows that "it is not that

much easier to follow Teufelsdröckh's wanderings than to make the journey oneself" (652). Sartor provides every encouragement for the wanderer in its byways to become inextricably bound up in the Teufelsdröckhian and Editorial search for a sure paternity; but as in the parable of the prodigal son, the attempt to seek out the lost father--to initiate the reconciliation--is itself misguided, the consequence of a limited and erroneous perception of the relationship between man and God, reading and writing.

Just as Carlyle rarely leaves a thought to ramble forever and pale into ghosthood, so his ideal of wandering is not that of an endless ambulation. Though he believed that wandering could be instructive to the noble, heroic soul (Works V: 159, 165-67), the speech of Coleridge, which he characterized as infinitely meandering, did not impress him (Letters III: 90-91). The conclusion of Sartor Resartus is an example of what Carlyle would doubtless have considered to be an "excellent impatience." It has been noted that the Editorial voice departs with some suddenness, with a rhetorical flourish and some linguistic neatness rather than with satisfactory closure of thought or fiction.[12] But even the attempt to limit the wandering ultimately appears to be a species of prodigality. According to the fiction the Editor's efforts throughout Sartor to order Teufelsdröckh's Clothes Volume involve not only reordering but also excerption. The Editor's claim that he has been altering the Volume in this way allows the construction of

an illusion that the Volume is "boundless" (LaValley 94-95, Tennyson, "Sartor" Called 187)--that all attempts to invoke closure of its limitless verbal dilation or discipline its formlessness are unauthorized in a radical sense of the word. Consequently, and this is a crucial accomplishment of Sartor, we are placed under the impression that the element of control and direction in the text is in fact a foreign element: that the author of the Clothes Philosophy is content to allow the straying that the near chaos of the original text encourages and even necessitates. The relationship between the author of the original writings and the reader of Sartor Resartus is overshadowed by a third party whose influence, given the book's wealth of Biblical and Miltonic allusions to the despoiling of Eden, can hardly be accepted as benign solely on its own assurance. The Editor's repeated speculation about the nature--angelic or diabolic--of Teufelsdröckh is an ironic reflection on his own role as an angel of light helping to order chaos. Satan, says Paul, sometimes disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14); and in Paradise Lost it is not only the creation of Earth, but also the presumption of Satan resulting in the creation of Hell as a prison for the fallen angels, that gives shape to the universe by impinging on the sway of Chaos (II.1002-06). The Editorial voice, then, is largely portrayed as an intruding voice, and the Editor's attempts to effect a direct and unproblematic link between the text and its readers are highly suspicious.

The Editor's lip-service to the idea of letting "the reader . . . do his part" is negated rather than complemented in practice by his resolution that "we, by judicious selection and adjustment, shall study to do ours" (III.viii.255). Sartor's irony weights the relationship of writing and reading--not by denying the power of the written work, but by affirming the liberty of readers to participate in the restless energy of its linguistic wheels within wheels, perhaps even requiring that they do so. Sartor's art, says Jacques Blondel, "réside dans le procédé qui résout l'apparente antimonie entre la mystification littéraire et la révélation d'ordre mystique" ("Vision et ironie dans Sartor Resartus" 10). The prophetic role of this art is not impaired by the wandering ways into which it leads its readers. Paradoxically, it is the reader who will not stray who will not receive the prophetic utterance which "desire[s] mercy and not sacrifice" (Hosea 6:6): which demands a dedication more profound than adherence to the straightforward motions of reading, requiring of each reader "qu'il découvre aussi en lui-même cette 'internal madness' qui permet seule de briser les idoles . . . et de déchiffrer les symboles" (Blondel 10-11) after the example of the wandering Diogenes Teufelsdröckh.

Sartor Resartus's wandering sage is described in terms of several of the types of the Romantic hero. He is a sorrowful young Werther, a Wandering Jew figure, another wandering Cain. What he is not called--what Carlyle instead

labelled Sartor itself--is a prodigal son (Letters V: 243). Yet it is clear that, beyond all other types of the wanderer, he is this. His epiphanic recognition that he has a father (II.ix.188) is the culmination of a long journey from origins shrouded in uncertainty. Even setting aside the question of Teufelsdröckh's honesty in his account of his birth (II.i.89), the Teufelsdröckh we get is a lost child of mysterious parentage who is travelling and does travel from mystery to mystery, from God and to God. Teufelsdröckh, in this journey, is an Everyman. But he is also a specific man whose peregrinations owe to several fictional genres and several Romantic ideas and images combined and stamped with the originality of Carlyle's ironic genius. "[L]e personnage de Teufelsdröckh est, au sens plein, une métaphore" (Blondel 10). He is, first and foremost, a literary man: radically a man of letters, a written man and a lettered man. His discovery of a parent immanent in creation is emphatically the discovery that he has been (in the usual sense of the word as well as a punning one) underwritten. In the "Prospective" chapter of Sartor Diogenes Teufelsdröckh's image of man's earthly existence is closely juxtaposed to his view of the status and nature of language.

> Nay, if you consider it, what is Man himself, and his whole terrestrial Life, but an Emblem; a Clothing or visible Garment for that divine ME of his, cast hither, like a light-particle, down from Heaven? . . .

> 'Language is called the Garment of Thought: however, it should rather be, Language is the Flesh-Garment, the Body, of thought. I said that imagination wove this Flesh-Garment; and does not she? Metaphors are her stuff: examine Language; what, if you except some few primitive elements (of natural sound), what is it all but Metaphors, recognised as such, or no longer recognised; still fluid and florid, or now solid-grown and colourless? (I.xi.73)

Reading passages such as the above it is not at all difficult to forget other of Carlyle's statements concerning language, many of which express a decided wariness concerning it. In Heroes and Hero Worship he warns that "words ought not to harden into things for us. . . . We ought to know withal, and to keep for ever in mind, that these divisions [of man's faculties] are at bottom but names" (Works V: 106). Despite occasional warnings not to become the "slave of Words" (I.viii.55), to be careful to use them well, Sartor has little of the flavour of negativism touching language exhibited here--exhibits little sense of "the subtle danger of philosophical naming itself" that William E. Buckler has noted in these words from "The Hero as Poet" (Buckler, "Aesthetic" 292-93). Indeed, closely tied to this perspective on language, and following only a very few pages later in the text of Sartor, is a disquisition, apostrophic in tone, on naming. In the

context of the account of the "genesis" and adoption of the young Teufelsdröckh we have a quotation from the grown sage:

> Names? Could I unfold the influence of Names, which are the most important of all Clothings, I were a second greater Trismegistus. Not only all common Speech, but Science, Poetry itself is no other, if thou consider it, than a right Naming. . . . In a very plain sense the Proverb says, Call one a thief, and he will steal; in an almost similar sense may we not perhaps say, Call one Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, and he will open the Philosophy of Clothes? (II.i.87-88)

It is in Sartor's treatment of genre (a species of naming) that we can detect most fruitfully its anticipation of the bewildered reception given its first publication, and also of subsequent attempts by critics to classify it, hook labels of kind and type onto it. Its own construct of a fictional Editor seems representative of an eagerness to encourage critical boldness of either an angry or enthusiastic variety; the Editor's references to his efforts to bring order to a chaos of Miltonic proportion have for many readers confirmed suspicions of formlessness without convincing them of the efficacy of the efforts. But Sartor also resists categorization to an extent that tends to make even the sanest generic criticism appear somewhat strained, excessive, or over-simplified. So extreme and successful is the work's qualification of any fictional genre it employs

that in a sense its fictions partake more of the nature of criticism than of "original" work (Hartman, Criticism in the Wilderness 49), an intriguing self-deconstruction by Carlyle the exponent of intuitive, unconscious genius and that "planting Thought of your own, which the fewest are privileged to do" (I.xi.80).[13]

To this point I have spoken of the concept of responsibility in Sartor in more than one context. I have suggested that the work takes responsibility for its readers in a manner more subtle than that of most other texts, imposing a requirement on readers that they consciously experience the perceptual process of reading; this suggestion may be taken in the light of Carlyle's assertion that "we are all poets when we read a poem well" (Works V: 82). I have also said that Sartor Resartus is in some sense responsible for the acquisitiveness of its criticism. To my understanding of the boundaries of the diverse method generally known as "reader response criticism" my argument does not fall within them. For though Sartor would appear to be an "open text" in Umberto Eco's sense[14] (though, LaValley has argued [97], it encourages a variety of interpretations rather than firmly "authorizing" one fixed meaning) it also resists each individual interpretation with the energy and elusiveness with which Teufelsdröckh frustrates the Editor's efforts to recover his phantasmagoric insights for a pedestrian "British Reader." My interest lies in the exposition of the points at which Sartor appears to be insisting on a heightened

responsibility in its readers and, simultaneously, lamenting its own tendency to thwart responsibility and purposeful direction.[7] Many of Sartor's central metaphors--wandering, maternity, passivity, silence--and of course the depiction of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh's dual nature, evoke an uneasiness that appears to haunt the work. Teufelsdröckh's "Demon-Empire" (III.viii.260) and his belief in the hieroglyphic, parabolic nature of fact (II.x.203); the Editor's failures and gullibility, as well as his suspicions of deceit on the part of the major sources for such "facts" as have been forthcoming concerning Teufelsdröckh's biography--all of these hints of the instability of "this our Sartor Resartus" suggest that the warring elements in the text may finally undermine and subvert its purpose.

What the purpose of Sartor is and what are, specifically, the elements that resist that purpose (or are perceived to be resisting it) will probably shift, as variables, with each new interpretation or characterization of the book. My own purpose here is not to forward a new interpretation, to name the dissenting variables or attempt to recover the "prodigal," on behalf of the "paternal," Sartor. Whether one speaks of the work's prodigality in terms of the elusiveness of words and names (terms I will examine) or of the guilt of the religious "prodigal" Carlyle even at the moment of his climactic statement of liberation from the religious skepticism occasioned by the unabashed dogma of his parents' faith (terms I will leave alone), the

point of relevance for my argument is that a distinct pattern forms in Sartor of symbolic elusiveness, metaphoric guilt, and an imaginative representation of prodigality. This pattern is forwarded (or "foregrounded") and resisted by turns; and it is this tension of assertion and denial, and the terms in which it is written, that will be my focus in this thesis. The examination of Sartor's "inner stresses" will certainly involve much reference to the role and responsibility of the reader as these seem to be envisioned in the text, and I will make certain cautious uses of the terms of some of the reader-response criticism. But I wish to emphasize at the outset that it is the role of the reader as it seems to be envisioned in the text that I am purporting to consider here, my certainty being restricted to the images and patterns of images that constitute a reader's initial experience simply by being. To enter more boldly upon the course of analyzing Sartor Resartus's extremely complex, parabolic, deliberately obscure pragmatics would be as rich a venture as it would be dangerous; it is in any case outside the limits of my investigation.

Still, as Kenneth J. Fielding has recognized ("The Letter and the Spirit" 40-41) Carlyle's works were hardly written by an adherent of "art for art's sake." In their tone, in their generic mixings of the "objective" forms of history and biography with fictive highlighting and the high rhetoric of epic poetry, and in their conceptual apparatus, they insist upon a hearing and a response as something other

than fictions and epic poems. Though Sartor Resartus keeps its artistic balance so as to be examinable more purely as a work of art than, say, Past and Present, in it also are moments of what LaValley calls a "collapsing of the myth" (104-05) of fictive speakers. This kind of collapse is what has led Gerry H. Brookes in The Rhetorical Form of Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" to a conclusion that is perhaps more seminal critically than it at first appears: that Sartor's fictive play is in fact self-transcending and is devoted specifically and entirely to a didactic goal whose attainment will render the fictions obsolete--in short, that Sartor is a persuasive essay. Brookes's genre statement is not pertinent to the argument of this thesis, but it does serve to make Fielding's point. Carlyle's image of the Vates is one that informs Sartor and the works after it and that is suggested with a special pointedness in Sartor's final pages, where Teufelsdröckh is suspected to be incognito in London preparing to take an active part in the "Palingenesia, or Newbirth of Society" (III.ii.217) heralded by the eruption of the French Revolution and newly presaged in the "Parisian Three Days" in which Charles II was deposed (III.xii.296). By means of such images attention is directed to Carlyle the Vates himself, dwelling incognito in the pages of a book.

I will comment in the second chapter on the structural metaphor of prodigal wandering, and its relation to the responsibility the text confers tropologically, if

ambiguously, upon the reader by means of the Editor's attempt to assert his own methodical conceptual order over the elusive and contradictory mind of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh. I will also concern myself with the exposition of certain patterns of reference and connotation throughout Sartor that connect with and play off of the focal allusions to types of the Wanderer. Prime for consideration here are Teufelsdröckh's characterizations of himself as a silent and passive man and the Editor's acquiescence in referring to him in this way; these, as well as the connotations accruing to maternity and mothers by virtue of attitudes espoused by Teufelsdröckh and the Editor, will be considered in the second chapter and subsequently. In the third chapter I will continue to explore the didactic strategy of Sartor Resartus on a more theoretical level in an attempt to deal with some of the work's more theoretical statements regarding the nature of words and symbols, the meaning and significance of names, on its own terms. In this context I will return, in the fourth chapter, to the question of why Carlyle's didactic purposes might have required the parabolic expression he gave them in Sartor Resartus.[15]

CHAPTER TWO: "Excellent 'Passivity'"

In a letter to his brother John dated 4 March 1831, Carlyle referred to the work that would become Sartor Resartus as his "prodigal son" (Letters V: 243). Within the text of Sartor he alludes to several myths of wanderers when referring to the wanderings of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh. G. B. Tennyson has written extensively about the allusions to the Wandering Jew ("Sartor" Called 201-12). At the point of Teufelsdröckh's deepest despair his life journey is likened to the labyrinth (II.vi.152) and Rowland D. McMaster has considered the role of the labyrinth as a structural metaphor in his article "Criticism of Civilization in the Structure of Sartor Resartus." McMaster has dealt carefully with the archetypal and mythological imagery used in connection with Teufelsdröckh. One of these images, he notes, is that of Tartarus, the prison into which the rebel Titans were cast by Zeus (272). Arguing that Sartor exhibits a qualified preference for authority, if necessary over and above individual cultivation and development,[1] McMaster seconds Harrold's observation (Carlyle and German Thought 216-17) that Carlyle's version of Entsagen, renunciation, left considerably less latitude for individual cultivation than its Goethean model (McMaster 277-78). McMaster concludes that though "Sartor Resartus is from one point of view a hopeful book" in that it is "the record of a spiritual victory," ultimately that "victory is Pyrrhic" (279). Teufelsdröckh's "Demon-Empire . . . out of which, indeed,

his world of Wisdom has been creatively built together" (III.viii.260), has been acknowledged in the abstract, but when Teufelsdröckh turns in the aftermath of his conversion to the assertion of the Everlasting Yea, the Demon-Empire, with all its possibilities for good as well as ill, is accorded little practical opportunity for expression.

> [T]he Self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever-paroxysms is Life rooting out the deep-seated chronic Disease, and triumphs over Death. (II.ix.192)

The social ideal, "Work thou in welldoing" (II.ix.183), anticlimactically crushes under its affirmation much of what has been most attractive in Sartor, has generated so much of its interest and energy. In fact, however, if the much-anticipated "reveille" of the Everlasting Yea has all the resonance of a bugle stuffed with cloth, it is a failure of that aspect of the work that can be called its "clothing." To the extent that Sartor wanders from its own roots, be they roots in a nether or other empire, it is indeed the prodigal Carlyle said it was. A more fruitful point of departure, though, comes in the recognition that whatever efforts may be made to suppress it, the Demon-Empire still thrives "beneath" Sartor; indeed as Teufelsdröckh indicates, it is the energetic basis and raw material of the order that has resolved to outroot it (McMaster 274; LaValley 101-02).

Carlyle's Diogenes Teufelsdröckh is a wanderer. It has been the matter of some conjecture what kind of wanderer he

is, and the diversity of Carlyle's allusions does not always help the critic to determine this. Teufelsdröckh is allusively associated with a number of Biblical, mythical and literary figures ranging from Satan to Werther. One figure who is not explicitly mentioned but whose influence, I will argue, permeates Sartor, is the Prodigal or Lost Son of Christian parable. I will make my case in two ways for the presence throughout Sartor of the image of prodigality: first by assessing its usefulness as one key among many to an understanding of Teufelsdröckh's tortuous wanderings; secondly by considering the emphasis in Book II on Teufelsdröckh's sense of lost paternity in its relation to the peculiarly modern aspects of his doubt and "stillness."

In a simple listing of similarities, the parabolic story of the Prodigal Son is strikingly similar in many points to the account of Teufelsdröckh's wanderings. Like the Lost Son, Teufelsdröckh is a young man, inexperienced at service, caught between the poles of morbid self-dilation and dissolution (Luke 15:13, 15:30) and a self-culture that involves self-abasement and selfless work (Luke 15:17-19, 15:29). His inexperience is his friend as well as his enemy; it threatens to undo him if he proceeds in his vanities, squandering his life as wildly as he has his inheritance (Luke 15:13-16) or it could, and does, prove a boon insofar as it amounts to a lack of straitening dogma, a lack which leaves the native human instinct free to guide him back to his father's house and the obedience which makes

him free (Luke 15:17-19).

As is to be expected, the prodigal travels a parabolic track, a roundabout. Seeking some purpose to sustain him, he appears to go about it by "devouring his own heart." He seems to be at his best when he is feeding the pigs, that is to say indulging in the meanest occupation whatever if it keeps his hands full (Luke 15:15).[2] He is a polished self-deluder who will have his charnel house of ghouls if granted time enough to see about its construction. As a result he cannot find his way back; he cannot see that there is no "back." "America is here or nowhere." The prodigal seeks a lost unity, but he seeks it outside himself--continues to seek it there, where he first found dissolution. It is only when his suffering proves intolerable, when he is reduced almost to a shadow, that he is finally able to recognize the futility of seeking that which has been with him all along.[3]

In the chapter called "Pilgrims and Prodigals" in his book Natural Supernaturalism Meyer Abrams outlines his exposition of "the Romantic plot of the circular or spiral quest" (193). The various modes in which this plot is cast include the realistic, allegorical, and that of the German philosophical myth or Märchen to which, as G. B. Tennyson has shown ("Sartor" Called 76-79, 189-93), Book Two of Sartor bears distinct resemblance. It embodies

> . . . an implicit theodicy, for the journey is a spiritual way through evil and suffering which is justified as a necessary means to the achievement

> of a greater good; and usually, although with greater or less explicitness, this process is conceived as a fall from unity into division and into a conflict of contraries which in turn compel the movement back toward a higher integration. (Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism 193)

In his discussion of Sartor Abrams never specifies where, in his reckoning, Diogenes Teufelsdröckh fits in the scheme of pilgrims and prodigals. He does, however, clearly fit Sartor into the conceptual universe of the "circuitous journey" and makes many illuminating observations as to the specific nature of "Teufelsdröckh's circular pilgrimage."

> Recurrently his painful wanderings are compared to those of standard guilt-ridden sinners. . . . The apparently aimless wanderings, however, are in deep spiritual truth a pilgrimage in quest of the foundling's unknown father and home. . . . The seeming disorder of the biography of Teufelsdroeckh [sic] is thus structured on the familiar Romantic model of a self-formative educational journey, which moves through division, exile, and solitariness toward the goal of a recovered home and restored familial relationship. (309)

Tennyson also is attentive to the fact that Teufelsdröckh "is fatherless, an important Christian allusion that is not forgotten when affirmation is reached" (292).

Teufelsdröckh the Wanderer is said to be "eat[ing] his own heart" (II.viii.170). This is a kind of madness similar to the attempt of Swift's Hack to penetrate the outer shows of things by entering further and further into them; at best he will reach into the inner _shows_ of things, not their reality (_A Tale of a Tub_ 351-52). The Wertherean obsession with one's own inner consciousness is a sick state in part because the one who believes that by his logic he can chop himself in two and objectively discern the state of his own passions is the true prisoner of the "inside-outside" dialectic encouraged by an uncritical view of man as "a _Clothed Animal_" (I.i.5).[4] He is the one of whom clothes have made more (or less) than a man--of whom they have made a "Clothes-screen" (I.v.41). The way to escape the domination of this dialectic is to look "fixedly on Existence" (III.viii.255) in such a way that one comes to recognize that one has all along been missing that "Open Secret"[5] which is the "interior Celestial Holy of Holies," hidden from the eye of sense and vulgar logic yet clearly disclosed to the intuitive vision of the wise.

Carlyle's version of the wise man is not necessarily--in fact is emphatically not--reserved to the cultivation of conscious intellect. In "The Speech of God-Devils: Artist as Mason and Freemason in Carlyle's Early Works," C. R. Vanden Bossche has written of Carlyle's reminiscence of his father, James Carlyle, and of Carlyle's own sense of inadequacy at being a worker in words, a substance far more

ephemeral than the bricks of the paternal stone-mason. Yet Carlyle also had the sense that "words ought not to harden" into brick, "into things for us" (Works V: 106; emphasis mine). The clothes ought not to envelop us completely, "to make clothes screens of us." Our own senses and our logic, our systems and our institutions can all become traps for us to lead us further and further from the point--the pure thought, the naked man, the Open Secret.[6]

To a remarkable extent Sartor's image of prodigality is an image of wandering in words. Despite (or perhaps because of) Sartor's fascination with the "influence of Names" (II.i.87) and the omnipotence in this world of the Word (II.x.199), the relationship in the book of words and symbols to falling away and wandering is substantial. From page one of Book I of Sartor metaphors of falling away or throwing away, erring (through folly or blindness) into boundless expanses or depths, and straying from straight paths are tossed at the reader in an imaginative barrage which is simultaneously enlightening and distracting--not unlike a flurry of "innumerable Rush-lights, and Sulpher-matches . . . glancing in every direction" (I.i.3). The subject of the Editor's work, a German philosopher with his German book, has to be distinguished from those Germans who "have been blamed for an unprofitable diligence; as if they struck into devious courses, where nothing was to be had but the toil of a rough journey;" or where "they were apt to run goose-hunting into regions of bilberries and crowberries,

and be swallowed up at last in remote peat-bogs" (I.i.6). The book itself is "an 'extensive Volume,' of boundless, almost formless contents, a very Sea of Thought . . . wherein the toughest pearl-diver may dive to his utmost depth" (I.ii.10). The only "vehicle" the Editor can find for his proselytizing instinct ("For if new-got gold is said to burn the pockets till it be cast forth into circulation, much more may new truth" [I.ii.10]) is Fraser's, a periodical "all strewed (figuratively speaking) with the maddest Waterloo-Crackers, exploding distractively and destructively, wheresoever the mystified passenger stands or sits . . . a vehicle full to overflowing . . ." (I.ii.11). The reader is cautioned to "strive to keep a free, open sense; cleared from the mists of prejudice, above all from the paralysis of cant; and directed rather to the Book itself than to the Editor of the Book." The Editor, in turn, promises not to "extenuate or exaggerate" (I.ii.13).

The Editor's relations with the Philosopher and his book,[7] as well as the Hofrath Heuschrecke, provider of the biographical documents of Teufelsdröckh, are similarly attenuated with images of wandering. The Teufelsdröckh of the Editor's past acquaintance had "seemed to lead a quite still and self-contained life" (I.iii.14), was not to have been expected to "descend, as he has here done, into the angry noisy Forum, with an Argument that cannot but exasperate and divide" (I.iii.15). His Volume will, the Editor believes, prove "no despicable pile, or floodgate"

wherewith to "divert the current of Innovation" (I.ii.13). In his letter promising the biographical complement to the Volume, "[t]he Hofrath, after much extraneous matter, began dilating largely on the 'agitation and attention' which the Philosophy of Clothes was exciting in its own German Republic of Letters . . . and then, at length, with great circumlocution, hinted at the practicability of conveying 'some knowledge of it, and of [Teufelsdröckh], to England, and through England to the distant West'" (I.ii.11-12).

Even the first clothes metaphors of Sartor are not free of some hint of circular motion, of conveying and being conveyed on a parabolic track rather than a perpendicular one:

> In thy eyes too, deep under their shaggy brows, and looking out so still and dreamy, have we not noticed gleams of an ethereal or else a diabolic fire, and half-fancied that their stillness was but the rest of infinite motion, the sleep of a spinning-top? Thy little figure, there as, in loose ill-brushed threadbare habiliments, thou sattest, amid litter and lumber, whole days to 'think and smoke tobacco,' held in it a mighty heart. The secrets of man's Life were laid open to thee; thou sawest into the mystery of the Universe, farther than another; thou hadst in petto thy remarkable Volume on Clothes. Nay, was there not in that clear logically-founded Transcendentalism of thine; still more, in thy

> meek, silent, deep-seated Sansculottism, combined with a true princely Courtesy of inward nature, the visible rudiments of such speculation? But great men are too often unknown, or what is worse, misknown. Already, when we dreamed not of it, the warp of thy remarkable Volume lay on the loom; and silently, mysterious shuttles were putting-in the woof! (I.iii.16-17)

From such an origin comes, naturally enough, a work whose author (between insights "furlongs deep, into the true centre of the matter") "will play truant for long pages, and go dawdling and dreaming, and mumbling and maundering the merest commonplaces" (I.iv.30). Similarly unequal "[i]n respect of style," this author offers "consummate vigour, a true inspiration. . . . Were it not that sheer sleeping and soporific passages; circumlocutions, repetitions, touches even of pure doting jargon, so often intervene" (I.iv.31). The work's arrangement is a great "labyrinthic combination" (I.iv.34).

These metaphors are all from the first four chapters of the first Book of Sartor Resartus. I could obviously go on for many pages listing the images of wandering to be found throughout the book. It will suffice to say that, were I to do so, the list would be about equally representative of each chapter through the last chapter of Book I, "Prospective." The concentration of important allusions to wandering and wanderers, floods and vehicles, "the that runs

and reads," and the Editor's own "journeying and struggling" would be greatly intensified in the part of the list devoted to that chapter. Again from "Prospective" through "Romance" a certain equal measure would reign, until with the "Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh" an imaginative explosion would occur; this heightened intensity of the wandering metaphor would be evident in the list until the end of Book II. The third book would be slightly more deceptive, since the image of wandering is there submerged and contained, to some extent, in the dominant one of cloth and the Clothes-Philosophy. It reemerges in the freewheeling burlesque of "The Dandiacal Body," sinks again in "Tailors," reemerges once more in the Editor's final "Farewell."

The examples I have listed above are for the most part descriptive of prodigality, some of them of verbal prodigality. Sartor also offers an example of active verbal prodigality in its German Professor's enigmatic name. Though as LaValley points out (99) the surname "Teufelsdröckh" is never translated in Sartor, the name "Diogenes Teufelsdröckh" is seminal and focal in several ways. In its first level of accessibility, that of simple translation, the name extends to us the image of an Every-man. The metaphor of the God-born and Devil's dung yoked together in uneasy union is as Platonic as it is Christian or Jewish; is a representation of the lot of mankind to which most men and women will respond familiarly. The validity of this interpretation of the name is almost

as ambiguous as the name's meaning. In many respects Teufelsdröckh is so unrepresentative of the common person that he has to be mediated by the "British Editor," who can chide and scorn the German Professor's idiosyncrasies from time to time and provide in himself a metaphor of a mediatory "common reader." It is the Editor who initially invokes the fundamental critical axiom, "_Amicus_ _Plato,_ _magis_ _amica_ _veritas_" (I.ii.14); yet he has to admit finally that much of his own purity of thought and style has been lost in Teufelsdröckh's sway (III.ix.269, III.xii.293). The Editor's announcement of this "conversion"[8] becomes an image of the decision each reader of _Sartor_ or of any book must make for himself: what price understanding? The illumination that a book will offer any individual will depend not only on his own mastery of the art of reading--his ability to read a text--and not only on the text's mastery of its own "reading process," its faithful mediation in language of some concept, image or experience; but on a meeting of the one reading with the other, a meeting that is as dangerous as it is promising.

In much the way that Teufelsdröckh depicts mankind as the "Image that reflects and creates Nature, without which Nature were not" (III.vii.246-47), readers of literary works may be said to create the texts they read. C. F. Harrold has glossed Teufelsdröckh's reference to Montesquieu as "a clever infant spelling Letters from a hieroglyphical prophetic Book, the lexicon of which lies in Eternity . . ."

as allusive to the theme of "Nature as the hieroglyphic expression of the Divine" as found in the works of Novalis and Schiller (I.v.36n). Carlyle himself speaks (Works V: 82) of the faculties of reading and writing as being in fact the two halves of the selfsame faculty that are imaged in Teufelsdröckh's "excellent 'Passivity'" which is in fact "but the rest of infinite motion, the sleep of a spinning top" (I.iii.16). Teufelsdröckh writes; Teufelsdröckh also reads, and is not prepared even to despise his misreadings.

> "One highest hope, seemingly legible in the eyes of an Angel, had recalled him as out of Death-shadows into celestial Life: but a gleam of Tophet passed over the fact of his Angel; he was rapt away in whirlwinds, and heard the laughter of Demons. It was a Calenture," adds he, "whereby the Youth saw green Paradise-groves in the waste Ocean-waters: a lying vision, yet not wholly a lie, for he saw it." (II.vi.147-48)

Louise Ann Rehling has written of "the deep structure which is derived from the text's incomplete mediation between reader and source" ("Reading Sartor Resartus" 170); the device of the Editor and his scattered and mysterious links to Teufelsdröckh, a "surface feature" of incompletion and inadequacy, in fact "implies that the reader can himself order the chaos of presentation to fulfill its potential as an expression of the Clothes Philosophy." The convolution of the reader's path through Sartor "stimulates the exercise

of imagination . . . by refusing the reader the ease of surface order" (170). The suggestion of sourcelessness in Sartor Resartus inculcates a sense that the reader must become the source of his own reading, or is already and has been the source, whether he has known it or not. What this means--what the source of a reading does, what his particular act of constitution is--is a question Sartor answers cryptically if at all. Rehling remarks upon the role of the Editor's bridge-building metaphor in support of her claim that "Sartor is inherently and basically provocative" of assertive reader response (170). But the image is equally suggestive of the text's resistance to the attempt to bridge its infernal churnings. The "bridge" is finally left a scattered "zigzag series of rafts" (III.ix.268) and the response the book has provoked, if assertive, has been far from wholly constructive. The most we finally know for certain of Sartor's vision of the creating reader is embodied in a handful of central images of reading performed or described by the Editor, Teufelsdröckh, the Hofrath Heuschrecke, Gretchen and Andreas Futteral. In a deft use of the technical aspects of book production Carlyle has also delivered the opinions of the book of some of its early critics as well as a footnote by "Oliver Yorke," the fictional editor of Fraser's, the magazine in which Sartor was first serialized. The common element of the descriptions and presentations of the reading process in Sartor is that of bewilderment. Yorke's note that the

Editor "still communicates [with us] in some sort of mask, or muffler; and, we have reason to think, under a feigned name" (I.ii.13n) is the parallel and metaphorical unravelling of the Futterals' act of reading, or attempting to read, the "Taufschein (baptismal certificate)" of the infant Teufelsdröckh, "wherein unfortunately nothing but the Name was decipherable" (II.i.84); this note is in fact a thread that invites each reader to unravel the whole fictional structure of Sartor Resartus, since in the context of missing biographical documents and Teufelsdröckh's notion that facts are in any case hieroglyphs of which whole beadrolls will not constitute an accurate biography (II.x.203), the enigma of a disembodied Editor is an invitation to the kind of despair experienced by Teufelsdröckh in "The Everlasting No." In the text's wilderness of words purporting to be facts, or in any case accurate symbols, yet openly disclaiming the ability to furnish evidence of their accuracy, the trustworthiness at least of the intentions of the Editorial voice is a "fact" that readers must accept if they are to get under way at all. The hint that the Editor is also a feigner and eluder, or simply an insubstantial front for a Teufelsdröckh "actually in London" (III.xii.297), suggests an orphaning of the reader similar to that of Teufelsdröckh. As in Teufelsdröckh's case, the reader's desire for a sure paternity is denied: "he too had to repel me, he too was not thou" (II.i.86). The trust in the Editor that gets the reader under way also leads him into his own

sorrows.

Teufelsdröckh's vision of "green Paradise-groves" becomes simply one more occasion for his wandering. It is not only at the point of his failed romance, however, that his sorrows have begun. In fact they begin, according to Sartor, in the realm of mystery, before the Editor or reader has any kind of material evidence for the child Gneschen's existence. As the Editor explains, and as is appropriate to the romanticized account of Book II, Teufelsdröckh's "Genesis" can really only be described in terms of an "Exodus"--a "transit out of Invisibility into Visibility" (II.i.81)--and it is properly before the child has become visible (while, in fact, he is still wrapped up in his Persian silk blanket and has not yet been seen even by his foster parents) that his father has disappeared. Whether the stranger who left the child with the Futterals was the missing father or not, his figure--the figure of a mysterious paternal presence--haunts the boy Gneschen from the moment his foster mother tells him the facts of his strange origin (II.i.85). The impression it makes is "indelible," and it appears in large part to be Teufelsdröckh's curiosity regarding his origin that drives him to the pursuit of knowledge of every variety--that culminates, in short, in his career as a Professor der Allerley-Wissenschaft, of Scholarship in General or, as Carlyle has preferred to translate, Things in General.

I do not think it is a coincidence that Carlyle's

translation is looser than it might have been in this case. Throughout the account of the Professor's wide travels he is presented as conforming to the aspects of many other famous literary travellers--of taking his place in a long line of mythical wanderers. As McMaster has recognized, most of the types of the wanderer alluded to in connection with Teufelsdröckh are rebels or outcasts. The labyrinth image in Sartor is especially revealing, given its status both "as prison and as wilderness where the straight way is lost" (McMaster 269). Another important association of the labyrinth is with its designer, Dedalus, like Teufelsdröckh a type of the artificer and knowledgeable man. Satan, with his obvious associations both of outcast and "knower," is included in the group of types, as are Cain, the rebel Titans (by indirect reference, via their prison Tartarus), Adam, and Faust. Of great importance among the allusions is that to Prometheus, whose punishment is imposed for a reason that is useful in reflection upon Teufelsdröckh's case (McMaster 270). Like Prometheus, Teufelsdröckh has in some respect presumed to steal the fire of the gods. As LaValley has shown (80, 87-88), he has committed the thoroughly modern version of the Adamic sin of pride, a fact of which so accomplished a Milton scholar as Carlyle could not but have been aware.

One of Teufelsdröckh's complaints as he approaches the crisis of the "Everlasting No" is that he feels himself guiltless, but nevertheless suffers from pangs of guilt

(II.vi.156). LaValley demonstrates that Teufelsdröckh's protestations of innocence are not to be accepted uncritically (82). In the terms set forth by the text of Sartor, the opinions of the Editor must be reckoned with--again, not uncritically, but always seriously. The Editor is rarely entirely approving of Teufelsdröckh's mind or method; even his admiration is "shuddering" (III.vii.250), surely an ambivalent compliment at best. And the Editor's central, recurring image of his work with Teufelsdröckh's manuscript and biographical fragments is the Miltonic one of the bridge builder over Chaos. This image is multiply ironic; among its many effects is another instance of what LaValley calls the "collapsing of the myth" of separate identity--the Editor from Teufelsdröckh and, by extension, Teufelsdröckh from Carlyle. The Editor, borrowing Milton's own ironic image, refers to himself as "Pontifex" (I.xi.79-80), but in terms of the allusion in question the original bridge builders were not popes or holy fathers of any variety, but the children of Satan, Sin and Death (Paradise Lost II.749-89). In a sense, then, the Editor's repeated use of the pontifex image is an unwitting (?) allusion to the same sort of ambivalence that so disturbs him in Teufelsdröckh. The Editor too, in terms of his own image, is godly-demonic; his attempt to build "a safe bridge for British travellers," his attempt to provide order and method, rests on the Teufelsdröckhian foundation of a "Demon-Empire." In terms of Teufelsdröckh himself, however, the image is an important

continuing reminder of the fact that each of the Editor's important statements concerning the Clothes-Philosopher, not excluding the later ones after his so-called conversion has taken place, is allusive both to the godlike and the demonic aspects of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh. The bridge over Chaos is, of course, a bridge between Hell and Paradise.

The Miltonic imagery of Sartor, hardly scratched in the criticism though well annotated in Harrold's edition, constitutes some of the most suggestive allusive material in the work. In the third chapter I will look at Carlyle's use of Milton's version of "right naming," which I believe to be a conceptual key to Sartor's didactic purposes as well as to its ironic ones. It is also important to note at this point that while many of Carlyle's allusions to Paradise Lost are found in ironic contexts, their irony is rarely if ever contrary to the spirit of Milton's original images. This is certainly the case with respect to a consideration of the "sin" of Teufelsdröckh, the reason he is a prisoner and outcast.

It is, I repeat, thoroughly modern of Teufelsdröckh to be uncomfortable with the notion of sin even in the abstract. Eve, at the test, was easily convinced by Satan that the action to which he was enjoining her would not be sinful; that which she would gain in contravening the command was in fact hers by right and God might, in fact, be pleased at her recognition of [illegible] fact and right assertion of her nature in ignoring his injunction (Paradise Lost

IX.692-97). Teufelsdröckh, however, manifests a demonic indifference (I.iv.32) to the whole notion of sin, because in his modern presumption he has abandoned the sense of a higher than himself, beyond himself, whom he will personally offend by virtue of the twin errors of doubt and despair. J. Hillis Miller has written that "[m]odern times begin when man confronts his isolation, his separation from everything outside himself. . . . [M]odern thought has been increasingly dominated by the presupposition that each man is locked in the prison of his consciousness" (The Disappearance of God 7-8). It is only at the conclusion of his anguished wandering that Teufelsdröckh considers a possibility that is not, after all, a new thought under the sun for one raised on Christian dogma. The father Teufelsdröckh has sought for so long on the assumption that he was to be found "out there" is in fact a spiritual parent, present always, "that lives and loves in me" (II.ix.188). It is certainly ironic that his search for that father is precisely the prototypically Carlylean search for a "prophet, priest and king, and an Obedience that makes us free" (II.ii.90), since it is in the course of this search, with its vicissitudes, that he falls into the transgression that he will and will not acknowledge.

Teufelsdröckh's denial of his guilt is not to be construed as a failure of courage on his part, or in any way a negative phenomenon. It is, in fact, an almost inevitable consequence of characteristics the Editor has spoken of from

Book I on. The Professor's uncanny "stillness," which upon close scrutiny appears more and more to be "but the rest of infinite motion, the sleep of a spinning top" (I.iii.16), helps to illuminate much that is obscure in him and to define to some extent the dynamic of his strange interpolation of the angelic and the demonic. Carlyle emphasizes the aspect of silence in Teufelsdröckh's wanderings at the outset of the account of them; the Editor acknowledges the probable assumption of the "less philosophical readers" of Sartor that the collapse of Teufelsdröckh's "Romance"--and with it his vulnerably prospectless universe--leaves him three unsavoury options: "Establish himself in Bedlam; begin writing Satanic Poetry; or blow-out his brains" (II.vi.146). These readers will also likely expect "extravagance enough; breast-beating, brow-beating (against walls), lion-bellowings of blasphemy and the like, stampings, smitings, breakages of furniture, if not arson itself" (II.vi.146-47). But these readers of Wertherean romances will be disappointed if they are unwilling to follow Goethe's own process of literary maturation after Werther, exemplified by the transformation of Teufelsdröckh at about this point into quite another sort of Romantic hero; from this point to the conclusion of Sartor the behaviour and words of the Professor are more those of a kind of Calvinistic Wilhelm Meister.[9] "Nowise" according to these readers' expectations "does Teufelsdröckh deport him."

He quietly lifts his Pilgerstab (Pilgrim-staff),

> "old business being soon wound-up"; and begins a perambulation and circumambulation of the terraqueous Globe! Curious it is, indeed, how with such vivacity of conception, such intensity of feeling, above all, with these unconscionable habits of Exaggeration in speech, he combines that wonderful stillness of his, that stoicism in external procedure. (II.vi.147)

It is fascinating, yet almost predictably ambiguous of Sartor, that the Editor's description of the stillness of the Professor is placed directly between two assertions of his loudness. Where one or the other contradiction--the expectation of bellowing or the reference to Teufelsdröckh's habit of exaggeration--would have served a foil to the image of silence and imperturbability, and become one more instance of the essential paradox of his dual nature, this reassertion of the counterpoint, the loudness, seems to constitute a kind of textual ambush. In fact, however, such obfuscating qualification is just one of the text's necessary strategies: necessary in order that Teufelsdröckh may be rendered as mysterious as possible and the Editor given as uncertain and unstable an aspect as he can be without completely undermining his credibility. The Editor's doubt of, no less than his enthusiasm for, Teufelsdröckh is a means by which Sartor mediates its "message" of faith maintained and even discovered in the depths of doubt. It is the Editor's suggestion that Teufelsdröckh was never

"more decisively the Servant of Goodness, the Servant of God," than when he was actually "doubting God's existence" (II.vii.161). In a similar way Sartor Resartus is never more faithful to its goal as a didactic literary work than when it is leading its readers to the conclusions it wants them to draw by means of the sometimes exhilarating, sometimes discouraging, always slightly bewildering path of semantic and structural ambiguity.

A parallel passage appears in the "Organic Filaments" chapter of Book III, though by this point the assurance of the Editor is less pronounced, the result being the incorporation into his voice of the Teufelsdröckhian ambivalence that heretofore has so bewildered it. The Editor's meditation on the Professor's view of the periodic births, flourishings and decrepitudes of societies issues in a forlorn complaint, which in turn issues quite unpredictably:

> [H]ow shall we domesticate ourselves in this spectral Necropolis, or rather City both of the Dead and of the Unborn, where the Present seems little other than an inconsiderable Film dividing the Past and the Future? In those dim, long-drawn expanses, all is so immeasurable; much so disastrous, ghastly. . . . And then with such an indifference, such a prophetic peacefulness (accounting the inevitably coming as already here, to him all one whether it be distant by centuries or only by days), does he sit--and live, you would

> say, rather in any other age than in his own! It is our painful duty to announce, or repeat, that, looking into this man, we discern a deep, silent, slow-burning, inextinguishable Radicalism, such as fills us with shuddering admiration. (III.vii.249-50)

This calm in the midst of a vision of chaos, this silence of the Professor that denies his own passionate and exclamatory nature, and the Editor's increasing instability in the face of it, are clues to the textual strategy of Sartor and to the peculiar relationship it establishes with its readers.

First of all, Teufelsdröckh's stillness and his exaggerated speech, his imperturbability and his "inextinguishable Radicalism," are all deceptive if viewed in isolation; and such viewing--a logic-chopping of the "almost boundless, formless" clothes volume and of the even less manageable paper-bag autobiography--is the Editor's stock-in-trade. This fact is revealing in itself, as it hints at the method behind the appearance of disordered multiplicity in Sartor. LaValley has recognized one function of the Editor here, noting that he "can be as much a dissolving voice as he is an ordering or rational one. . . . [H]e is obviously every bit as disorganized as his author, and his own leaping about only intensifies the sense of Teufelsdröckh's randomness" (94).[10] The Editor's interpolations in the midst of Teufelsdröckh's passages and his tendency to close some subjects abruptly and hover at length on others with little

more than cursory, often humorous nods at an explanation of his method, "convey a frightening sense of multiplicity and complexity" (94). Even the Editor, however, is ultimately drawn into the apparent stillness, really a whirlpool, of Teufelsdröckh's mind by the end of Sartor and it is largely his failure to assess the integrity of his author's mind that has brought him to this pass.

But this failure, like Teufelsdröckh's failure to acknowledge his guilt, is at worst a misdemeanour on the part of the Editor. It is a redemptive fault, not unlike those flaws in the Old Testament types of Christ which, by abasing, exalt; Patricia Parker has written that the notion of the type or figura "traditionally depends upon a crucial element of failure or destruction. Only by an act which destroyed the Garden could the Garden come to be a 'type' of the Truth. Only when David 'failed' as king could he become a figure for the Kingship of Christ" (125). If my comparison seems hyperbolic it should be remembered that Sartor was meant to be a redemptive work, Teufelsdröckh a medicinal remedy.[11] The Editor is the spokesman, perhaps the persona, certainly the mediator to the readers of Sartor on behalf of the Professor and of the duplicitous though remedial strategy, the book, that he represents. If the Editor's failures disturb readers and cause them to doubt the authority of his mediation, they are fulfilling the larger purposes of the work in so doing; for Teufelsdröckh's prodigal doubtings finally lead him into the "Divine Depth of

Sorrow" in which he glimpses the "knot" of selfishness that has been the source of his misery (II.ix.189), and this is a reflection of Sartor Resartus's own embodiment of sorrow in its musings on the Age of Doubt that has given it birth. Throughout Sartor Resartus the Editor adopts an almost perversely ambiguous attitude on the question of Teufelsdröckh's veracity in the matter of the biographical documents forwarded by the Hofrath. While progressively entertaining suspicions of virtually anyone other than himself who could have had a hand in bringing forth the biographical account of Teufelsdröckh--while suspecting a Clothes Philosopher's strategems and even his good faith toward the Hofrath and himself--the Editor appears to accept uncritically the "spirit" of Teufelsdröckh's revelations, and seems particularly gullible in accepting Teufelsdröckh's claim to have been brought up in such a way as to instill in him an "excellent 'Passivity'" (II.ii.98, 100-01).[12] Teufelsdröckh's attitude toward this "excellent 'Passivity'" is hardly separable from his comments on his foster-mother Gretchen and his images of maternity throughout his autobiographical fragments; since these images are thoroughly pertinent to the Editor's predicament I will examine them here.

The growing suspicion of the Editor that the autobiographical documents with which he has been furnished "are partly a mystification"--either a devilish strategem of Teufelsdröckh's own or a deception by some third party--

is partly allayed, but also somewhat aggravated, by the discovery of writing on "a small slip, formerly thrown aside as blank, the ink being all-but invisible." This writing moots the question, "What are your historical Facts; still more your biographical?" and answers that "Facts are engraved Hierograms, for which the fewest have the key" (II.x.203). I have already dealt to some extent with the Editor's suspicion of his sources for the biographical portion of Sartor, in the context of the instability of his own authority to address the alert reader. The most damning of the suspicions that he entertains concerns Gretchen Futteral, whose oral relation of her adoptive son's biography, mediated by the son's pen, is the most direct evidence the Editor claims to have for Teufelsdröckh's earliest life-account; in the absence of material evidence it seems the best Sartor will offer is maternal evidence, and it is characteristic of the work to portray maternity as a flawed, if not threatening, resource.

The first reference of Sartor Resartus to Diogenes Teufelsdröckh's foster mother forecasts the oddness and instability of the maternal role as it is to be presented in the succeeding chapters. "'In the village of Entepfuhl,'" writes Teufelsdröckh (by the Editor's quotation) "'dwelt Andreas Futteral and his wife; childless, . . .'" (II.i.81-82). This is Teufelsdröckh's mother; childless, as the grammatical construction emphasizes by its arrestingly periodic cast. The inversion (reminiscent of the fairy-tale to

English-speaking readers) of indirect object and subject compounded by both an Editorial intervention and the preference for a semi-colon to join, rather than a period to separate, two quite separable statements, deliberately focuses the reader's attention on the childlessness of Andreas and his wife, but particularly of the "wife; childless," the childless wife.

Despite the literal translation of Teufelsdröckh's first name, it should be recalled that Carlyle emphasizes the "unchristian rather than Christian" derivation of it (II.i.86). The temptation to leap immediately from "childless wife" to some variation on the virgin birth theme should be avoided, as indeed should any such sudden leap in the case of a work so conscious of its many sources. In fact Gretchen Futteral bears a stronger resemblance to another childless woman visited in old age with a child attached to a "promise": Sarah (Genesis 21:1-2). Gretchen, like Sarah, is depicted as a favoured woman (II.i.83-84); unlike Sarah, however, it is unclear who has favoured her. It does not help to clarify the matter that "Gretchen" is the name of the last penitent in <u>Faust</u>, who dies as a casualty of an argument between Mephistopheles and God. Gretchen Futteral, caught in this undeciding text between the two halves of the name assigned by a stranger to the child given her to nurture, is representative of the text itself, promising a birth--if a death-birth--of a nation but fashioning, not an Isaac, but an Ishmael (II.iii.113-14).

Diogenes Teufelsdröckh's wandering search for a lost paternity is an evocation of the reader's experience in Sartor Resartus; a quest which itself is evoked by the wavering, elusive image of maternity of which the grown sage speaks, and which would seem to have resulted from Gretchen's relation to the twelve-year-old "Gneschen" of the mystery of his parentage, embodied by the dark stranger to whom the boy's fancy would ascribe paternity (II.i.85). Sartor's image of maternity takes life and shape from Gneschen's fantasy of paternity, and this is not the last of the burdens the image bears. The trope of maternity could be said to divide Sartor in two; though interestingly it does not fully respect the gender delineations of specific characters. Andreas Fütteral, for instance, is grouped with his wife (who is clearly, however, the more prominent of the two) into a collective maternal image.

> 'And yet, O Man born of Woman,' cries the Autobiographer, with one of his sudden whirls, 'wherein is my case peculiar? Hadst thou, any more than I, a Father whom thou knowest? The Andreas and Gretchen, or the Adam and Eve, who led thee into Life, and for a time suckled and pap-fed thee there, whom thou namest Father and Mother; these were, like mine, but thy nursing-father and nursing-mother:- thy true Beginning and Father is in Heaven, whom with the bodily eye thou shalt never behold, but only with the

spiritual.' (II.i.86)

Maternity, for Carlyle, is material in its essence; and as for the western philosophical tradition generally, matter for Carlyle carries implications of changefulness and of an ambivalent genius that can be accorded only an ambivalent trust.[13]

When the Stranger leaves the basket bearing young Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, enjoining Andreas and Gretchen to "take all heed thereof, in all carefulness employ it" and cautioning that it will be "with high recompense, or else with heavy penalty, [that it] will . . . one day be required back" (II.i.84), Gretchen, unlike Sarah, does not laugh. Her response, and that of Andreas, is to attend to "the grand practical problem": "What to do with this little sleeping red-coloured Infant?" And they proceed to establish an environment and a regimen in which the infant can come "into whiteness, and if possible into manhood" (II.i.85). Their nursing is, if not perfect, adequate upbringing that does not stunt the development of their child genius. But something, from the child's later perspective, is missing: the ways of the elderly couple encouraged in him more an "excellent 'Passivity'" than an equal development of his active and passive faculties (II.i.98, 100-01). Their age also had its inevitable effect in the boy's loss of the father he had known, Andreas--a bereavement which was immediately followed by the then "first communicated" account of his origin by Gretchen (II.iii.107).

Teufelsdröckh writes that the communication "produced on the boyish heart and fancy a quite indelible impression."

> Ever, in my distresses and my loneliness, has Fantasy turned, full of longing (sehnsuchtsvoll), to that unknown Father, who perhaps far from me, perhaps near, either way invisible, might have taken me to his paternal bosom, there to lie screened from many a woe. (II.i.85)

His nurture is also marred by poverty; having sent him away to boarding school, "the good Gretchen . . . must after a time withdraw her willing but too feeble hand" (II.iii.108).

Though there are certainly instances in which Teufelsdröckh portrays maternity as a benevolent element (II.ii.99), it is ultimately seen to be a flawed or failed one. In what is perhaps the most reassuring image of motherhood in Sartor, of the "Mother's bosom [which] will screen us all," the maternal "screen" is apparently co-terminous with the veil of death (II.iii.106). The metaphor is from Teufelsdröckh's account of Andreas Futteral's death, and in Sartor comes immediately before that of Gretchen's disclosure, which leaves the boy "doubly orphaned . . . bereft not only of Possession, but even of Remembrance" (II.iii.107). Gretchen's last appearance is in fact a disappearance; she "seems to have vanished from the scene, perhaps from the Earth," says the Editor (II.iv.123)--presumably indicating that Teufelsdröckh has lapsed into silence concerning her. Teufelsdröckh's flight, in his

sorrows, "into the wilds of Nature" is interpreted by the Editor as a flight into the "mother-bosom" (II.vi.149) and Teufelsdröckh confirms this. Referring to himself in the third person as "the Wanderer," he declares that it was at this hour that he had first "known Nature, that she was One, that she was his Mother and divine" (II.vi.151). The powerful evocation that follows of the wounded soul's succour in its communion with this Mother is shattered in the very next paragraph, with the appearance of a coach bearing a newly-wed couple: Blumine, Teufelsdröckh's beloved, and Towgood, his friend. Hardly surprisingly, given her default-by-association in this instance, Nature's next appearance as a mother is as a "needy," not a divine one (II.ix.189).

I have noted the Editor's distrust of Gretchen in terms of its reflection on his credibility; also of interest is the fact that his distrust of his various sources for the life of Teufelsdröckh effects a bi-directionality in his efforts that makes him, in a sense, a more active Gretchen and another representative of Sartor's resolute irresolution. On the one hand the Editor clusters with Gretchen and Andreas as one of the figures of maternity in the work. To some extent he is a nurturer of Teufelsdröckh, bringing him forth into the world--though as I have already argued in the previous chapter he has not claimed for himself the creative or authoritative function that Teufelsdröckh clearly ascribes to a father:[14]

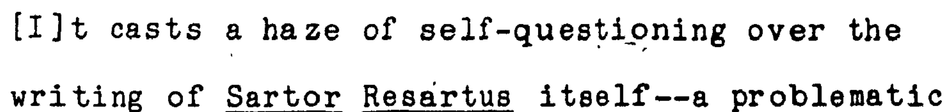
> In all the sports of Children, were it only in

> their wanton breakages and defacements, you shall discern a creative instinct (<u>schaffenden Trieb</u>): the Mankin feels that he is a born Man, that his vocation is to work. The choicest present you can make him is a Tool; be it knife or pen-gun, for construction or for destruction; either way it is for Work, for Change. In gregarious sports of skill or strength, the boy trains himself to Cooperation, for war or peace, as governor or governed: the little Maid again, provident of her domestic destiny, takes with preference to Dolls. (II.ii.92)

More importantly, under the scrutiny which his distrust of Gretchen invites, the Editor's instability as a critic associates him with the ambivalence of the text's maternal aspect. Yet he is clearly with Teufelsdröckh at least in this: his search for an indubitable authority for the biography of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh--his "utmost painful search and collation among these miscellaneous Paper-masses" (II.i.89) and "repeated trial[s]" and inquiries directed to the archives at Weissnichtwo (I.iii.17), in short his attempt to garner material for a Genesis rather than an Exodus for Teufelsdröckh--is directly parallel in its major aim, spirit, and even its errors to the Professor's quest for a father.

This persistent concern of both of <u>Sartor Resartus</u>'s main characters to recover a paternity that has been or

is believed to have been lost can offer us insight as to fruitful approaches to Sartor. Teufelsdröckh's and the Editor's persistent inquiries into the Professor's origins are the least of it. It is primarily the obsessive longing for a creative authority, a stable and directing force which will harness that which is undisciplined or discordant in the text, that characterizes the text and its characters, and even "characterizes" its readers in that it leads readers into the elusive tracking process, the alternation of definition and authority with apparent chaos and orphaning, that is Sartor's means of generating and developing its complex characters. LaValley speaks of the attempt to govern Sartor's discordant elements, following the Editor's hope that he can build his Miltonic "Bridge for British travellers" over Teufelsdröckh's Chaos and his fear that "his whole Faculty and Self are like to be swallowed up" in it (I.xi.80) through to the final state of the project: "some zig-zag series of rafts floating tumultuously thereon" (II.ix.268). LaValley concludes that even in his incessant "striving for the possibilities of order, the meaning of meaning, the editor always reminds us . . . that, however successful he may be in achieving that order, the possibility of disorder, the meaninglessness of meaning, also exists" (97). LaValley considers this ambiguity to be a carefully employed strategy.



> [I]t casts a haze of self-questioning over the writing of Sartor Resartus itself--a problematic

> aura that makes the book susceptible to diverse interpretations, in fact seems to make the book spawn such diversity. The editor through his own espousal of ambivalent viewpoints becomes as enigmatic as Teufelsdröckh, and both of them partake of the larger self-questioning of the author himself. (97-98)

It is intriguing, given the subtlety of LaValley's insights, that he agrees, apparently uncritically, with the Editor's uncritical acceptance of Teufelsdröckh's attribution to himself of an "excellent 'Passivity'" (LaValley 80). As we have seen time and time again, Teufelsdröckh's activity is an almost ceaseless phenomenon in Sartor Resartus. This creator of Chaos and straddler of heaven and hell; this incessant wanderer; this Prometheus, stealing fire; this spinning top cuts a questionable figure of passivity. The Editor's gullible belief in this characteristic claimed by the Professor results in his suspicions, always at the conclusion rather than the outset of the phases of his labours (Gentry 162), that he has been the victim of a "trick" of the Clothes Philosopher (I.xi.76, II.vi.154), perhaps a deception that will prove endemic to his work. At the close of Book II, in the "Pause" that precedes Book III, the Editor congratulates himself on what he takes to have been a near escape.

> Could it be expected, indeed, that a man so known for impenetrable reticence as Teufelsdröckh, would

> all at once frankly unlock his private citadel to an English Editor and a German Hofrath, and not rather deceptively inlock both Editor and Hofrath in the labyrinthic tortuosities and covered-ways of said citadel (having enticed them thither), to see, in his half-devilish way, how the fools would look? (II.x.202-03)

The Editor's pleasure at having "lately" discovered a paper written on in "all-but invisible" ink and referring to the hieroglyphical nature of facts (II.x.203) is almost cruelly ironic. As much as the "perceptible smell of aloetic drugs" on the Hofrath's Malthusian document in "Helotage" (III.iv.226), the device of ink which for all readers can know may have been fully invisible until near the conclusion of the Editor's task is redolent of Teufelsdröckh's excellent _activity_.[15]

The Clothes Philosopher is given many names throughout _Sartor_, and his one relatively constant name is really another hierogram, intensifying the mystery of the man as much as it defines him. LaValley's observation about the ambiguities of the Editor and Teufelsdröckh respectively, leading the reader by concentric rings into the center of Carlyle's own self-questioning, seems apt--though if we respect the necessary obliquities ~~of Carlyle~~ Carlyle himself as clothes philosopher we will perhaps prefer to refer to _Sartor_'s self-questioning rather than its author's. The danger of the reader of _Sartor_ is that as he proceeds,

the names the Editor gives to Teufelsdröckh and those the Professor gives to himself become more confusing than clarifying. These names do not only include the many allusions to literary types of the wandering romance figure; they do not stop once the names "Diogenes" and "Teufelsdröckh" have been fully footnoted. The names include "silent," for instance, and "passive": appellatives given in such a way that they appear to have been "given out." They colour the reader's perception of Teufelsdröckh from the beginning, though one can never really be sure where they were first come across; the obfuscations and perambulations of the text have more than taken care of that. And these names that mislead are more dangerous for the careful reader than for the careless. The reader who reads behind them or through them, or who in any way looks fixedly enough to "rend them asunder for moments, and look through" (III.viii.260), does so at a certain peril. Carlyle emphasizes that it is in vain that men will attempt for more than a moment to "strip off" the illusions of Space and Time that cover the "interior Celestial Holy of Holies" (III.viii.255), simultaneously clothing and blinding "our celestial ME" (III.viii.260); such is also the case for the reader and the literary text, for the reader cannot get to the meaning of the text except by the mediation of the words--the right or wrong namings--that compose it. If the namings given are confusing ones the reader may have the alternative of renaming; as I have suggested above, Sartor appears to be one of those "open"

texts that invite such activity from their readers. But the danger of the reader as writer of Sartor lies in the threat of being Resartus--read and written in turn. This is indeed what occurs in the work, for as the reader attempts to write Diogenes Teufelsdröckh into clarity--to spell him out methodically, to name him, so to assert order and authority over the "Demon-Empire" that seems to threaten his existence and ours--he finds that the paper on which he is writing that name is himself. He himself is a Demigod hovering over the Demon-Empire; and he is, first and foremost, a prodigal in the byways of this book.

The best way to approach an explanation of all this is through the further examination of Teufelsdröckh's journey in search of a lost paternity, represented in the account of his mysterious "Genesis" through to his recognition of his Father in Nature "the 'Living Garment of God'" (II.ix.188). I have already followed this account as it is reflected in the story of the Editor's unfolding sense of who Teufelsdröckh is. As G. B. Tennyson has argued, the increasing Teufelsdröckhisms of the Editor's style throughout the book serve both to represent and eventually to constitute each reader's quest in search of this Archangelic-Archdemonic authority ("Sartor" Called 177-81, 280). But if one of Teufelsdröckh's aspects is the authority with which the Editor successfully or unsuccessfully attempts to invest himself in order to address the reader, the other is the shifting and duplicitous verbal medium of which

Teufelsdröckh is himself the representation--from which he derives the authority, or at any rate the energy, to direct "the general eye and effort" to the "vitally momentous province" (I.i.7) in a search that is both purposeful quest and prodigal straying.

CHAPTER THREE: Naming Diogenes Teufelsdröckh

"Diogenes Teufelsdröckh" is an enigmatic name, the attempt to read which intelligently is hardly less active a naming than Carlyle's own writing of it. The allusions and suggestions embodied in both parts of the name act and react upon each other to produce a bewilderingly complex image which finally does not appear to be the image of a person at all, but rather of a literary catalogue--a book or myth reflecting other books and myths, ultimately a Carlylean naming of names. Carlyle's reply to Sterling's accusation of agnosticism, that confronted with such an accusation Teufelsdröckh would put his hand to his breast and cry, "Wer darf ihn NENNEN?" is suggestive.[1] Teufelsdröckh, who will not dare to name the author of all names, will approach that authority indirectly; he will name the names that have been applied to God and man since time, and naming, began.

Two of the major subtexts of this kind of naming--traditions in which, self-consciously and ambiguously, Sartor situates itself--are those of the Biblical and classical epic texts whose progressive interaction with and modification of each other has been traced in this century by Auerbach.[2] These subtexts are highlighted in Sartor Resartus by means of the Editor's hyperbolic allusions to the Miltonic dimensions of his task--allusions which, of course, recall that other uneasy meeting of human frailty with dangerous enticements in the form of the Christian poet's encounter with pagan poetry and myth.

Not surprisingly, it is in the chapter entitled "Romance" in the second book that Diogenes Teufelsdröckh experiences the loss of love which sets him upon his wanderings in the wilderness of mechanistic despair. G. B. Tennyson has dealt in detail with the relationship of this chapter, and indeed of Book Two generally, to the German Romantic form of the Tale or Märchen (<u>"Sartor" Called</u> 76-79, 190-93). Gentry evaluates <u>Sartor</u>'s attempt and success at a parody of romance (165-77). Since Parker's treatment of <u>Paradise Lost</u> in her <u>Inescapable Romance</u> is among the most pertinent of the critical material to the development of my argument, and since her assertion that "Milton's greatest poem . . . participates in a tension we have hitherto identified with the uncertain middle realm of 'romance'" incorporates the recognition that "Milton formally rejected the genre of romance in favor of epic" within the larger argument that "<u>Paradise Lost</u>, within English poetry, takes romance beyond the strictly generic" (128) it will not be necessary here to go into <u>Sartor</u>'s history as a generator of genre criticism. George A. Levine's characterization of the work as a "confession-anatomy-romance"[3] is representative of the bewildering proliferation of tags, of which a couple of examples will be analysed later in this chapter.

Basil Willey has written that "Carlylese is as distinct a dialect as Miltonics" (<u>Nineteenth Century Studies</u> 104); Parker's treatment of Milton's syntactic gymnastics points up several similarities with Carlyle's basic prose syntax.

Certainly Carlyle's prose in <u>Sartor</u> itself cannot be discussed without reference to the influence, conscious or unconscious, of the German authors whose works he had studied and expounded to the British public over the course of the previous decade.[4] A major computerized survey of Carlyle's syntactic forms shows that more than half of the sentences in <u>Sartor</u> are marked by some form of the inverted structure of parts of speech that the Anglo-Saxon inevitably perceives in initial encounters with the German language; the occurrence of this inversion of normal English syntax is quantitatively insignificant in Carlyle's other works (Oakman 96). But the better part of Carlyle's prose is characterized by a tremendous density which has appalled as many readers as it has attracted; it is as if the <u>spirit</u> of inversion, or of its sibling qualification, inhabits Carlyle's prose. It is amply evidenced by the works' tendency to forward, carefully and meticulously, a view that will then be mercilessly deconstructed, postulate by postulate, assumption by assumption (LaValley 82). The method is employed humorously in the first three paragraphs of <u>Sartor</u>--or perhaps it is better to say that the first half of it, the forwarding, is employed in the first two paragraphs and a few thereafter, and in a sense the whole remainder of the book is devoted to the dismantling and reconstructing efforts.

Parker writes of the "assertion of discontinuity in Milton," which she claims

> often takes the form of what might be called the syntactic feint, the movement in which line endings become invisible turning points, interstices in which a mistaken continuity is reversed. "Hesperian Fables true, / If true, here only . . ." (IV.250-51) becomes one of many syntactic mottos, or models, of the description of Paradise, the simultaneous evoking of an image or surmise (here "true") and the redirecting caveat, the undertow which reveals that truth to be contingent. (126)

Milton's syntactic method is not confined to his dealings with the "shadowy types" of pagan myth; his "dialectical use of all media" extends even to the images of his own poem. Parker cites the description of Death in Book II,

> The other shape,
> If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb . . . .
> (II.666-68)

as "virtually an initiation into a special kind of reading, into the process of imaging, retracting, and reimagining in pure contingency" (127). The suggestion of shape, followed by denial of any shape, followed by a qualification that "supplies the images of 'member, joint, or limb' at the same time as it restates their absence," all seems designed to threaten the reader's sense of balance or focus. "The eye returns for focus to the central 'call'd,' to what

is finally, in such a context, the sheer contingency of naming" (127).

When Teufelsdröckh holds forth on the meaning and significance of names in the "Genesis" chapter he claims that if he could "unfold the influence of Names, which are the most important of all Clothings, [he] were a second greater Trismegistus" (II.i.87). The claim is, typically, a qualified one, the implication being that, unfortunately, such an unfolding is beyond even the Philosopher of Clothes. Such an admission is both striking and ironic, given that the Professor of Things in General (surely a close analogue to "second," if not "second greater," Trismegistus) is the product of the most elaborate kind of naming. As he himself notes, "may we not perhaps say, _Call one Diogenes Teufelsdrockh, and he will open the Philosophy of Clothes_?" (II.i.88). As the Editor has pointed out early on regarding the Professorship of things in general, "the enlightened Government of Weissnichtwo . . . had only established the Professorship, nowise endowed it; so that Teufelsdröckh, 'recommended by the highest Names,' had been promoted thereby to a Name merely" (I.iii.18-19). And as McMaster and others have documented and as I argued above, Teufelsdröckh is in fact denoted by many names, proper and common, throughout _Sartor Resartus_. This is not to suggest, however, that readers are expected to invert the meaning of Teufelsdröckh's disclaimer; Carlyle's answer to Sterling--"_Wer darf ihn NENNEN?_"--leaves little ground for doubt of

Carlyle's seriousness on the subject of names. And the assertion that names are the most important of all clothings is hardly one for ignoring in this particular book; it demands a particularly careful reading, acts as a space of holy ground in the text. The one who wields the full power of names will act as a god, Trismegistus, or as unfallen man, in his domination of all other "natural appearances," was able. "Not only all common Speech, but Science, Poetry itself is no other, if thou consider it, than a right Naming" (II.i.87-88).

Though there can be little doubt here about Carlyle's reverence for his topic, it is difficult not to feel the density of the irony in this passage. A masterpiece of indirection, its treatment of naming alludes in several directions at once to an array of subtexts rivalling in impressiveness that accruing to the wandering Teufelsdröckh himself. The richness of the image of naming in the Judaic and Islamic traditions can hardly be touched here; Solomon's knowledge of the name of God gave him power to command the beasts as well as the higher spirits, the jin of Islamic lore, and one Talmudic story even has him summoning the demons to assist his building of the Temple (Gittin 68a-68b). The primary allusion is difficult to pinpoint. Harrold mentions only the Bible (Genesis 2:19) in his notes, but the words approximate those of Milton's Adam, who recounts God's approbation of his naming of the beasts in the words, "thou hast rightly named . . ." (VIII.439). In

either case, Carlyle's treatment of the subject, while hearkening to the others, parallels the conclusion of the Christian tradition that the Fall has irreparably damaged man's ability to name well, to name accurately. On one hand it may represent what Geoffrey Hartman calls "the modern poet's concern with the inherent arbitrariness of symbols."

> [T]hose poets who have forsaken the literary and the spiritual authority of a sacred text not only feel the unavoidable inadequacy that dogs conventional ways of expression (a stimulus in all times for artistic creation), but feel this inadequacy as inherent in all the works of man, as his one constant dilemma, his pain from childhood on, his existential anguish. For nothing now declares God of itself, but all is the work of man, including the testaments; and all is profane as it is sacred, and cannot be more than his conceptions which remain conceptions. (The Unmediated Vision 160-61)

It is also, however, the danger of which Milton's narrative voice in Paradise Lost is so aware in its attempt to adhere to and faithfully mediate its sacred text: the danger that, ultimately, the "shadowy types" he is attempting to name in a qualified, qualifying way will go him one better; that the final qualification will envelop his best work and his best intentions and out of such good still find means of evil.

The contingency of naming in Sartor Resartus rests,

then, in the Judeo-Christian belief that the Fall of man has impaired his ability to subdue and control creation by naming. It is important that the word "man," rather than "mankind," be used in this instance, since it is clearly typical of this Mediterranean religious tradition that it is the man who is privileged as the namer and subduer; and in the particular myth of this tradition we have been examining it is the woman who allows a "father of lies" (John 8:44) to obtrude his false naming in Paradise. The nominative aspect of Satan's speech is particularly evident in the account in Milton's poem, where both in the preparatory dream and in the actual temptation Eve is laden with imperial titles and finally promised that in the contingency of her transgression she will actually rise to be "as gods" (V.74-81, IX.684-709).[5]

Diogenes Teufelsdröckh is also named as if he were a god--to be precise, as one "born of God." But his surname clearly qualifies the title, renders it contingent upon the Demon-Empire that churns even beneath godhood. An obvious difference between the Editor and Gretchen, the woman he suspects of false naming, is that the Editor regularly uses the surname without the "pagan, rather than Christian" name while Gretchen in fact domesticates Diogenes to the pet-form "Gneschen" (II.i.88). This is certainly not altogether a surprising fact; a mother, however strange the circumstances in which she became a mother, would be unlikely to call her child other than by a familiar or even a pet-name and an

Editor would hardly do so. But in the case of this particular name any division or adaptation of it is bound to draw attention to itself, if only by virtue of its irksomeness. The diminution of a name that translates "god-born" is somehow inappropriate regardless of who, even a fond mother, is responsible for it; the omission of its mitigating influence on the surname "devil's dung" is, to say the least, problematic. On another level, then, the divergent practices of the Editor and the Hausfrau are significant in their accentuation of the problem of good and accurate naming as presented in the text. This is particularly evident in that it is the lack of such visible evidence of the Professor's name as a legible birth certificate that allows the Editor to intimate that Gretchen Futteral may be to blame for much of the obscurity and uncertainty, which is to say the contingency, of his endeavour (II.i.89).

The meaning and significance of naming in Sartor connects, therefore, with the distrust of maternity evident in the text. If, as I argued in the previous chapter, the Editor's distrust of Gretchen contributes to a revealing scrutiny of his own failures to name Diogenes Teufelsdröckh in a convincing way, it also ironically contributes to his own assimilation to what in Sartor's terms is a maternal role. Though the Editor is not a "father"--a progenitor--of the text, he shares Teufelsdröckh's at best ambivalent attitude toward maternity; but his assertion of the unsuitability of the intangible, invisible evidence for the

Professor's paternity--the unwritten and even unspoken understanding that the name is sufficient unto itself as an establishment of patriarchal authority--is implicitly a radical denial of paternal control over filial issue. It is an anthropological commonplace that the utter contingency of the man during gestation and the consequent public invisibility of his role in procreation results in his attempt to downplay the visible mediatory role of the woman by privileging the invisible mediatory role of symbolic exercises such as naming and, of course, asserting the Adamic right to exercise that privilege.[6] In his questioning of the invisible evidence of Teufelsdröckh's mysterious origin, the Editor's distrust of Gretchen's maternal evidence becomes a sign of his own ignorance of the code by which paternal authority is asserted and suggests once again his incapacity to perform as an agent of patriarchal control over the too-tangible, capricious and inscrutable, surprisingly all too "feminine" body of Teufelsdröckh's sprawling text. It becomes clear in Book Two of _Sartor_ that this sensual effeminacy of the text must be negated if it is not to prove a labyrinthine space where an Icarus, one shadowy type of the prodigal son, may yield to such misleading impulses as will likely cheat his father of his fatherhood.

The reader's attempt to resolve the contradictions of the book Teufelsdröckh has written, embodied in the contradictions of the book _Sartor Resartus_, which contains both

Teufelsdröckh and his book--and which Teufelsdröckh, himself more book than man, represents--presupposes a trust in the "Editor of these sheets" that is not ostensibly repaid. The Editor is finally not only as disorganized as Teufelsdröckh, but also as confounded as the reader of Sartor.[7] The chief difference between the Editor and the reader is that the book the Editor reads is imaginary, while the book Sartor Resartus is physically real. Unlike many other dialectics to be found in Sartor--stillness / loudness, passivity / activity, British Reader / British Editor, British Editor / German Philosopher--this one of real book and imaginary book would appear to be irreducible. It would appear to be irreducible because an examination of it seems to require that we first accept that we are examining something that is itself real; however much it may participate in the exercise of imagination, a book must also participate in objective reality if we are to analyse it, at least to the extent of having legible script of some kind and generally "reflect[ing] light and resist[ing] pressure."

Yet, it is hardly possible to consider Sartor thoroughly without dealing with the tension of the imaginary and the real within the work. Carlyle's ambivalence toward the imaginary worlds woven by novelists had manifested itself before he wrote Sartor Resartus, and was no doubt partly responsible for his ambivalence toward the work later in life.[8] Carlyle is on record as having considered Sartor a kind of novel (Letters VI: 396), though Gentry has argued

persuasively that in the wake of Frye's Anatomy of Criticism we have a categorization that more aptly describes the book's genre: Menippean satire or anatomy.

Gentry agrees with the mainstream of Sartor criticism in recognizing that the work's "plot," to the extent that it may be called that, "is the interrelationship between Teufelsdröckh and the editor" (28). The focus on this interrelationship marks the analyses of works such as Tennyson's "Sartor" Called "Resartus", which construes the book as a novel whose protagonist is the Editor and whose characters include Teufelsdröckh, Heuschrecke, the characters of the biographical account, and the documents that are being edited (184-85).[9] Gentry's argument hinges on the recognition that the relationship between Teufelsdröckh and the Editor is that typical of Menippean satire: in Frye's words, a relationship "less [of] people as such than [of] mental attitudes" (Anatomy of Criticism 309). Even in its use of Romance types, for example, "[i]t differs from the romance . . . as it is not primarily concerned with the exploits of heroes, but relies on the free play of intellectual fancy and the kind of humorous observation that produces caricature" (Frye, Anatomy 309-10). Given Frye's generic base, Gentry proceeds to argue that though "the interrelationship between Teufelsdröckh and the editor" is "a fairly good description of the 'plot' of Sartor, . . . novels are not plotted by mental constructs, while anatomies are" (28).

Proceeding to a discussion of "Menippean Parody in Sartor Resartus," Gentry quotes Frye's statement that "a kind of parody of form seems to run all through [the] tradition" of prose satire (Frye, Anatomy 233). Taking the stance that "Sartor's basic theme is the difficulty if not impossibility of form" (149), Gentry considers Sartor Resartus as a parody of "literary forms, among them the scholarly edition and translation, the book review, the biography and autobiography and the romance" (150). It will be useful to follow out his argument in a much-abbreviated form.

Sartor Resartus "purportedly is an English translation of a German treatise." However, according to Gentry, "the spotlight is less on the German book than on the English editor" (150). Teufelsdröckh's writings, supposedly the material of primary interest for which the Editor is acting as mediator to the British public, are presented in quotation marks throughout, as interpolations in the Editor's text. "Simply by virtue of typography the editorial apparatus dominates the primary material. Carlyle thereby parodies the sort of sterile pedantry and counterproductive scholarship all too familiar to him" (151). Sartor is also "a parody of the kind of book review then being published in leading journals." Here Carlyle's parody does not exempt the parodist himself.

> Carlyle's best general essays were structured as book reviews. . . . The book reviewed in Sartor

> Resartus is imaginary and the books reviewed in "Signs of the Times" and "Characteristics" are real, but the works share basic intent and themes. "Signs of the Times" and "Characteristics" follow seriously what in the 1820's had become the accepted form for book reviews, and Sartor parodies this form. (152-53)

Biography enters Gentry's scheme because "[t]he full identity of Teufelsdröckh is one of the editor-narrator's chief concerns in Sartor" (155). But this concern is parodied as well in that "[t]he editor uses the epic simile of himself as bridge builder . . . thus suggesting the mock-epic dimension of his task" (158). By virtue of the subject's own provision of writings about his life, the biography is also an autobiography. But "the only order in the autobiographical documents is the skeletal chronology of six Zodiacal signs, and this breaks down when Pisces appears out of place"--Capricorn following it, then Aquarius. To inject irony into the Editor's complaints of disorder in the documents, Carlyle has allowed the editor to overlook the mixed-up Zodiac (158). Finally, Sartor Resartus is a parody of Romance, which deals ironically with Romance conventions by means of Teufelsdröckh's mildly satiric depiction of a childhood idyll and the Editor's scorn of the clothes Philosopher's torments in his attempt to "get under way" and his deportment while in love.

The parody of romance is most fully developed

> in the chapters "Romance" and "Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh." Here again we find the reader kept at some distance from Teufelsdröckh's problems instead of an attempt at effective sympathy. This distance between the reader and the young Teufelsdröckh is maintained by both writers, but chiefly by the editor. Throughout Book II, as indeed throughout Sartor, the editor enters to reinforce or modify, or even occasionally contradict, Teufelsdröckh. Yet in the chapters "Romance" and "Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh" he breaks in more often than usual. He enters at inopportune times, and a pattern is established of the editor's deliberately foiling the reader's expectations. (170-71)

A major virtue of Gentry's argument is that it is less reductionist than most generic treatments of Sartor Resartus. Even G. B. Tennyson's exhaustive research into Carlyle's early work in translation, review writing, biography, and the Romantic novel is presented in such a way that Sartor appears to emerge fairly directly out of Carlyle's literary past.[10] The tendency of the criticism to take Carlyle's theory of unconscious genius and apply it fairly unquestioningly to the generation of Sartor is surprising, given the patent self-consciousness of the work and Carlyle's recorded doubts during its composition concerning his capacity to produce an "original" work (Tennyson,

"Sartor" Called 127-28).

Perhaps the most famous statement reflecting Carlyle's uncertainty about what the writing he was working on was or would become is found in his letter to his brother John of 19 October 1830, in which he wrote that his work in progress was one that "glance[d] from Heaven to Earth and back again" (Letters V: 175). The reference is, of course, to A Midsummer Night's Dream (V.i.12-13), just one of the many evidences in Sartor Resartus of the extent to which Carlyle was steeped in Shakespeare's plays. Harrold has noted (III.viii.267n) that the Shakespearean conclusion to "Natural Supernaturalism"--"We are such stuff / As dreams are made of [sic], and our little Life / Is rounded with a sleep!" (III.viii.267; Tempest IV.i.156-58)--became for Carlyle something of a "motto" from the time of his first reading of The Tempest. Most important for this examination, however, is the fact that it is one of several dream metaphors throughout Sartor, and occurs at the climax of the editor's interaction with Teufelsdröckh's writings, a point at which it cannot help but draw attention to the structure of Sartor Resartus. As Tennyson has pointed out, the title of Carlyle's book means not only "the Tailor re-tailored" but also "the editing of the clothes volume" ("Sartor" Called 175); therefore the editor's enthusiastic declaration that "[i]t is in his stupendous Section, headed Natural Supernaturalism, that the Professor . . . finally subdues under his feet this refractory Clothes-Philosophy, and takes

victorious possession thereof" (III.viii.254), and the Professor's image of the "Volume of Nature . . . whose Author and Writer is God" (III.viii.258) are bound to attract the reader's "utmost force of speculative intellect" (III.viii.255) not only to Teufelsdröckh's philosophy but to the clothes it has itself appeared in: the Clothes-Volume and _its_ victorious author.

In her "Play World and Real World: Dramatic Illusion and the Dream Metaphor," Judith Scherer Herz has pointed out that both _A Midsummer Night's Dream_ and _The Tempest_ "in large measure derive their form from the dream experience they describe. In them 'dream' is not only the major source of metaphor but it is the source of structure as well" (388). Much the same thing could be said of the structure of _Sartor Resartus_ since here, as in the plays, "[o]ne moves from episode to episode, relationship to relationship, as if we, as well as the actors, were dreamers. As we enter the illusion we are made to believe that the dream state is in significant ways more real than our ordinary experience . . ." (388). It is this larger-than-life aspect of _Sartor_ that renders finally limited expositions of its structure as a parodic Menippean anti-form. Gentry's recognition that "Carlyle's concern for the problem of reviews" stated in "Characteristics" (Works XXVIII: 24-25) is "a problem of which he is himself a part" (Gentry 153) may well be extended to Carlyle's reservations concerning Romance and indeed of the kind of encyclopedic writing that

Carlyle parodies both in his mock-epic imagery and in what Gentry calls his "parody of the scientific method." Carlyle's recognition that "[t]o the wisest man, wide as is his vision, Nature remains of quite infinite depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all Experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and measured square-miles" (III.viii.257) has no more prevented him from writing a profoundly learned and allusive work than his ambivalence toward Wertherism prevented him from writing a "Sorrows" of his own, culminating indeed in Teufelsdröckh's entry into a "Divine Depths of Sorrow" (II.ix.189) which recalls Wilhelm Meister (Works XXIV: 275) and suggesting that, as in Goethe's case, the mature genius cannot come to be except through youthful error. Teufelsdröckh's "Sorrows" are written in a form that is at least as Romantic as it is parodic of romance, and that is also richly suggestive of the potential of writing to transcend as well as embody these formal designations.

G. B. Tennyson's study of the influence on Sartor of the German Märchen or fabulous tale ("Sartor" Called 76-79, 96-98, 189-93), both in its form of traditional folk-tale and conscious literary device, is most enlightening in terms of Sartor's resistance to an either-or categorization along genre lines. "The Märchen," says Tennyson, was for Carlyle "the proper vehicle for contemporary allegorical symbolism" (96).

No form but the Märchen could have given Carlyle

> the latitude he needed to depict a figure who, like Teufelsdröckh, is a little more than human and less than divine. By freeing Teufelsdröckh from the requirements of conventional biography, Carlyle could invest his figure with symbolic significance impossible to overlook. (193)

But the major attraction of the form for Carlyle would have been its use as a didactic medium. "Carlyle credits the fable (for him a variety of the Volksmärchen) with introducing the Age of Apologue, or the Didactic Age, in European literary history. . . . The Märchen, he felt, had a role to play again in literature" (96). Carlyle's belief that "fable . . . may be regarded as . . . the first attempt of Instruction clothing itself in Fancy" sheds considerable light on the place of this Romantic form in a largely parodic work.

> As the Märchen can unify separate elements (instruction and fancy), so, to Carlyle, can humour. . . . Humour is [for him] the joining together of the ridiculous and the sublime; it is the means of uniting the visible and the invisible worlds, an occasion for embodying eternal truths in the very multitudinousness of nineteenth-century life. (97-98)

It is Carlyle's belief in art as "a means of unifying contrary or disparate things: visible and invisible, truth and beauty, instruction and fancy, finite and infinite" (98)

that can give us a clue to the resolution of his peculiar imaging of the relationship of readers and reading to writing and the written work. A primary image Carlyle employs to depict this relationship is, as I have argued, that of prodigal wandering. Within this motif is another, intricately woven into it and crucial to a full understanding of it. This second image is of dreams and the dreamer.

Each of Sartor's major references to dreams and dreaming stresses the weakness or littleness of the dreamer, even while asserting his power as the weaver of the dream that is his reality. As is not surprising with Carlyle, this ambivalence toward the dream-state stems from his sense of the passivity of it. Carlyle's belief that "the end of Man is an Action, and not a Thought" (II.vi.155) is evident in his image of humanity sitting "as in a boundless Phantasmagoria and Dream-grotto" with "sounds and many-coloured visions flit[ting] round our sense" (I.viii.53). The moral decrepitude of the race is shown in its inability to see "the Unslumbering, whose work both Dream and Dreamer are"--its inability "except in rare half-waking moments" even to suspect His presence. Therefore "we clutch at shadows as if they were substances; and sleep deepest while fancying ourselves most awake" (I.viii.53-54). Life's battles, revolutions and philosophies are "but the Somnambulism of uneasy Sleepers."

This Dreaming, this Somnambulism is what we

> on Earth call Life; wherein the most indeed undoubtedly wander, as if they knew right hand from left; yet they only are wise who know that they know nothing. (I.viii.54)

Despite the earlier assertion of the existence of an "Unslumbering, whose work both dream and dreamer are," it is not a departure from the spirit of Teufelsdröckh's words to this point when he concludes his meditation on Space and Time, "the master colours of our Dream-grotto," with the statement that "there _is_ no Space and no Time: WE are--we know not what;--light-sparkles floating in the aether of Deity!"

> So that this so solid-seeming World, after all, were but an air-image, our ME the only reality: and Nature, with its thousandfold production and destruction, but the reflex of our own inward Force, the "phantasy of our Dream"; or what the Earth-Spirit in _Faust_ names it, _the living visible Garment of God_. (I.viii.55)

The relationship of _Sartor_'s dream metaphor to the work's most prominent metaphor of clothing and the fashioning of clothes could not be clearer than in this passage. It has been argued that Carlyle's interpretation of the Earth-Spirit's speech was crucial to the conception and construction of _Sartor Resartus_ (Lore Metzger, "_Sartor Resartus_: A Victorian _Faust_"). At the very least it would appear to be a fact of no small significance that we have

here an instance in the text either of indecisiveness or of what J. Hillis Miller believes to be an active undecidability inherent in the text's strategy;[11] perhaps we will be unable even to decide which of these possibilities, passive or active indecision, is the case.

Any reader is certainly well-advised to beware dismissing anything met with in Sartor as mere deficiency. The Editor, in a moment with much promise of felicity, notes in the chapter "Pedagogy" that "[f]or the shallow-sighted, Teufelsdröckh is oftenest a man without Activity of any kind, a No-man; for the deep-sighted, again, a man with Activity almost superabundant, yet so spiritual, close-hidden, enigmatic, that no mortal can foresee its explosions, or even when it has exploded, so much as ascertain its significance" (II.iii.101). But the Editor passes on to bemoan the difficulty of his biographical task, given its subject, and then to reassert his will "to do his endeavour," whatever his success (II.iii.101). Within three pages of the text the Editor is referring to Teufelsdröckh's "excellent 'Passivity'" apparently without irony (II.iii.104); and in "The Everlasting No" (II.vii.158) and subsequently without a trace of irony. He has become a victim of the shallow-sightedness he has described, an example which can only serve to caution the readers of Sartor to keep their critical wits about them.

But what may be most intriguing about this lapse of the Editor is the fact that it seems to occur at the moment he

summons up his resolution to carry out his duty, to be active himself. The Editor's hope at the end of Book II that "for all the fantastic Dream-Grottoes through which, as is our lot with Teufelsdröckh, he must wander," there will be "between whiles some twinkling of a steady Polar Star" (II.x.206) is doubly revealing. The Editor construes his task, his activity, in essentially passive terms. His relationship to Teufelsdröckh is such that _his_ wandering is "our lot." The Editor hopes to be led--by a steady polar star. Instead he is led by a wanderer; yet for all the wanderer's apparent aimlessness he leads so assiduously that the Editor can only perceive himself as an effect of that wandering. In short, the Editor is the reader as somnambulist, walking as if led by his dreams, and in the same "half waking" state in which, suspicious and naive by turns, he must decide to awaken and be about his activity or return to the realm of trance and vision. For the rub is that in _Sartor_ the vision seems to be coupled with the trance. Teufelsdröckh is visible to the world at large for as long as he is resident in the _Wahngasse_--"Dream Lane" (I.iii.20); once he leaves it he is "to all appearance lost in space" (III.xii.295). The reader of _Sartor Resartus_ might be forgiven for concluding with the Editor that Teufelsdröckh's autobiography as presented in the documents is in fact "only some more or less fantastic Adumbration, symbolically, perhaps significantly enough, shadowing-forth the same" (II.x.202); but the point is that _in fact_ the documents do not exist at all. Their

existence is a matter of fact only inasmuch as "they" have been edited, or presented to readers in a comprehensible way.[12] But as Sartor seems to proclaim, a reader accepts this clarity and comprehensibility at the inevitable cost of being led on the personal wanderings of another and made to "revolve . . . not without disquietude, in the dark depths" (I.ii.11) not of his own but of another's mind and mentality, as if trapped in someone else's dream. Graham Hough, in his Preface to "The Faerie Queene", examines "how narrative sequence is used to present logical relations" in the poem in terms of dream and dream's simultaneous relation to and transcendence of allegory.

> As it is the latent meaning that gives its purposiveness to the apparently illogical dream, so it is the latent purpose that controls the apparent planlessness of The Faerie Queene-- though this latent meaning need not always be the straightforward Christian moral allegory that is so often proposed. . . . We read the poem as we experience a dream, with the same slight bewilderment yet sense of latent purpose. . . . It is the animating spirit of the poem that conditions its shape. . . . (97-98)

The connections Hough makes between the apparent (formal) planlessness and seemingly straightforward didacticism of the dreamlike structure he claims for The Faerie Queene, and his suggestion of a latent meaning and purpose belying

those appearances, are of obvious parallel significance for *Sartor*. They illuminate and are illuminated by Carlyle's own remarks on allegory in the preface to his translation of Goethe's "Das Mährchen," whose 1832 publication in *Fraser's* preceded that of *Sartor*. This preface is cast in the form of an edited translator's proem written by a mysterious "D.T." (Works XXVII, 448-53). The editor, O.Y. (the fictional Oliver Yorke of *Fraser's* who also appears in *Sartor*) refers to Goethe's tale as presenting "a phantasmagoric Adumbration, pregnant with deepest significance" (Works XXVII, 448); D.T. denies that it is "Allegory; which, as in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, you have only once for all to find the key of, and so go on unlocking it: it is a Phantasmagory, rather; wherein things the most heterogeneous are, with homogeneity of figure, emblemed forth; which would require not one key to unlock it, but, at different stages of the business, a dozen successive keys" (Works XXVII, 449). Such testimonies bear witness to the woeful inadequacy of the Editor's dismissal of the biographical documents in *Sartor* as "only some more or less fantastic Adumbration," operating symbolically. *Sartor Resartus*'s complexity and heterogeneity of image and effect create a "phantasmagoric" space into which it leads its readers, to wander, distracted by its images, as in a dream. Whether the leading is an activity inherent in the text, a Teufelsdröckhian strategy, or merely the unthought-of consequence of a text that, like the great Homer, "not only

nod[s], but snore[s]" (I.vi.46), is matter apparently for endless conjecture. The presence of a paternity in the text and a longing for it, counterbalancing or even seeking to eradicate the effects of that which encourages prodigality, is after all an ambivalence that can be traced back beyond the text itself to the mind whose articulation it is. Carlyle's comments on the autobiography of Ellwood[13] speak eloquently of an irresolution worthy of and parallel to Sartor:

> He suffered persecutions out of number, but cherished no revenge against the authors of them; his share of worldly comfort was small in comparison with what he once might have hoped for; but his heart was clear & healthful, and his life may justly be called happy notwithstanding. What made it so? How came he to shew so complete and consistent & respectable a walk and conversation amid so many drawbacks & obstructions? His creed was his support, his all in all. Is it better then to have a straight road formed for us, tho' a false one, thro' this confused wilderness of things--than to be waiting asking searching for a true one, if we never find it altogether? Compare Ellwood, a weak man, with Alfieri, Goethe, Voltaire, strong men; & award the palm! What is the proper province of Reason? (Notebooks 21-22)

CHAPTER FOUR: The "natural parabolic track"

Sartor's multi-levelled recognition of the contingency of the text, reflected in its expression of paternalistic anxiety about the textual temptation to prodigality, connects with J. Hillis Miller's work on the interrelationship of parabolic form and that type of utterance which has been labelled "performative." In an unpublished paper entitled "'Hieroglyphical Truth' in *Sartor Resartus*; Carlyle and the Language of Parable," Miller alludes to the work of Austin, Searle, Derrida, de Man, and Fish, among others, in drawing the distinction between "performative" and "constative" utterance. According to Miller,

> A constative utterance expresses, accurately or inaccurately, a prior state of affairs, a state of affairs which exists independently of the language which names it. Such a statement records an act of knowledge and is to be judged by its truth of correspondence. A performative utterance makes something happen. It is a way of doing things with words. A performative brings something new into the world, something which a moment before did not exist, as when the minister says, "I pronounce you man and wife," or when the proper person in the proper circumstances says, "I christen thee the Queen Mary." A performative utterance does not correspond to anything already

> there. It is not the result of an act of knowledge, but is a groundless positing, . . . thrown out by the words themselves to change the world. A performative creates rather than discovers. (18)

Miller's thesis about Sartor is that the work exhibits an "intrinsic undecidability" (23) about its own nature as a symbolic work which is reflected in its ironic undercutting of its own fictions and form. This undecidability comes to a head in the oft-excerpted conversion chapters, in particular that of "The Everlasting Yea." Teufelsdröckh's "discovery" of his vocation is apparently constative, or the recognition of a vocation that was his before he discovered it, yet that he had to discover before he could begin to assume its responsibilities. But as Miller has observed, the references to God and allusions to providential designs in the chapter are phrased in such a way that the reader is almost challenged to doubt their substance.

> [W]hich form of utterance is Teufelsdröckh's "Yea"? My argument is that it appears to be a constative statement but is in fact performative, or, to be more precise, that on the basis of Carlyle's own language about it, ascribed of course to Teufelsdröckh, it is impossible to tell for sure which it is, in a systematic ambiguity which is . . . not Carlyle's fault, but an essential feature of what it is he is trying to

say. . . .

> At first Teufelsdröckh's "Yea" seems unequivocally constative, another version of Isaiah's answer to God's "Whom shall I send?": "Here I am, Lord. Send me." Has not Teufelsdröckh heard God's call in his own heart, and is not his "Yea" in answer to that a knowledge of his vocation which justifies what he is, what he does, and what he says? . . . On the other hand, Teufelsdröckh makes it clear that his "Yea" is not to be a knowledge but an action, a gesture, if you will, a form of conduct not the result of speculation, in short, a performative. (19)

Miller's reference for the active nature of the "Yea" is Carlyle's quotation of Goethe's doctrine that "'Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by Action!" (II.ix.196) as well as Teufelsdröckh's affirmation that "Conviction, were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct" (II.ix.195). But insofar as <u>Sartor Resartus</u> is a hieroglyphic and indirect rendering of Carlyle's autobiography, an oblique relation of his "saying yes to his vocation as a writer" (17) a problem arises in the use of one important image in the text. Miller notes that the "terms Teufelsdröckh uses [in 'The Everlasting Yea'], his basic hieroglyphical figure here for conduct or action, as well as his account in the next chapter of his acceptance of 'Authorship as his divine calling' [II.x.199], indicate

that what is especially in question here is the proffering of language as gesture, action, or conduct . . ." (20). In the chapter following, Teufelsdröckh employs the analogy of God's creation of the world to express the performative power of writing: "The WORD is well said to be omnipotent in this world; man, thereby divine, can create as by a Fiat" (II.x.199). But the Professor's use of the same image in "The Everlasting Yea" differs from the later use in one important respect. In "Pause" he concludes his thought with the exhortation, "Awake, arise! Speak forth what is in thee; what God has given thee, what the Devil shall not take away" (II.x.199); but though in the "Yea" itself he refers indeed to a "Divine moment," it is one in which the attribution of speech to God is noticeably lacking. "Divine moment, when over the tempest-tossed Soul, as once over the wild-weltering Chaos, it is spoken: Let there be Light!" (II.ix.197). Teufelsdröckh's concession in the following sentence that it is a "miraculous and God-announcing" event only serves to highlight the conspicuous absence of God in the previous statement; it is the most conspicuous, though as I will show not the only, instance of a certain "sleight of hand" with Biblical quotation in Sartor; and as Miller argues, so evident an omission as the name of God from the image of God's creating Fiat is thoroughly problematic, casting a distinct shadow over the subsequent use of the image.

In spite of the phrase "what God has given

> thee," it is impossible to tell whether the Fiat of the man who holds the pen and wields it as a magic wand is a response to God's call or whether it is an autonomous act, a performance which on its own turns chaos into an organized world spinning round a center and making a coherent system. The ambiguity, or, more properly, undecidability, turns on the uncertain reference of the "it" in Carlyle's formulation "it is spoken." Is the it speech of God or is it speech of man the performative penwielder? If "it" is the first, then conduct for Carlyle is based on a prior knowledge, and it is God who brings light, intellectual illumination, and order. If "it" is the second then man's own autonomous act as a producing writer creates the order, posits it as a manbegotten fiction, along with the conviction that the conviction is Godbegotten. (21)

If in fact the references to providence in "The Everlasting Yea" are merely formal--courtesies to the confession tradition and psychologically significant to Carlyle, but hardly an inherent part of the conversion experience being described--then, in Miller's words, Teufelsdröckh's "Yea" is an "[a]ction or conduct [which] precedes conviction and the knowledge (or conviction of knowledge) conviction brings, not the other way around" (20). Significantly, though the words to which

Teufelsdröckh specifically ascribes the title "Everlasting Yea" have a distinctly scriptural ring to them, the ring is deceptive. "Love not Pleasure; love God" (II.ix.192) is a command cast in an emphatic syntactic formulation familiar to any student of the words of Christ; but the command of Christ that perhaps best approaches the sound of Teufelsdröckh's Yea is in fact an almost direct inversion of the Yea, much more reminiscent of Teufelsdröckh's earlier response to the No. Speaking to the twelve, upon whom he has just conferred their apostolate, Jesus instructs them: "fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28; emphasis mine). Much closer in sentiment to Teufelsdröckh's words is Christ's charge in Matthew 6:19, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth . . . / But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . / For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (This charge, incidentally, is also within glancing distance in the text from the instruction at Matthew 5:37 to "let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay.") But the injunction on fear is actually more pertinent to the sorrowful Teufelsdröckh's spiritual state throughout his wanderings.

> I lived in a continual, indefinite, pining fear; tremulous, pusillanimous, apprehensive of I knew not what: it seemed as if all things in the Heavens above and the Earth beneath would hurt me;

> as if the Heavens and the Earth were but boundless jaws of a devouring monster, wherein I, palpitating, waited to be devoured. (II.vii.166)

The moment "when, all at once, there rose a Thought in me, and I asked myself: 'What art thou afraid of?'" is the moment of Teufelsdröckh's emancipation from the Everlasting No and the beginning of his spiritual restoration. Perhaps most interesting of all is the fact that the verbal content of the Yea, the principal words "love," "pleasure," and "God," almost certainly come from II Timothy 3:4, a verse which, rather than affirming, censures, by describing the "lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" Timothy is counselled to avoid. Regardless of the closeness of the Yea's approximation to the words of Christ, the Word of God, or the scriptures, the words of God, the words of the "Yea" are in fact the words of Teufelsdröckh, "Devil's-dung," also named "born of God," Diogenes; as such they carry an implicit threat that they--their formulation or the interpretation which will be placed on them--will prove to be "traitors, heady, high-minded . . . having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (II Timothy 3:4-5).

As Carlisle Moore has noted, Teufelsdröckh's sorrows are brought about by a fundamental doubt that God loves the world;[1] the language used to depict Teufelsdröckh's wanderings and especially the passage which closes the "Romance" chapter, has been likened to that of Jean Paul Friedrich

Richter.[2] Jean Paul's "Rede des Toten Christus" narrates a dream in which Christ convokes the dead and tells them that he has searched the universe for the living, loving God and Father he had trusted and has found instead a dead eye socket, an eternal emptiness.[3] Teufelsdröckh's emptiness at the end of "Romance" suggests the cosmic proportions of his disappointed trust and love:

> Thus was Teufelsdröckh made immortal by a kiss. And then? Why, then--'thick curtains of Night rushed over his soul, as rose the immeasurable Crash of Doom; and through the ruins as of a shivered Universe was he falling, falling, towards the Abyss.' (II.v.145-46)

J. W. Smeed has demonstrated the specific parallels between the imagery of Richter's Christ and Carlyle's Teufelsdröckh in this passage (<u>German Influence</u> 5-6). Carlyle himself cites Richter in a passage that constitutes Teufelsdröckh's denouement, his final undoing. Seeking healing in the "mother-bosom" of Nature and seeming, in that communion, to find a new faith--"as if Death and Life were one, as if the Earth were not dead, as if the Spirit of the Earth had its throne in that splendour . . ."--he hears the approach of a wedding-party. His immediate sympathy with their celebration of their new joy shifts quickly as he recognizes his former love, newly married to the man whose company was the nearest thing to friendship the young Diogenes had had. They pass him "with slight unrecognizing salutation," and

"I," says Teufelsdröckh, -

> in my friend Richter's words, I remained alone, behind them, with the Night. (II.vi.151)

Jean Paul's "Rede," a dream vision, is in the end only a dream and the sleeper awakes to a relieved knowledge that he can still pray to God (Works XXVII: 158). In a sense the "Rede" is a parody of a dream vision in that the contrast between the content of the dream and the conclusion drawn by the dreamer from the experience of the dream is stark enough to cast the entire vision into the mode of irony, to effect an ironic inversion of its message. Ostensibly the nadir of Romantic despair, it penetrates the depths of the imagery of despair as Dante has to pass beneath Satan's hinder parts in hell, in order to arrive at hope again.[4] The hope is also Romantic, the hope of Goethe and the Romantic Idealist philosophers as well as of Jean Paul.[5] It is the hope that Teufelsdröckh has come close to grasping, only to have it shattered again--the intuition that "the Universe is not dead" after all (II.ix.188). In fact, there is a more pointed parallel between the two passages in that both depict the sorry result of misplaced faith. The "Rede" even indulges in a second level of irony on this theme; it is suggested by Christ in the dream that men should continue to pray to God while they live, for that is the only way for them to keep his image alive--to keep their hopes alive, false though they will prove after death (Works XXVII: 158). The final pastoral scene of the "Rede," after the dreamer's

awakening, cannot be viewed with the perfect confidence it should elicit, since the dreamer's gratitude that he can still pray to God is too close for comfort to Christ's suggestion that man do just that, despite the fact that there _is_ no God.

If Teufelsdröckh's "Romance" is in fact a parody of romance in the sense that Jean Paul's "Rede _des Toten_ Christus" is a parody of a vision of Christ, it is also so in the sense that one of Christ's own preferred modes of speech, his parables, are a parody of parable.[6] Christ's parables are _about_ parable; they speak of the power of God to speak his word to mankind, even through the intermediate and indirect means of human words and actions; and it is difficult to think of a parable that exemplifies this as clearly as that of the prodigal son. The "lost" son is in fact, as I have said earlier, lost for the very reason that he cannot _find_ his way back, lacking as he does the knowledge that his father will be where he needs him to be as soon as the son can understand that he is lost. The moral emphasis of the parable is clearly not on the dangers of dissolute life, but on the forgiving love that can recover and repair such dissolution. The better part of the narration, however, focusses upon the details of the son's decline and so illustrates in both manner and matter the indulgence of wandering and of profligate indirection that the father must--at any rate, does--allow. God's gift of love, his Word, mysteriously meets and redeems mankind only

after it has gone so pathetically astray that it can no longer be spoken to plainly and directly. The "parabolic track" of discontinuous straying, which has become mankind's only pattern and "natural" track, is the path that the omnipotent Word will enter in order to recover the prodigal.[7]

As in Sartor Resartus, so in this its most famous parabolic ancestor, the status of words and the Word is simultaneously "foregrounded" and obscured; the result in the case of Sartor is an often bewilderingly intense scrutiny of the relationship of the creative act of verbalizing to a wayward textual universe that seems intent on avoiding redemption or recovery by words. Teufelsdröckh's irony, his deep-seated demonic humour, is the Editor's scapegoat for his failures to master the Clothes Volume and the autobiographical documents. But we have only to examine the prototype of parabolic usage, the parabolic speech of Christ, to appreciate the universality and complexity of the wandering maze that the reader or audience of parable, no less than the Editor of Sartor, must run: a maze whose intricate ironic delusions repeatedly moot the question of what relationship if any can be established in good faith between speaker and hearer, reader and writer, the creating Word and the recipient of his created words.

The Word of God, the God-man, is speaking to other men in a parabolic form which is not new, but which is invested with a new power by virtue of the authority of the speaker.

The words of the Word are his actions in the sense that the words of characters in a text are their means of acting upon each other (Elizabeth Bowen, Collected Impressions 255). In a sense that I believe Carlyle would have approved, the difference between the words of these characters and those of Christ is the difference of reality. The words of fictions will partake of the nature of fiction, which is in some measure the nature of lying (Works XXVIII: 49);[8] those of Jesus of Nazareth proceed from "our divinest Symbol" (III.iii.224) and "highest Orpheus" (III.viii.263), and so participate in the highest reality. Christ is the zenith of the Vates, is both poet and prophet. His words cannot be false, and are without vestige of the threat of sophisty; rather, they restore the prelapsarian language of "right Naming" exhibited by Adam in his naming of the beasts in paradise, glancing at once into "the deepest deep of Beauty" and the Good (Works V: 81).

Christ's parables are a parody of parable at the same time as they recover parable from its profane uses and transform it into a medium for the grace of God. Christ uses fictions freely, to the point that he is criticized and doubted by his own disciples for obscuring the truth he has been sent to convey (Matthew 13:10; John 16:29-30). His answer to them, parabolic itself, is that those who have ears to hear should hear (Matthew 13:9; 13:16-17); at the same time he explains the parables in private to the twelve, in language they can understand (Matthew 13:18-23).

Parable, then, is a necessary or at least a useful form, but once employed it is not indispensable. The primary use of this most cryptic of fictions is to convey truth, and in Christ's use it is an act of revelation. As in the "Rede des Toten Christus," the contrast is between the apparent content of Christ's action as Word--dealing in verbal fictions--and its outcome in the private disclosure of meaning to the disciples, a silent or at least secret manifestation whose seminal influence proceeds in due course in the Acts of the Apostles. Those Acts, to extend the point, are the acts of a group of twelve that are the same but different,[9] and who are in communion with the same Christ but in a different way (2 Corinthians 5:16). One of their number, whose seemingly wordless action of a kiss issued in the loss of Christ's presence among them, is himself gone from among them (Luke 22:47-48, Acts 1:15-18). His signal of betrayal, apparently wordless, was of course covertly worded--established by verbal negotiation beforehand and revealingly enough an oral sign (Luke 22:3-4). He has been replaced by one who, according to the Acts writer, had been with the twelve the whole time they walked with Christ on earth (Acts 1:21-26) but on whom the gospel account is utterly silent. They have discovered that Christ is still with them, though in a new way, in spirit and in truth. This new way is conceptually opposed to "the letter that killeth" (2 Corinthians 3:4-6) by the wordiest of the apostles, who is also the unnumbered Apostle--the one

Apostle who is and is not of the communion of the twelve, having been chosen by Christ in his new way, in a new manifestation of his presence, and spoken to by him in words that only he, Paul, could hear (Acts 9:3-9). The Acts scenario has to confirm any suspicion we may have from the gospel that we could only have shared in the criticism of Christ forwarded by the twelve, perhaps even do share in it: that though we may not insist with Carlyle that Christ's parabolic form of speech, in its secular use, partakes of the nature of lying, we might protest that even in Christ's use the form, as a means of public utterance of import and of truth, appears to partake of the nature of folly. We are then free to exasperate ourselves fully by reading Christ's prayer to his Father, overheard and recorded by his followers, in which he delights that the Father has concealed his truth from the learned and revealed them to simple men (Luke 10:21)--a sentiment echoed later, of course, by Paul the learned apostle, who says of the ungodly that "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1:22). If we follow Christ's leading to this point it will be difficult for us to resist the vision of ourselves as onlookers and overhearers caught up in a parody of revelation, an almost absurd inversion of communication, which, however, purports in the grave terms of Life, Death, redemption and perdition to effect a revelation that can catch us up into the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12:2) and that will create communion and community.

Given Teufelsdröckh's assertion that all symbols are but garments which, he observes with Isaiah (50:9), will "wax old" and which the Professor believes may in some cases--must if they are to survive--be reinvested with significance (III.iii.224), the seeming attempt of the god-born to usurp the station of performative speaker from the prior, god-begotten creating Word is perhaps devoutly to be wished. It should not be forgotten that, as Tennyson has pointed out, "Teufelsdreck"--the name of Sartor as well as of its hero until shortly before publication--is the name of an herbal digestive remedy (Sartor Called 220); and Teufelsdröckh's faith in the progressive revelation of the Divine to each new generation through further and further refined symbols is reminiscent in several ways of the Archangel Raphael's treatise on angelic and human digestion in Paradise Lost (V. 404-505). Raphael's suggestion that, as Humankind grows in the love and obedience of God in which it has begun, its corporeal essence may be translated into a more purely spiritual (just as the angelic digestive apparatus has no difficulty "transubstantiating" the coarser fruits of the earth into fit sustinence for itself, the higher translating the lower) finds a close analogy, if not a direct progeny, in Teufelsdröckh's words on the "Bible":

> One BIBLE I know, of whose Plenary Inspiration doubt is not so much as possible; nay with my own eyes I saw the God's-Hand writing it: thereof all other Bibles are but leaves,--say, in Picture-

Writing to assist the weaker faculty. (II.ix.194; emphasis mine)

This is one of the instances of Sartor Resartus's insistent self-referentiality and displaying of its seams. Sartor's "foreign hieroglyphs" (I.xi.74)--symbols, perhaps intrinsic as in "all true Works of Art" (III.iii.223), but to all appearances extrinsic and ornamental, persistently direct the reader's attention to the surface, the superfices of the text. Its fictions draw attention to their fictiveness; its syntactic peculiarities announce themselves by the interpolation of German translations in the text; if its biographical portions do, as Elizabeth Waterston suggests (112), attempt to provide the impression of veracity, they undercut such an impression with at least an equal force.

Such direction to the surface of a text whose well-evinced moral purpose demands the transcendence of clothing and recognition that clothes, however necessary, are neither the native property nor a permanent accoutrement of man, permeates Sartor Resartus. The first several chapters, and indeed, as has been noted by more than one critic, half the words of the book, are devoted to establishing this emphasis. It will hardly be possible for a reader to remain unaware of the surface technicalities of a work whose narration is begun and consistently reentered by an Editor.[10] This question, of why Carlyle, who deprecated Byron as "a Dandy of Sorrows" (Notebooks 230), chose to set forth his ideas in such sartorial ostentation, is Miller's point of

departure in the close analysis of hieroglyphic, parabolic language outlined at the beginning of this chapter.

> The problem, the reader will see immediately, in a blink of the eye, is that though Sartor Resartus may indeed be engraved Hierograms shadowing-forth a transcendent meaning, those Hierograms, in this case, are not facts at all but outrageous and hyperbolic fictions. Sartor Resartus differs in this radically in its mode of language from most of Carlyle's other works, [which] have a solid historical or biographical base, however much they make that base the hieroglyphic vehicle of an otherwise invisible spiritual truth. That base is missing in Sartor, except by way of the exceedingly oblique and indirect presence of the facts of Carlyle's own life story behind the life of Teufelsdröckh. No one who did not already know those facts, however, for example the story of Carlyle's conversion experience in Leith Walk, could possibly extract them as such from Sartor. My questions here are the following: What, exactly, is the mode of language of Sartor Resartus? Why did Carlyle find it necessary to use such a fantastic mode of indirection to say the truth that was in him? What does it say about the nature of that truth that it needed to be said in such a roundabout and parabolic fashion? (5-6)

It will likely prove impossible to answer such questions; Miller does not suggest that it is possible to do more than "indicate" a logical resolution to what is, ultimately, paradoxical and undecidable (23); and this is undoubtedly an attitude in the spirit of Carlyle, whose ambivalence toward "vulgar logic" meets the reader at every turn in his writings. The most fruitful route is likely to be through the center of the paradox--or at least through a center of indifference, to what will in any case prove an unresolved paradox. We cannot expect to share in Teufelsdröckh's eschatological triumph if we refuse to experience something of his eschatological tension.

I have indulged in the hyperbolic typological parallel of the previous sentence in order to highlight once again the attitude of doubt and sense of danger about the nature of _Sartor_'s "authority" that marks the Editor's statements at several turns in the book; that the text seems to insist upon establishing in its readers.

> The examples Teufelsdröckh gives of God-inspired men are all of real historical personages, Jesus for example. What difference does it make that Teufelsdröckh is a fictive character in a work of fiction, . . . not really [a personage] himself, only the cunning image of one? Does that not discount, ironize, or hollow out Teufelsdröckh's claim to present genuine Promethean Hieroglyphs or to be such a one in himself? He is not a real

God-inspired man but a diabolical image of one, or worse, the mere detritus of such an image, its remnant written down on the pages of a work of fiction, in short, Teufelsdröckh, devil's dung. (17)

An intriguing supplement to these observations is that of Geoffrey Hartman in Criticism in the Wilderness, that a possible alternative reading of "Teufelsdröckh" would be Teufelsdruck or devil's print (47), suspending "Teufelsdröckh" in an ambiguity similar to that of "Diogenes" with its pagan and Christian associations. Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, god-born and cynic, is also detritus and the footprint or "track" of language: the dead letter on the printed page.

The "natural parabolic track" which, according to the Editor, Teufelsdröckh has followed into the Empyrean (II.v.145), is also a roundabout route through most of the countries of the world, in the course of which the wanderer has encountered a conglomeration of sights and sounds, a Hyperborean Bear, and most of the world's spoken languages. As well, however, it is a track and trace of literary and mythic allusion: a path to lead the reader of Sartor Resartus through "most Public Libraries" (II.viii.176) and the thoughts and words of such "great Men" as "are the inspired . . . Texts of that divine BOOK of REVELATION, whereof a Chapter is completed from epoch to epoch, and by some named HISTORY; to which inspired Texts your numerous

talented men, and your innumerable untalented men, are the better or worse exegetic Commentaries . . . ." (II.viii.177). Carlyle's entry in his notebook for 25-26 March 1822 could hardly less appropriately be applied to Sartor than to Milton's Defensio pro Populo Anglicano, to which Carlyle is referring:

> Milton's mode of reasoning has something curious in it: he appeals to first principles hardly, but wanders in a wilderness of quotations and examples, summoning to his aid all that Jew or Gentile ever did or said on the subject. (4)

The riddle of the wandering Diogenes Teufelsdröckh's identity is ultimately reducible to that of the identity, the meaning and significance, of the circumambulatory text whose emblem he is. Similarly, the reader as imaged in Sartor is finally obliged to follow in Teufelsdröckh's footprints if he is to hope to master the nether-churnings of Sartor's Demon-Empire. The question whether or not such a hope is realistic or even desirable is one that will not ultimately be decided by readers "untalented" in the sense of another parable of authority and error, that of the faithful servants and the unprofitable servant (Matthew 25:14-30)--by readers who ~~are~~ unwilling to make a suitable investment of themselves.

CONCLUSION

To say that the naming of Diogenes Teufelsdröckh and, by extension, of Sartor Resartus, is parabolic, is to say that this naming is a form of linguistic wandering. Yet to assert that the namings of any text, the terms in which it simultaneously frames and executes its meanings, is a thing prone to error and perhaps even inherently erroneous, is to assert a fundamental paradox. For naming is an established agent of the control of meaning and the assertion of purpose; in the literary text, indeed, it is the chief if not the only constituent of direction and coherence. The argument of this thesis has been that, in the case of Sartor Resartus, the existence of the paradox cannot but be acknowledged.

In his chapter "On Words and The Word" in The Rhetoric of Religion, Kenneth Burke writes of what he calls the linguistic "paradox of the negative":

> Quite as the word "tree" is verbal and the thing tree is non-verbal, so all words for the non-verbal must, by the very nature of the case, discuss the realm of the non-verbal in terms of what it is not. Hence, to use words properly, we must spontaneously have a feeling for the principle of the negative.
>
> The most obvious formal instance of this feeling for the negative discount is in irony, a

> figure which, at its simplest, states A in terms of non-A. (18)

We might easily echo Burke in stating that the most obvious formal aspect of Sartor, as of the characterization of both Diogenes Teufelsdröckh and his British Editor, is irony. Carlyle's words to John Stuart Mill, "[I] could have been the merriest of men, had I not been the sickest and saddest" (Letters VI: 449, 24 September 1833), may help us to indicate in a final encapsulation some key to the intuition, though by definition not the comprehension, of Sartor Resartus's paradox of prodigal naming. For Carlyle's qualification in the subordinate clause of his statement absolutely negates, as his emphasis indicates, the assertion of the main clause. In a remarkably similar way, the names "Diogenes Teufelsdröckh" and "Sartor Resartus" summon up images which--though they cannot but be stated in the positives that words and images themselves are--have as well the "quasi-positive" aspect that characterizes theological naming (Burke, Religion 22). Just as we might say that "God, by being 'supernatural,' is not describable in the positives of nature" (Burke, Religion 22), we may assert, pending the kind of demonstration I have sought to provide here, that the peculiarity of Sartor Resartus's form of naming is significantly attributable to the tendency of those names to employ the "principle of the negative" to forward what positive purposes may be theirs.

One of the inevitable effects of naming a character

"Diogenes Teufelsdröckh" will be to inculcate in a reader's mind a sense of the negative, of the ultimately ephemeral nature of both of the names that have been yoked together. To the extent that we are able to name the ineffable, God, in terms of what he is not--"in words like 'immortal,' 'immutable,' 'infinite,' 'unbounded,' 'impassive' and the like" (Burke, <u>Religion</u> 22)--one of the primary concepts we will be able to enunciate will be that of a not-God, what Carlyle calls the "Time-Prince (<u>Zeitfurst</u>), or Devil" (II.iv.119): the inherently negative and negating contradiction of God, with whom, or with whose "issue," no God-created thing could hold discourse.

That "Diogenes Teufelsdröckh" attempts to sustain just such a discourse is central to the purpose of a "<u>Sartor</u>" that would be "<u>Resartus</u>." The transcendence, perhaps also the undercutting, of the Tailor whose "stuff" is metaphor requires just such an impossibility of language, for the Tailor is imagination "herself" (I.xi.73). "Diogenes Teufelsdröckh" invites readers of the many names of <u>Sartor Resartus</u> to participate in an attempt to secure a rebirth of imaginative language parallel to the "<u>Newbirth of Society</u>" (III.ii.217) championed on a more emphatically semantic level by Diogenes Teufelsdröckh. Sterling characterized as "barbarous" various aspects of the language of <u>Sartor</u>--its neologisms, its "new and erroneous locutions," "the constant recurrence of some words in a quaint and queer connection," and certain "strange mannerisms" which "fall under the

general head of a singularity peculiar . . . to Teufelsdröckh":

> the incessant use of a sort of odd superfluous qualification of his assertions; which seems to give the character of deliberateness and caution to the style, but in time sounds like a mere trick or involuntary habit. "Almost" does more than yeoman's, almost slave's service in this way. Something similar may be remarked of the use of the double negative by way of affirmation. (310)

Carlyle's reply, that the revolutionary time is not "a time for Purism of Style," is characteristically put as a rhetorical question--"[D]o you reckon this is really a time for Purism of Style?"--and then denied: "I do not" (317). His response to the criticism of Sartor Resartus's linguistic practice is an extension of that practice, a positing and negating in a single breath, or forwarding of a position that implies its own negation, an authorial and authoritative purpose whose content is prodigal wandering.

NOTES: Chapter One

[1] G. B. Tennyson concludes that Sartor is ultimately a novel ("Sartor" Called 125, 173-74). William Larry Gentry, in his doctoral dissertation "Sartor Resartus: An Anatomy," employs Frye's term for Menippean Satire to define Sartor's genre. In The Rhetorical Form of Carlyle's Sartor Resartus Gerry H. Brookes argues that the work is finally to be considered a persuasive essay, whose fictions are purely means to its hortatory ends.

[2] In Carlyle and the American Transcendentalists, written in the midst of World War II, William S. Vance observes that "[p]ropaganda is one of the tools of war" (2-3); Carlyle's reputation undoubtedly suffered as a consequence of attempts to interpret his works as a justification of Nazi political ideology and methods.

[3] See Janice L. Haney, "'Shadow-Hunting': Romantic Irony, Sartor Resartus, and Victorian Romanticism"; Emma S. Richards, "Romantic Form and Doctrine in Sartor Resartus"; Charles Richard Sanders, "The Byron Closed in Sartor Resartus"; Donald R. Swanson, "Carlyle on the English Romantic Poets." See also Albert J. LaValley's Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern 99, 105-07, and G. B. Tennyson's "Sartor" Called "Resartus" 92n.

[4] In "Carlyle and Goethe as Scientist," "Carlyle and the Torch of Science," and "Carlyle, Mathematics and Mathesis."

[5] Tennyson, "Sartor" Called 182, 189-93; LaValley 90; Paul Jay, Being in the Text 101; Geoffrey Hartman, Criticism in the Wilderness 48-49; and Stephen L. Franklin, "The Editor as Reconstructor: Carlyle's Historical View as a Shaping Force in the Fiction of Sartor Resartus" 34 are five instances of the argument for the deliberate and insistent artificiality of Teufelsdröckh's biography.

[6] Geoffrey Hartman, in his consideration of Sartor in Criticism and the Wilderness, writes that "no writer who goes through the detour of a text gets himself unmediated" (48).

[7] Adam's naming of the beasts at Genesis 2:19-20 is probably the best-known image of an ideal state in which names may be applied to things accurately so as to reflect their essential natures. Implied in the myth, of course, is a judgement that the inadequacy and the often misleading inaccuracy of human naming are consequences of the Fall.

[8] G. B. Tennyson explores the allusive significance of the Persian silk blanket in which the infant Teufelsdrockh was wrapped when left at the cottage of Andreas and Gretchen Futteral ("Sartor" Called 222).

[9] See Jay, Being in the Text 92-114 for a stimulating discussion of Sartor Resartus as garment. The term "foregrounded" is borrowed from Hartman's discussion of Sartor in Criticism in the Wilderness 48-49.

[10] For a discussion of Carlyle's style in terms of

political and linguistic authority, see C. R. Vanden Bossche, "Revolution and Authority: The Metaphors of Language and Carlyle's Style."

[11] In Inescapable Romance. Though the term "texture" is the currency of Carlyle criticism since Tennyson's "Sartor" Called "Resartus" rather than Parker's own, I believe it serves admirably as a bridge between her criticism of "romance"--extending as that criticism does to the consideration of works such as Paradise Lost that eschew the rigorously structural, generic conventions of romance--and analysis of Sartor Resartus, a work that strenuously resists neat categorization in terms of structure alone, style alone, subject matter alone.

[12] LaValley suggests that the Editor departs on a note of doubt more pronounced than any he has struck to that point--"not . . . the usual utilitarian misapprehension," but an expression of "Carlyle's own doubt about himself and his world" (87).

[13] For examinations of Carlyle's views on the unconsciousness of genius see Matthew P. McDiarmid, "Carlyle on the Intuitive Nature of Poetical Thinking" and M. H. Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp 216-17.

[14] Umberto Eco, The Role of the Reader 4. In broad terms, an open text is one in which "[t]he reader as an active principle of interpretation is a part of the picture of the generative process of the text."

[15] The subject of parabolic form and expression in Sartor

Resartus has been directly treated by J. Hillis Miller in "'Hieroglyphical Truth' in Sartor Resartus; Carlyle and the Language of Parable," a paper scheduled to be published in a volume sponsored by the Department of English, University of Kentucky. I will make extensive use of the paper later in this thesis, but believe that the echo of it is strong enough even at this point to require citation--which the author, who retains all rights, has permitted.

NOTES: Chapter Two

1 See also Albert J. LaValley, _Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern_ 86-87.

2 I have seen fit to supply the references to the Biblical parable in the text; the references to _Sartor_ to this point require the elucidation of a note. Teufelsdröckh's inexperience at service is largely a result of the sullen independence and nonconformity often associated with genius, which has resulted in his being given up as "a man of genius" by prospective employers (II.iv.123). In Teufelsdröckh's case one of the spurs to indignation against him has been a self-indulgence that he appears never fully to relinquish--that of his ironic attitude (II.iv.128-29). In "The Everlasting Yea" he becomes aware of the necessity of selflessness and of working "_in Welldoing_" (II.ix.183, 186). But Teufelsdröckh's breaking off of the "neck-halter" of his auscultatorship before having accrued more than minimal experience in a worldly profession exacts at least partial approval from the Editor as a necessary escape from a stifling situation (II.iv.121-22): one that certainly would have rendered more difficult the exercise of free speculation which has resulted, not in a sansculottist philosophy of negation, but in the doctrine of renewal and recovery of worn-out symbols that is at the heart of the Clothes Philosophy. Teufelsdröckh has travelled "a natural

parabolic track" into the Empyrean of love, only to return by "a quick perpendicular one" (II.v.145). But he has recognized in the course of his subsequent wanderings that the labour by which he must sustain his life is as much a distraction from the activity of self-torment as it is a life-giving end in itself (II.vi.156).

3 The Jerome Biblical Commentary observes that "[t]he remembrance of his father's goodness revives [the prodigal's] hope and compunction. The father first seeks the lost son by the memory he has instilled; he is seeking the boy before the lad thinks to return (44:119).

4 LaValley argues that "the role of the self in discovering a center that will render ME and NOT ME is implicit" in the Clothes Philosophy, even "ultimately identifiable with it" (78).

5 The "Open Secret" is Carlyle's translation of Goethe's "offenbares Geheimniss"; he used it to express his belief "that absolute truth and reality lay behind the world of time and space, and yet lay openly revealed to the eye which could recognize appearances for what they were" (Charles Frederick Harrold, Carlyle and German Thought 77-78, 266-67 n. 10). See Works V: 80.

6 LaValley notes "how often [the Editor's] negative criticism of Teufelsdröckh emphasizes the dangerous potentialities of disorder" (101-02). The Editor's "intense movement toward order" leads him to cast his observations about Teufelsdröckh "in strict either-or

disjunctions" calling for a clear identification of the Professor as godly or demonic. But the "insistent repetition of such a disjunction each time that Teufelsdröckh appears at least implies that the reader is not really expected to make a choice between the two realms," destroying the Editor's quest for logical and systematic distinctions by suggesting that "the two worlds are more closely related than he suspected, perhaps even identical."

[7] G. B. Tennyson treats Sartor as a novel whose primary characters are the Editor and the Clothes Volume ("Sartor" Called 174-75). Gentry covers similar ground, but classifies Sartor as an anatomy since "novels are not plotted by mental constructs, while anatomies are" (28).

[8] Critics have come to quite different conclusions as to the evidence for the Editor's "conversion" in Sartor Resartus. G. B. Tennyson supports the view of the Editor as an initially reluctant convert ("Sartor" Called 177-82). Alvan S. Ryan rejects it, claiming that the Editor from the beginning is hardly distinguishable in thought or expression from Teufelsdröckh ("The Attitude Toward the Reader in Carlyle's Sartor Resartus" 16). See also Walter J. Reed, "The Pattern of Conversion in Sartor Resartus."

[9] Tennyson, "Sartor" Called 207. See also Harrold's treatment of Carlyle's revision of Goethe's concept of Entsagen in Carlyle and German Thought 216-22.

10
See also Jay 101-02.

11
See Tennyson, "Sartor" Called 146n, 220-22 for a discussion of one etymological association of the name "Teufelsdröckh"--to asafoetida, "an aloetic plant and an anti-spasmodic medicine made from the gum resin of the middle-eastern ferule" (221).

12
Rowland D. McMaster discusses the polarities of Teufelsdröckh's character, including those of activity (allusively symbolized by Prometheus) and passivity in the forms of doubt and a tendency to seek harmony within himself (270-72, 276-78). See also Lavalley 90-91 for a discussion of Carlyle's relationship as evidenced in Sartor to the modern concept of the "self" as container and partial resolver of such polarities. See also Joseph Sigman, "'Diabolico-angelical Indifference': The Imagery of Polarity in Sartor Resartus."

13
See Jonathan Culler's chapter on "Reading as a Woman" in On Deconstruction, particularly pages 58-61.

14
See Jeffrey L. Spear's "Filaments, Females, Families and Social Fabric: Carlyle's Extension of a Biological Analogy" 70-71 for a possible connection between Carlyle's use of the expression "organic filaments" and the Aristotelian "dichotomy of male form and female matter."

15
G. B. Tennyson writes: "[W]hen the Editor says (banteringly?) that he found Heuschrecke's paper lying 'dishonourably enough (with torn leaves, and a perceptible

smell of aloetic drugs), stuffed into the Bag Pisces,' readers alive to the associations [especially that of the oriental aloetic drug asafoetida to the surname of the Clothes Philosopher] know at once that all about the document (literally in the margins) there is hell and heaven, purgation and salvation, for it has been touched by Diogenes Teufelsdröckh" ("Sartor" Called 222).

NOTES: Chapter Three

1 Sterling's letter to Carlyle and Carlyle's response are both printed, with some excisions, in Harrold's edition of Sartor Resartus 305-18. Subseqüent citations will be made parenthetically in the text.

2 In Mimesis Auerbach outlines his plan for dealing with the "representation of reality in western literature" by means of the comparison in his first chapter of Euryclea's recognition of Odysseus in The Odyssey with the account of Abraham's sacrificial offering of Isaac at Genesis 22. "We have compared these two texts, and, with them, the two kinds of style they embody, in order to reach a starting point for an investigation into the literary representation of reality in European culture. The two styles, in their opposition, represent basic types: on the one hand fully externalized description, uniform illumination, uninterrupted connection, free expression, all events in the foreground, displaying unmistakable meanings, few elements of historical development and of psychological perspective; on the other hand, certain parts brought into high relief, others left obscure, abruptness, suggestive influence of the unexpressed, "background" quality, multiplicity of meanings and the need for interpretation, universal-historical claims, development of the concept of the historically becoming, and preoccupation with the problematic" (23).

[3] "Sartor Resartus and the Balance of Fiction" 132. Levine's discussion is often illuminating, and I believe that his qualification of Frye's classification of Sartor as a confession-anatomy (Frye, Anatomy of Criticism 313) is a deliberate attempt to achieve a psychological balance in Sartor criticism between the poles of aggressively exclusive generic labelling (whether as novel, essay, autobiography, etc.) and an inclination to avoid the whole question of Sartor's genre by declaring the work formless and ill-conceived. That the attempt to address a critical problem has become emblematic of the problem is far from obviously a discredit to the approach.

[4] See Tennyson, "Sartor" Called 123-24; as well his "Carlyle as Mediator of German Language and Thought."

[5] Eco presents a provocative and witty model of an Edenic language, depicting the Fall as a semantic lapse, in "On the Possibility of Generating Aesthetic Messages in an Edenic Language," The Role of the Reader 90-104.

[6] See Dorothy Dinnerstein, The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise 80; also Culler's reference to her in On Deconstruction 58-60.

[7] LaValley (94, 97) and Gentry (158-62, 170-76) both argue that the Editor's role as a confuser of issues, facts, and readers is an important one.

[8] In his diary entry for 23 January 1874 William Allington recorded the statement by Carlyle, "I never did, and do

not now, think highly of Sartor" (230). Isaac Watson Dyer reports the diary entry in his Bibliography of Thomas Carlyle's Writings and Ana 241.

9 Also concerned with the fiction of the Editor and his tribulations with the German Philospher and his book is Gerry H. Brookes's The Rhetorical Form of Sartor Resartus, which deals with the "plot" as a persuasive device. Brookes's thesis is that the fictions of the German philosopher and his British Editor are intended to convince only to the extent that they are rhetorically advantageous, that they further Carlyle's persuasive purposes. "Carlyle does not interest us in his fictions in such a way that interest in them is an end in itself and usurps our interest in the Clothes Philosophy" (175). Though the fictions, once established, cannot be abandoned without violating the reader's trust too radically, they are at best inconsistently maintained (176-79). Though Brookes's argument is in certain respects ingenious and Tennyson's examination is extremely subtle and articulate, Gentry's exposition is the most thorough and stimulating generic treatment I have encountered.

10 "Sartor" Called 126-27. Tennyson writes that he has "tried to show that Carlyle's methods and ideas in Sartor are to be sought in his work of the previous decade and that his successes in the essays as well as his failures in the early fiction were necessary undertakings in the disciplining of his literary skill and imagination before

Sartor could be written." Tennyson's statement is certainly qualified, and he is far from insensitive to any aspect of Carlyle's highly conscious, ironic art; still, the emphasis on the early roots of Sartor's structure is clearly present in his book.

11 J. Hillis Miller, "'Hieroglyphical Truth' in Sartor Resartus; Carlyle and the Language of Parable" 19, 23. This is the first of several direct references I will make to this paper, scheduled to be published in a volume sponsored by the Department of English, University of Kentucky (see note 15, chapter 1). All subsequent page references, in the text, are to the manuscript version, quoted by permission of Professor Miller, who retains all rights.

12 LaValley 92; Tennyson, "Sartor" Called 175, 182-83.

13 Ellwood was Latin reader to Milton. Carlyle read his Life for the sake of his Milton studies "but found nothing therein beyond what is recorded in my own Milton" (Notebooks 21).

NOTES: Chapter Four

1 "Faith, Doubt, and Mystical Experience in In Memoriam" 158-59. Moore returns in this statement to a point he made earlier, speaking of Carlyle, in "Sartor Resartus and the Problems of Carlyle's Conversion" 669.

2 J. W. Smeed, German Influence on Thomas Carlyle 5-6; Tennyson, "Sartor" Called 303-310.

3 I cite Carlyle's translation of the "Rede" in the essay "Jean Paul Friedrich Richter Again," Works II: 155-58.

4 Inferno XXXIV.70-93. Northrop Frye cites this passage in the Divina Commedia in direct relation to the name "Diogenes Teufelsdröckh" in The Secular Scripture 119.

5 See Frederick Coppleston, A History of Philosophy VII.i: 29-38 on the affinity between the German Romantics and Idealists.

6 Miller, "'Hieroglyphical Truth' in Sartor Resartus" 9.

7 See note 3, chapter II. Jerome's concludes its exegesis with a striking parallel. "This parable not only vindicates Jesus' kingly regard toward 'sinners' . . . but the refrain, 'dead but come to life,' makes us think of Jesus' passion and resurrection. Jesus, by his union with human nature, becomes the wayward son" (44:119).

8 On the development of Carlyle's attitudes toward fiction see Carlisle Moore's "Thomas Carlyle and Fiction, 1822-1834," and Hill Shine's "Carlyle's Views on the Relation Between Poetry and History up to 1832."

[9] Because of the replacement of Judas, who had committed suicide, by Matthias (Acts 1:15-26).

[10] LaValley 90-94; Tennyson, <u>"Sartor" Called</u> 167-68; Stephen L. Franklin, "The Editor as Reconstructor" 34.

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