To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Carl Randall Cluff entitled "Salvaged Cargo: Herman Melville, John Wiley and the Revised Edition of *Typee*." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in English.

George B. Hutchinson

George B. Hutchinson, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

Michael A. Lofaro

Charles J. Maland

F. Stanley Lusby

Accepted for the Council:

Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

SALVAGED CARGO: HERMAN MELVILLE, JOHN WILEY, AND THE REVISED EDITION OF *TYPEE*

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Carl Randall Cluff
December 1997

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DEDICATION

For my grandmother,

LaVon Reidhead Hamrick

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ABSTRACT

Herman Melville launched his writing career with his first novel *Typee*, published in 1846 by John Murray in London and by Wiley & Putnam in New York. Less than five months after *Typee* was originally published in the United States, it was republished by Wiley & Putnam in a revised, expurgated edition. The expurgations of the American Revised Edition removed the thirty-six pages of material that embodied Melville's critique of the activities of the Protestant missionaries in the South Seas and the detrimental effects of their relations with the natives.

Melville boldly challenged the fervid assumptions of Manifest Destiny and the millennial expectations of Protestant evangelicalism. In the absence of primary documents, Melville scholars have logically speculated that John Wiley's decision to expurgate *Typee* derived from his own sensibilities as a Protestant evangelical Christian and his astute business sense of how to create a wider reading audience for the novel by appeasing offended religious readers. However, archival research into John Wiley's personal life has brought to light new facts and documents, and shows that when *Typee* was published, the reality of the historical moment was quite complex. Wiley's professional

options were constrained by his need to conform to priorities in his personal life and to the expectations of prominent, devout individuals from his personal social circle, and these factors, rather than simply an attempt to foster greater sales of the novel, motivated his decision to bring out a revised edition of *Typee*.

The identity is established of the author of the first negative review of *Typee* published in the New York *Evangelist* of 9 April 1846. Moreover, the reviewer's relationship to John Wiley, his qualifications and his likely motives as a reviewer are studied to demonstrate, albeit through provocative circumstantial evidence, that the reviewer may well have had a much larger impact upon the Revised Edition than that provided simply by writing the first negative review of Melville's first book. He may have actually participated in expurgating the novel. Thus, the dissertation sheds significant new light on the launching of Melville's career and the publication history of *Typee*, and proposes a potentially fruitful hypothesis for future Melville scholarship regarding *Typee's* publication in the Revised Edition.

The Introduction describes the methodology of the study and an overview of the project. Chapter One reconstructs the larger cultural context of American ideals of the mid-1840s and more particularly the Protestant evangelical ethos animating the missionary movement in the South Seas and

throughout the world. Chapter Two summarizes the publication history of the first British and American editions of *Typee* and analyzes the reception of *Typee*, especially the *Evangelist* review. Chapter Three examines relationships, events and circumstances in John Wiley's personal life, identifies the *Evangelist* reviewer, and discusses his potential influence on the expurgation of *Typee*. Chapter Four explores the impact of the *Typee* expurgations on some of the compositional strategies in *Omoo*, Melville's next novel, and surveys the potency of the legacy of John Wiley on Melville's subsequent career in his "earnest desire" to present the truth in his fiction.

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INTRODUCTION

What's the use of elaborating what, in its very essence, is so short-lived as a modern book? Though I wrote the Gospels in this century, I should die in the gutter. . . . All Fame is patronage. Let me be infamous: there is no patronage in *that*.

--Herman Melville to Nathaniel Hawthorne, [1 June?] 1851

Basic to [the study of] the history of the book is an understanding that literature is a human institution, part of a matrix of social and cultural forces from which it emerges, rather than a pure or abstract ideal, independent of history. No publication, literary or otherwise, is created in isolation; instead it is the collaborative effort of many people--authors, editors, compositors, printers, papermakers, publishers, readers, among others--and represents the state of technology and economic organization of its time.

--Michael Winship "Afterword." *Literary Publishing in America*

Herman Melville's first novel, *Typee*, created trouble for both its publishers and its author. First published in early 1846 in England by John Murray, and soon after in the United States by Wiley & Putnam, it caused repercussions for all of them, but for very distinct reasons. John Murray published *Typee* as a strictly truthful narrative in an important collection of non-fiction, but to his horror many in the British audience read *Typee* as a *romance*, vociferously debating the issue of the novel's authenticity in the newspapers and in the parlors of England. In the United States, John Wiley's headache was of a quite different sort. There *Typee* was popular with most readers because of its romantic elements, while actually being attacked and condemned by religious readers for the *realism*

of its fierce critiques of the activities of the Protestant Evangelical missionaries in the South Seas. Sheila Post-Lauria explains the roots of this dual-cultural response:

> Melville learned quickly that writing for both American and British audiences required different sets of social registers. Cultivated British audiences expected a narrator to reflect . . . his class status. Since Melville's narrator works as a sailor but writes as a gentleman, British readers expressed their incredulity with the notion that an uneducated sailor could write in the sophisticated and elegant manner exhibited in *Typee*. (44)

In contrast, cultivated American audiences were familiar with "mixed-class narratives," so their concerns focused on the ideology of Melville's writing (Post-Lauria 44). However, on one thing readers all agreed: the book was of very high artistic quality.

Even the offended religious readers of *Typee* found true artistic merit in the novel, which, when coupled with what they considered its reprehensible message about the missions, made the book all the more dangerous, and required its condemnation. Particularly for John Wiley, *Typee's* publication came at an inopportune time, personally engaged as he was at the moment with other prominent religionists in a revolutionary transplanting of Congregationalism from New England to New York City.

There were problems for Melville as well. Accused by religious reviewers in the United States of being morally unreliable and therefore not credible, his stake in the argument over *Typee* was very high, "for he was fighting for

nothing less than a chance at a literary career" (Parker 419). Nor was this the only concern Melville had with his authorial credibility. From England, John Murray dogged Melville for any proof of an actual voyage made to the South Seas.

John Murray rode out the storm of controversy, although he continued to press Melville for documentation of his experiences. John Wiley, a prudent, frugal businessman and devout evangelical Protestant, wanted to serve two masters. He needed to recover his capital investment and make a profit on the novel. He also needed to repair any harm the book had done or could do to the holy cause of evangelical Protestantism,[1] not to mention the reputation of his publishing house. The fledgling author Herman Melville wanted to recover his personal and artistic credibility. John Wiley and Herman Melville both sought to salvage the novel and repair the damage that *Typee* had caused them, but what was a remedy to one was poison to the other.

Less than five months after the First American Edition of *Typee* was published, John Wiley reissued the novel in an expurgated Revised Edition of *Typee*. The Revised Edition was primarily a salvage operation calculated to control and recover from the controversy caused by *Typee*. All references to missionary activities were deleted in the Revised

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[1] Generally, evangelicals feared that Melville's criticisms would reduce contributions. There were other concerns, specific to John Wiley himself, that will be detailed later in this study.

Edition, and in John Wiley's opinion--a point of view he argued vehemently to Melville--it was the correct course of action to follow. Melville, it appears, was persuaded against his will, and, as a new author, had little credibility and less authority over his work than his experienced publisher. Only by happenstance did the Revised Edition help salvage Melville's reputation too. A witness who could verify many of Melville's claims in *Typee* surfaced just before the Revised Edition went to press and his story was included as a sequel to the novel. As a result of the sequel, Melville believed himself and his tale vindicated and his personal credibility and authorial identity restored on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

In such a volatile mix of issues, reputations, causes, and dollars as the *Typee* nexus yielded, it is important to ask from where the main impetus for changing the novel came. Michael Winship has proposed that scholars study publishers' personal lives as a key element in understanding their publishing decisions. Winship, in fact, suggests the value of investigating

> the social, religious, and political environments within which individual publishers found themselves. . . . Who were their neighbors? To what church did they belong? How did they stand on such issues as temperance, abolition, and women's rights? Did they participate in the activities of political parties? The answers to these and similar questions may go a long way to explaining publishing strategies and decisions. (100)

Following Winship's suggestion, this study reviews the broad political, social and religious environments of the United States at the time *Typee* was published in the mid-1840s to place John Wiley in his larger cultural milieu. In addition to this commentary focused on the great cultural currents swirling about John Wiley and Herman Melville during this period, the study also reports on some of John Wiley's previously unknown personal circumstances and activities that had a direct bearing on his publishing decisions with regard to *Typee*. John Wiley's reasons for changing *Typee* are the focus of this study, and, as this study will show, those reasons were intensely personal.

Traditional Melville scholarship, largely due to a paucity of documents and information on John Wiley, has ascribed Wiley's motives to a confluence of wanting the novel to conform with dominant cultural norms (thus pleasing a wider audience and increasing profits) and desiring to comply with personal religious values (Howard, "Historical Note" 285; Parker 416). Such a judgment is an astute one, as far as it goes.

Certainly, there were pressures on Wiley as a businessman, and the reputation of his firm among the devout was important to him. Although the exact date of the decision to revise the novel is unknown, it was known to Melville at least by late June and had actually been made earlier by John Wiley. By then, only one negative review of

Typee based on religious concerns had been published. Indeed, the vast majority of reviews were positive and sales were strong, which raises the question: Why change the novel at all?

The answer is that Wiley himself wanted the changes. If he had not, he had a good, truthful business reason that most people would have understood and likely respected: his partner had made him do it. John Wiley's partner, George P. Putnam, had contracted for the publication of *Typee* in London. In fact, as related later in this study, this detail was noted by a hostile reviewer to defend John Wiley in the interim between the publication of the first and Revised editions. Wiley, if he had so chosen, could have relaxed, reaped his profits, and justified himself on the basis of a less devout (perhaps even less informed) partner's contractual obligation. However, such a course was not the course that would have been pursued by a man of conscience or commitment, and John Wiley was both.

Regarding the publication history of *Typee*, the traditional point of departure is Leon Howard's "Historical Note," published in the Editorial Appendix of the Northwestern-Newberry Edition of *Typee* in 1968. Although minor aspects of the story have been somewhat refined through subsequent scholarship, Howard's basic inferences and conclusions, noted above, regarding John Wiley and the motives for the publication of the Revised Edition have

remained essentially in force and unchanged. Two very recent biographies have also contributed greatly to our understanding of Melville's life and artistic achievement, but add little about John Wiley,[2] for good reason. The details of John Wiley's personal and professional life are sketchy at best, and the evidence that exists is extremely difficult to locate.

Such a situation regarding publishers and their lives and records is hardly unique. One of the recurring problems plaguing studies of publishing practices and relationships between authors and publishers is the widespread practice of publishers disposing of their records as part of standard business practices. In the "Introduction" to his groundbreaking *The Profession of Authorship in America*, a book that "attempt[s] to write the history of American literature in terms of the profession of writing and the business of publishing," William Charvat describes the endeavor of recovering this history:

> It is much like the effort to describe a building in terms of internal structure--foundations, supporting beams and columns, strains and stresses--instead of presenting photographs of façades and finished interiors.
>
> It cannot be a complete history because many--perhaps most--of the documents of the profession have been lost. . . . (3)

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[2] Hershel Parker's *Herman Melville: A Biography, Volume One, 1819-1851*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1996; and Laurie Robertson-Lorant's *Melville: A Biography*. New York: Potter, 1996. Volume Two of Parker's work is forthcoming.

Donald Yanella has acknowledged the implications of this same problem of documentation in his own work on the relationship of Melville and Evert Duyckinck and has written: "Along our way through the tough commercial publishing world the people inhabited, we will try to piece together a reasonably substantiated landscape but also be tentative and not claim too much certitude about it. It is, after all, of our own making" (63). The problem of documentation Yanella describes is even more graphically illustrated when we consider that the Duyckinck Family Papers collection at the New York Public Library is, to use Yanella's descriptor, a "massive" collection. Even with such a large collection which to work from, details of these professional literary matters still remain fragmentary at best.

If the Duyckinck collection is massive and still provides a vague picture, the problem of finding details about John Wiley is even more acute. John Wiley was a man who sought no personal attention, who devoted himself to his work, his family and his church responsibilities and worried little about keeping records--either of a personal or of a business nature.

When I visited the publishing firm of John Wiley & Sons in New York[3] to do research in their archive, I found the

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[3] John Wiley & Sons is the only American publishing firm established early in the nineteenth century that is still "in the family," or, in other words, controlled by the direct descendants of

archive consisted of few documents having to do with the period of the firm's history in which I was interested, and none that dealt with John Wiley or *Typee* directly.[4] I found one document, a partial account statement, related to Melville and *Typee*. Other potential gateways to Wiley's background were also barred.[5] With no central collection of documents to work from, this study has developed out of the findings of intense archival research conducted in several different locales.[6]

This lack of primary records is worth emphasizing because it underscores the significance of the documents and information that the research for this project has run to ground, and the necessity for some circumstantial conclusions derived from this new evidence in the absence of

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John Wiley.

[4] I did discover the research prospectus and book outline written by historian John Hammond Moore, author of Wiley's 175th commemorative history, which indicated his own frustration with the lack of primary documents dealing with the early years of the firm. Hammond wrote: "Lots of problems here, mainly no primary sources due to the self-effacing destructiveness of the 19th century Wileys with personal and business records. . . . Pray for new original sources." (Moore, John Hammond. Draft Outline. Wiley 175th Anniversary History, 1807-1982. John Wiley & Sons Archive.)

[6] When *Typee* was published and revised, John Wiley was in partnership with George Palmer Putnam. Putnam had the reputation of being a pack rat, keeping all sorts of papers and correspondence, but this avenue to Wiley was also a dead end. Dr. Ezra Greenspan, who is writing a cultural biography of Putnam, informed me that Putnam's main archive of business files and personal papers was stored in shoeboxes and kept by his grandson in a vacation home on Cape Cod. Sometime in the 1960s, a violent hurricane put Cape Cod underwater, and the home and the archive were destroyed (Phone Interview. Ezra Greenspan, 1 July 1996).

[6] For detailed information about the various archives consulted for this project see the Acknowledgements section.

conclusive proof. It should be observed that responsible speculation has always been employed by Melville scholars in their search to explain the details of the publishing history of the Revised Edition of *Typee* as well as other details of Melville's life and career. In fact, Melville addressed the issue of "gaps" or lacuna in the record in a passage in *Moby-Dick*. The following scene occurs at the end of the Town Ho's story:

> "Are you through?" said Don Sebastian, quietly.
> "I am, Don."
> "Then I entreat you, tell me if to the best of your convictions, this your story is in substance really true? It is so passing wonderful! Did you get it from an unquestionable source? Bear with me if I seem to press." . . .
> "So help me Heaven, and on my honor, the story I have told ye, gentlemen, is in substance and its great terms, true." (258-59)

Melville understood that ambiguity was an inescapable part of every human endeavor.

In the Preface to his 1951 biography of Melville, Leon Howard stated that his intent was that he sought to understand Melville as a nineteenth-century human being, making no attempt to fashion him after his own or any other reader's expectations. His conclusions were carefully reasoned and founded upon the best available evidence, and "the only real freedom [he] allowed [him]self was that of making inferences without attempting to reproduce the arguments leading from the evidence to the conclusions" (ix). Howard used the same approach for the "Historical Note" on *Typee*. It was a methodology Hershel Parker

employed in his new Melville biography, but with a difference in emphasis.

Describing his own methodology in his narrative biography of Melville, Hershel Parker observes in his essay "Biography and Responsible Uses of the Imagination" that

> Howard's shrewd inferences were often wrong, and usually for the same reason. Given the chance, Howard made Melville behave like the sober, rational fellow he himself aspired to be, not the man who at crucial times of his life behaved impulsively, recklessly, and irrationally. He did not have basic sympathy with Melville and his enterprises, would not let himself emotionally identify with Melville. (38)

Parker follows this critique of Howard's method with a statement that points to his own approach to Melville and one that has methodological implications for this study, since in essence this study attempts to create a portion of the narrative biography or history of a book--Melville's *Typee*.

Parker explains that his mind is easy about having made shrewd inferences that will undoubtedly be disproved later, but then mentions what does worry him:

> I am uneasy about whether or not I have sympathetically enough imagined what a human being, Melville or one of my minor characters, would naturally think and do under the circumstances that I can lay out, sometimes, in surprising detail. I worry about the ramparts against the imagination much more than I do about the possible irresponsible uses of the imagination in narrative biography. (38)

Parker proposes that where gaps in the matrix of the factual record exist, the responsible and self-conscious use of the

imagination is necessary to create reconstructions of events.

Much like a dot-to-dot graphic in a child's coloring book, one must lay out and examine the "dots" of the factual landscape, and then place imaginary dots in such positions that when the lines are connected, a plausible, coherent picture emerges. Parker adds: "*Probably, most likely, very likely, possibly, just possibly, perhaps*--these are the termites of honest narrative biography" (Parker 37). They are also, of necessity, the termites of honest book and publishing history. Yet, as Parker observes, when you rearrange the evidence in a new orchestration, new supportive details often emerge because the new arrangement suggests new places to look (37). A new orchestration also suggests alternative ways the scholar and the scholarly community can read. Consequently, not only do new supporting documents emerge, but previously known evidence of apparently little import can take on a new significance when viewed in a new context. And evidence that refutes speculative claims will also be discovered, but, in either case, the cause of scholarship has advanced.

The Revised Edition of *Typee* is an important document reflecting significant cultural conflicts, the process of cultural mediation of those conflicts and a professional confrontation between a publisher and an author. It is vital to recover this literary history to whatever extent

possible and to contemplate its meanings and to be suggestive about its implications. The skirmish between Herman Melville and John Wiley over the content of the Revised Edition of *Typee* is an important case study because it is an example of the degree to which social mediation by members of a reading audience can pressure a publisher and be imposed upon an author.

This study of *Typee* then fulfills a need recognized by William Charvat for more demonstrations "that the relation between the writer and society is reciprocal" ("Literary Economics" 284). Recognizing this dynamic relation is important because most traditional literary models have tended to assign a dynamic or dominant role only to the author, seeing society (i.e. readers) as fulfilling a passive role. Worse, there has been little recognition historically of the impact of publishers, editors, and others responsible for getting books to market on the process of how texts come into being. Charvat shows that instead of a simple linear transaction between author and reader, there is really a triangular relationship between the author, the publisher and the reader with the lines of influence running both ways in every direction. Authors can influence publishers and readers; so can publishers influence authors and readers; and, readers can influence authors and publishers. The history of the Revised Edition of *Typee* shows how correct Charvat's three-way model is, and

how misleading it is to assign the author the predominant role in the relationship ("Literary Economics" 284).

Leon Howard's view of the Revised Edition credits John Wiley with an astute reading of the novel's audience and market, this assessment prompting his demands upon Melville for the revision. The revision was thus supposedly calculated to widen the appeal of the novel to take in religious readers and make it more profitable.[7] Howard also suggests that Wiley's personal religious sensibilities were offended by the novel, and the Revised Edition was Wiley's way of assuaging his conscience in resolving the controversial matter. Certainly, Howard's conclusions are logical and pertinent as far as they go, but new documents show the actual situation of the moment and the personalities involved comprise a far more complex set of circumstances than Howard's limited documents could predict. This new array of evidence explains aspects of the revision of *Typee* that have heretofore been unexplained, and that allow a more entertaining and compelling story to emerge. As a result, the publishing story of the Revised Edition can itself be revised. Personal factors in John Wiley's life at the time the decision was made to revise *Typee* need to be taken into consideration because they comprise a large part of the events that evolved and culminated in the creation of

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[7] Perry Miller argues in *The Raven and the Whale* that the scandal *Typee* caused in religious circles caused religious readers to buy the novel to learn what all the fuss was about (6).

the Revised Edition and shaped its actual form. John Wiley's personal principles and associations with individuals from his intimate social circle influenced his publishing practices and the text of *Typee* directly.

Regarding Wiley's politics, it is known that he was almost certainly a Whig, but his specific personal position on political matters is still unknown. His stand on social causes of the time such as temperance can be largely inferred from his religious activities, but nothing directly is known of his participation or his championing a particular social cause. However, in the area of religion a rich vein of material emerges. Both Wiley's church affiliation and his religious associates were central factors in a complex web of cultural obligations and social ties that were powerful enough to pressure him into creating a chain of events that caused havoc with Melville's *Typee*.

The effect of John Wiley's actions on Melville is as important to consider as it is difficult to reconstruct. I have singled out John Wiley because his interaction with Melville occurred first, and likely had a significant impact in determining Melville's conduct in future relationships with publishers.[8] If we can understand what happened between Herman Melville and John Wiley, it may go a long way

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[8] Although John Murray published the first Melville book, Herman did not negotiate directly with John Murray regarding *Typee*. Herman's brother Gansevoort took the *Typee* manuscript to London with him and acted as Herman's agent, setting up both the British and American publishing contracts.

toward understanding his relationships with his subsequent publishers. Carolyn Karcher observes:

> The authority figures with whom Melville had to contend for the rest of his life . . . were not sea captains, but publishers, editors, readers, and the family members he had to support by producing salable fiction. Nowhere did he more dramatically act out his deep inner conflict between complying with and resisting their demands on him than in alternately yielding to and defying the outraged evangelicals and worldly-wise publishers who pressured him into issuing a revised . . . edition of *Typee* in 1846. (7)

The Revised Edition of *Typee* was a watershed event for Herman Melville and deeply affected the way he approached his subsequent art.

As Michael Paul Rogin has observed, Melville made his literary debut "as a spokesman for the aboriginal victims of Manifest Destiny" (48), arguing in *Typee* that the cultural salvation the United States believed it was exporting abroad via the missionaries and other avenues of progress was actually diminishing the peoples' quality of life and, ultimately, killing them. He took their cause to heart, and challenged his own social order to evaluate their actions. However, at the same time that "Melville [was] looking forward to a new dispensation of human brotherhood," the Protestant evangelicals "were seeking the millennial kingdom of Christ" (Karcher 17). There was too much at stake for the Protestant evangelicals to ignore Melville's claims in *Typee* in general, and Wiley's involvement as the publisher

was personally embarrassing to his close religious associates; therefore *Typee* was changed.

When the material critical of the missionaries was removed to produce the Revised Edition, Hershel Parker says

> As usual, Melville repressed his feelings, but the resentment rankled all of his life . . . . His niece Charlotte, born in 1859, often heard her mother, Melville's sister Kate, and her aunts talk about the fact that Melville "was very cut up that in all later editions--all mention of the Missionary's [*sic*] was omitted. He saw how much evil they were doing and thought it should be known." (440)

Melville's anger or remorse at the expurgation of *Typee* originates out of the rejection in his novel of what he had personally experienced and perceived to be the truth of the historical moment. The rejection of this truth was a rejection of part of himself, if we think, as Wai-chee Dimock observes, authorship is "an articulation of the author's selfhood" (4-5). Dimock continues:

> if selfhood is itself a contingent term within a historical process, then literature too must be understood to be contingent. There is no transcendent ground, ultimately, for its formal authority--its assembly of shape and meaning--because the "author" who authorizes that form is himself historically constituted. And if by literature we still refer to a collection of honored texts, the "text" too must be understood to be an expedient (rather than absolute) term. . . . For the "text" and its "context" are in every case inseparable, the latter being not so much external to the former as constitutive of it, encompassing it and permeating it as the condition of its textuality. (5)

To apply Dimock's method here, to recover the "context" of the publishing history of *Typee* and to tell John Wiley's

story with its own cast of characters is to constitute Herman Melville within his historical "network of associations," and to recover part of the "text" of *Typee* itself, to see *Typee* "not as a reified entity--not a monument of individual achievement, but [as] a field of permutating relations" (5).

Chapter One of this study presents Melville's relevant biographical background up to the time of the composition of *Typee*, the applicable historical background and the contours of the cultural field of the mid-1840s, including some discussion of the intense nationalistic fervor of Manifest Destiny and attitudes of United States superiority. The chapter examines the Protestant reaction to the increasing urbanization of the United States, Protestant evangelical philosophies regarding the ethos and practice of their missionary labors in the South Seas, and the conflict between such views and Melville's report of his own experience in *Typee*. Chapter Two presents John Wiley's professional background as a publisher, a brief historical overview of the publishing industry in the mid-1840s, the publishing history of *Typee* in its first editions in both England and the United States, and a discussion of the reception and reviews of *Typee* in the United States, particularly the first negative review of *Typee* that appeared in the New York *Evangelist*. Chapter Three looks at the personal background of John Wiley and identifies several

significant characters from Wiley's personal life that had a direct impact on the conduct of his business. Of particular note, this chapter presents the evidence that identifies the author of the first negative review of *Typee* published in the 9 April 1846 New York *Evangelist*, his background, his personal reaction to *Typee*, his impact upon the Revised Edition, and comments upon his likely role in its production. The Fourth Chapter is an attempt to assess the impact of John Wiley's domination on and tampering with Melville's later career by examining a sampling of his later writings, both in fiction and in prose.

Finally, this project anticipates two audiences: those who are interested in matters pertaining to the study of Melville, his life, works, and art; and those who know little of Melville but who are interested in book history and publishing matters as they influenced American *belles lettres*. To accommodate the former group, who may know little of publishing history, I include an overview of the background and status of publishing at the time John Wiley published *Typee*. To accommodate the latter group, who will not be familiar with Melville's particular history, I include details of Melville's life and circumstances up to the time he published *Typee* which are salient to the conclusions of this study.

CHAPTER ONE

HERMAN MELVILLE AND THE CULTURAL MILIEU OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE 1840s

> [W]e Americans are the peculiar, chosen people--the Israel of our time; we bear the ark of the liberties of the world. . . . Long enough have we been skeptics with regard to ourselves, and doubted whether, indeed, the political Messiah had come. But he has come in *us*, if we would but give utterance to his promptings. And let us always remember that with ourselves, almost for the first time in the history of earth, national selfishness is unbounded philanthropy; for we can not do a good to America but we give alms to the world.[1]
>
> --Herman Melville *White Jacket*

When Herman Melville set sail aboard the whaler *Acushnet* from Fairhaven, Massachusetts on 3 January 1841, he began a three-and-a-half year adventure that transformed his life in ways he could not have even imagined, let alone foreseen. At age twenty-one, he was driven to sea by the combined forces of wanderlust and economic need. Of these factors, economic need was the most compelling. Financial problems had beset the family for some time.

Striving to maintain social appearances, Herman's father and mother, Allan and Maria Gansevoort Melvill,[2] both coming from important established families, had always

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[1] From Chapter 36, "Flogging Not Necessary." Here Melville, rather than expressing any profound conviction of his own, is consciously appealing to American reform ideology and inciting its progressive tendencies in opposition to flogging.

[2] The Melvill family name would not be spelled with the final "-e" until 1832.

lived beyond their means. In 1818 the Melvills left Albany and relocated to Boston for a year, then moved on to New York City, thinking it would be a faster route to personal fortune (Robertson-Lorant 8). Outwardly all seemed well, and to all appearances the Allan Melvills were securely part of the rising middle class, but Allan was a better dreamer than businessman. Loans from Allan's father were needed to bridge the deficit between inadequate business revenues and the expenses of the family's personal lifestyle. Ultimately, failing in business in New York City, Allan and his family moved back to Albany in late 1830. The only situation he could find in Albany was work as a clerk in a fur store at a subsistence salary. Allan's father needed money and began to pressure him for repayment of his loans. In late 1831 Allan borrowed $2,000 from Maria's brother, Peter Gansevoort, and gave it all to his father (Parker 56).

In December 1831, Allan Melvill made a trip to New York City to forestall problems with his creditors that ended in disaster. When he arrived home he was extremely ill, but given the unrelenting financial pressure, he kept working. (Parker 57). Just after New Year's Day 1832, Allan Melvill collapsed and never recovered. He died 28 January 1832, leaving his family in a desperate financial situation and largely dependent upon the benevolence of Peter Gansevoort.

The family rallied to help itself. Gansevoort, Herman's older brother, opened a fur and cap business late

in March; he was just over sixteen years of age, requiring his mother to sign, and his Uncle Peter to countersign, a certificate of accountability since he was below a legal majority. About this time Maria Melvill changed the spelling of the family name, adding the "-e" to make it Melville.[3] Herman, in his thirteenth year, left school and in June 1832 went to work as a clerk in an Albany bank, a position arranged for by his Uncle Peter. He worked there until the Spring of 1834. Herman left the bank to become a clerk in the fur and cap store when fire destroyed Gansevoort's factory and he could no longer afford to keep his other employees. Herman was also enrolled in the Albany Classical School, which he attended until Autumn 1837, when he had to withdraw because of the failure of the fur and cap store, a casualty of the Panic of 1837. After the failure of the business, Gansevoort went to New York City to read law, Herman was sent to Pittsfield, Massachusetts to help his Melvill relatives on the farm, and younger brother Allan, aged fourteen, was taken out of school and sent to serve as an unwilling clerk and apprentice in his Uncle Peter Gansevoort's law office in Albany (Robertson-Lorant 54-5, 59-62).

While at the Albany Classical School, Herman had acquired enough education to qualify him to teach school,

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[3] For additional information about the name change, see Parker 67 and Robertson-Lorant 53-54.

and he taught thirty students for a few months during the fall and winter of 1837 in a rural, one-room school near Pittsfield (Howard 11). Discouraged with unlearned and unruly pupils, Herman quit the teaching post and returned to Albany. Desiring the intellectual stimulation not afforded by the students of the rural school, he joined several debating societies, exercising his argumentative powers both orally and in print (Robertson-Lorant 63). In the spring of 1838, Gansevoort fell ill and was unable to work. Under pressure from her creditors, needing to find a less expensive situation, Maria left Albany and moved the family ten miles up the river to Lansingburgh (Robertson-Lorant 64).

In the summer of 1838, work on the Erie Canal created a demand for surveyors and engineers. At the suggestion of his Uncle Peter, and to the delight of his mother who thought the training would guarantee work, Herman enrolled in a surveying and engineering course at the Lansingburgh Academy in November of that year. He completed the course over the winter, but failed to gain employment on the project (Parker 133, 137). Unable to find work that paid, he turned to what he enjoyed doing--writing.

While at the Albany Classical School, Herman learned to love English composition, and, Charles E. West, his teacher, reported that although Melville was not adept at mathematics, he believed him an able writer. Moreover,

unlike the dread of writing that other pupils felt, Herman Melville loved to write themes and compositions (Robertson-Lorant 60). Herman returned to his writing in the spring of 1839, publishing several short pieces under the heading "Fragments from a Writing Desk" in the local papers, firing his literary ambitions (Robertson-Lorant 67-8). Gansevoort was now recovered sufficiently to return to New York, but recalcitrant brother Allan succeeded in getting himself dismissed from the law office (Robertson-Lorant 68-9). Anxious, Maria sent Herman out on an unsuccessful expedition to find a job to pay the balance of the rent.

Finding no work in the area, Herman took his cousin Leonard Gansevoort's advice and shipped for Liverpool on 5 June 1839 as a "green hand" on board the merchant vessel *St. Lawrence*, at age nineteen (Parker 144-45). The adventure, the independence, and the escape from worry about the family finances were exhilarating for Herman. He was at sea four months, returning home to Lansingburgh early in October 1839, only to find that his family's circumstances had not improved. He gave his mother money from his sailor's wages to save the furniture from auction, and he published another sketch in the *Democratic Press and Lansingburgh Advertiser*. However, short sketches published in the local paper would not alleviate the family's financial distress, so he returned to teaching (Robertson-Lorant 78).

He took a position teaching sixty pupils at the Greenbush-Schodack Academy near Lansingburgh, a far better situation than the rural school had been, but the directors of the Academy soon announced they were facing bankruptcy and could not pay Herman his wages. Maria was again reduced to begging her brothers for money to pay the quarter's rent. Herman traveled west with his friend Eli Fly to visit his Uncle Thomas who had moved from Pittsfield to Galena, Illinois; Herman knew he could work on his uncle's farm if nothing else proffered. Unfortunately, the economic malaise that had held the East in its grip since the Panic of 1837 had moved westward ahead of the boys. After helping Thomas Melvill with the crop and harvest, Herman and Eli returned home. Having observed the primitive conditions in the West, Herman now perceived many of his mother's complaints about her needs as having little to do with necessity. Accompanying Eli Fly to New York, he was again unsuccessful at finding work (Robertson-Lorant 78-84). During this time, in the Fall of 1840, Herman read Richard Henry Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* (Leyda 108-09). The book recalled to him his own adventures from his previous voyage, and reawakened his desire to go to sea. With little prospect of employment, and then only in jobs for which he was temperamentally unsuited, Herman decided to go whaling.

The decision to go whaling did not please Herman's family, but it was a psychological boon to Herman, providing

an escape from the pressures and domination of home as well as a sense of direction and purpose to his life. In a letter to her daughter Augusta on 8 January 1841, Herman's mother wrote:

> Last week I received a long letter from Herman, who has embarked for a long Voyage to the Pacific, under the most favorable auspices and feeling perfectly happy, Gansevoort was with him to the last and assisted with his more matured Judgement in supplying him with every comfort, Gansevoort says he never saw him so completely happy, as when he had determined upon a situation and all was settled. (Melville, *Correspondence* 24)

Embarking on the *Acushnet* put an end to a frustrating and anxious period in Herman Melville's life, but all of his problems would not remain ashore, as he was soon to discover.

The *Acushnet* was the newest ship in the United States whaling fleet, and was commanded by Captain Valentine Pease II. The first part of the voyage was very successful, harvesting 200 barrels of whale oil in the Atlantic, and another 650 barrels after rounding Cape Horn in the Pacific. The *Acushnet* had made port at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and at both Callao and Santa, Peru; Pease, fearing desertions, apparently did not grant the crew any liberty. The men had been forecasting a short prosperous cruise, but now their luck turned and they cruised about for months, frequently spotting whales, but making no kills. The crew grew restless, Pease responded with increased discipline, and morale toppled (Robertson-Lorant 91, 99-100). Finally, with

a crew on the verge of mutiny, Pease stopped six days in the uninhabited Galapagos Islands and let the men go ashore. Pease then determined to cruise further West along the Line, but before beginning the long voyage, the ship travelled to Payta Harbor at Tumbes, Peru, to replenish supplies. Still concerned about desertions, Pease anchored the *Acushnet* outside Payta Harbor, and held the men fast to the ship. For thirteen days the crew watched the palms and grass huts on shore, while their resentments grew (Robertson-Lorant 101). Replenished, the *Acushnet* weighed anchor 15 December 1841, setting its course for the Marquesas Islands; the adventures that would comprise Melville's literary capital for writing *Typee* lay just over the horizon (Leyda 124).

The *Acushnet* arrived at Anna Maria Bay, Nuku Hiva Island of the Marquesas Archipelago, 23 June 1842 (Leyda 128), on the very day the French Navy occupied the island and claimed it for France. Herman was fascinated with the French maneuvering as they established their colony, the beautiful uninhibited natives, and the exotic tales he heard about the native tribes occupying the interior valleys of the island: the friendly Happars and the fierce, cannibal Typees. He had been at sea over one-and-a-half years, and during the voyage, Pease had become ill and bad-tempered, even more tyrannical than usual (Robertson-Lorant 106). Unhappy with his lot aboard ship and beholding a paradise before him of two volcanic peaks rising out of lush tropical

forests with plunging waterfalls, Melville conspired with fellow crew member, Richard Tobias (Toby) Greene, to jump ship and travel to the interior of the island. There they would dwell for a time among the friendly, non-cannibal Happar tribe. The journey to the interior of the island was both a romantic impulse and a necessity. Ship's captains would go to great lengths to recover deserting sailors, often even paying a bounty to the local natives for capturing or informing on them.[4] The only way certain for Herman and Toby to avoid recapture was to go to the interior where they could not be found.

Herman Melville and Toby Greene deserted the *Acushnet* 9 July 1842 and hiked inland seeking the Happar tribe. The terrain proved difficult, and when they at last attained the heights overlooking the harbor and looked inland, they were dismayed to see numerous ridges and valleys, with no possible way of properly distinguishing the respective valleys of the Happars and Typees from their crude information. Wishing to avoid the feared Typees at any cost, over several days they made a dangerous descent into one of the valleys, only to find themselves among the dreaded Typees. Herman and Toby were surprised by the civility shown them by the natives, but were still nervous

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[4] Captain Pease was no exception. After Melville and Greene deserted, the *Acushnet* remained in harbor an extra day hoping to find the two sailors. The following day, Pease sailed to a neighboring island and anchored the ship out of view, then returned the next day to Nuku Hiva hoping to surprise and recover the two men (Howard 51).

because of the tales they had heard. During the climb down into the valley, Melville had injured his leg, and Toby was soon permitted to leave to seek medical help. He never returned. Melville remained a month among the Typees,[5] learned their diurnal routines, and observed their religious customs, economic and social practices, and their informal method of government. He found them a content, charming and gracious people, hardly the savages described in sailor and travel yarns, or in missionary discourse, as he would later discover. More importantly, the Typees were not influenced by western practices, unlike the natives living in the more accessible areas of the harbors and along the coasts of the islands where continual exposure to exploitation by foreigners and efforts at colonization by western powers had greatly extended western influence and altered native customs.

A month later, on 9 August 1842, Melville was picked up by an Australian whaler, the *Lucy Ann*, out of Sydney and bound for Tahiti (Stern 17). The captain of the *Lucy Ann* had heard of a sailor held captive by natives, and sailed into Typee Bay to trade with the Polynesians for Melville (Parker 219). However, conditions aboard the *Lucy Ann* were substantially worse than those aboard the *Acushnet*. The captain was a true incompetent, and the first mate an abusive drunkard. On 25 September 1842, at Papeete, Tahiti,

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[5] An interval he would expand to four months in the novel.

"Melville joined four fifths of the *Lucy Ann's* crew in mutiny. . . . With the others, Melville was put ashore at the British open air prison where he was allowed to wander loose" (Stern 17). On 19 October he escaped from the prison at Tahiti and beachcombed on the island of Eimeo until shipping on the whaler *Charles and Henry* for the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands on 3 November 1842. Melville left the *Charles and Henry* on good terms 2 May 1843, at Lahaina, on Maui island, just after Lord George Paulet had assumed military control of the islands to protect British interests. For three and one-half months he roamed about the Sandwich Islands, finally enlisting in the United States Navy, signing aboard the frigate *United States* on 17 August 1843 for the remainder of its homeward voyage (Stern 17). The *United States* arrived at the Charleston Navy Yard in Boston on 3 October 1844, and Melville was discharged from the Navy 14 October 1844 at Boston.

The time he spent awaiting his release aboard the *United States* and the first days following his discharge were significant. Arriving home during the last weeks and final throes of the 1844 Presidential Campaign between Democratic candidate James K. Polk and Whig candidate Henry Clay, Herman learned that his brother, Gansevoort, was playing a significant role in the campaign. Herman read transcripts of Gansevoort's speeches in the papers while in Boston aboard ship awaiting his discharge from the Navy

(Parker *Resources* 22-23). Gansevoort's part in the presidential campaign of 1844 and his resulting rise to political prominence had important consequences for the publication of *Typee* and is itself part of that history.

The Democratic Party had split over the issue of Texas annexation. Former President Van Buren was actively seeking the party's nomination but was on record as opposing annexing the Texas territory. Broad national sentiment had come to favor the issue passionately. When the Democratic party snubbed Van Buren and nominated the dark-horse expansionist Polk at its Baltimore convention, the party was divided in its loyalties. Perceiving the crisis, party leaders at Tammany Hall sent Gansevoort Melville as the head of a delegation to seek Van Buren's endorsement for Polk.[6] Van Buren gave Gansevoort a letter that was carefully crafted, approving Polk's character more than his nomination. The letter was an opportunity young Gansevoort exploited with shrewdness, determination and finesse, thrusting him into the national spotlight. With wonderful rhetorical skill he waved the letter from podiums all over the country, not actually reading it but rather interpreting

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[6] Gansevoort was a logical choice because his Uncle Peter, as a member of the influential Albany Regency, knew Van Buren well.

and pronouncing it a hearty endorsement, and declaring the Party united in its support of Polk.[7]

While in Boston Herman visited family members and learned that while he had been at sea, his sister Helen had become fast friends with Judge Lemuel Shaw's daughter, Elizabeth.[8] (Melville had also spent time with the Shaws in Boston as a young man.) Herman discovered that Elizabeth had the most recent news of his family, and hungry for information about the family, he visited Elizabeth before leaving Boston, and enchanted her with tales of his escapades. If he had not realized it before, it was here, recounting his adventures to Lizzie and the Shaws, that Herman Melville learned of his abilities as a storyteller and perceived the power his adventures possessed to thrill an audience (Parker, *Resources* 24-28).[9]

After his return to Lansingburgh, Melville continued to tell of his adventures in the South Seas. He was a

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[7] For discussion of Gansevoort's rise and involvement in the 1844 Campaign, see Hershel Parker's "Gansevoort Melville's Role in the Campaign of 1844." *The New-York Historical Society Quarterly*. 49 (April 1965):143-173.

[8] Judge Shaw had been a close friend of Herman's father, and a co-executor of Allan Melvill's estate. In August 1830 Lemuel Shaw had been appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts (Parker 77).

[9] Also during this time their romantic attachment began. Herman and Lizzie met again in Lansingburgh in May of 1845, in Boston March 1846, they were engaged by 31 August 1846, and married 4 August 1847 (Parker 450). Herman would dedicate *Typee*, published in early 1846, to Lizzie's father, Lemuel Shaw.

remarkable storyteller,[10] and became something of a "celebrity" as "the man who had lived among cannibals," a sobriquet that would follow him the rest of his life and that he would grow to detest. Melville's niece, Charlotte Hoadley, wrote nearly one hundred years later in February 1944 that Herman had told and retold his Typee stories for two years, but it was his family, particularly his sister Augusta, who persuaded him to begin writing (Parker 354). Melville needed little encouragement; he had enjoyed his previous literary experiments, and now he had real fodder for his pen.

Although the decision to write the book may have been made at Lansingburgh, he did not actually begin writing until after he had returned to Manhattan in November or December 1844. He likely wrote the novel there in Gansevoort's and Allan's law office (Parker 355). He later recorded that he wrote *Typee* "in the Spring of 1845--Began in New York in the winter of that year & finished in Lansingburgh in the early part of the summer[.]"[11] Although Melville was writing his novel from lived

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[10] Other storytellers thought so too. In a letter to his brother Edmund dated 18 March 1849, Richard Henry Dana, Jr., author of *Two Years Before the Mast*, wrote: "Melville has made a visit here & I have passed two nights with him . . . . He is incomparable in dramatic story telling" (Leyda 293). Parker observes that Dana's judgment would have been considerably informed, based on his own experience listening to storytellers aboard ship, on the frontier in Mexican California, and to "the best raconteurs among the anecdotally stocked members of the Massachusetts bar and the New England literary set" (Parker 264).

[11] *Typee* Manuscript. Gansevoort-Lansing Collection. New York Public Library.

experience, he did not hesitate to use and borrow from other sources to fill in details that he had either forgotten or had never learned, especially after John Murray had the novel under consideration for publication. His free use of these sources caused him trouble with reviewers, particularly in Britain, after the novel was published.[12]

In the early months of 1845, while Herman was writing *Typee*, Gansevoort was agonizing over Polk's apparent forgetfulness in awarding him a government position for his service during the campaign. He asked a number of influential people to write the president in his behalf, reminding Polk of his important contribution. As Herman watched Gansevoort and wrote, he "could take some satisfaction that in his less spectacular way he was himself attempting now to rise to a position of respectability by the force of his own 'fine powers' with words" (Parker 360).

The work of composing *Typee* was fulfilling for young Herman, who was just now twenty-five years old. In an 1851 letter to Nathaniel Hawthorne, Melville looked back to this moment in self-appraisal:

> My development has been all within a few years past. I am like one of those seeds taken out of the Egyptian Pyramids, which, after being three

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[12] Among these sources were *A Visit to the South Seas, in the U.S. Ship Vincennes, During the Years 1829 and 1830* by the Reverend Charles S. Stewart; Captain David Porter's *Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean in the U.S. Frigate Essex*; Georg H. von Langsdorff's *Voyages and Travels in Various Parts of the World*; and *Polynesian Researches* by William Ellis to name the principal ones (Howard "Historical Note" 291). His first revision of *Typee* and the controversy over its reception will be discussed more fully in Chapter 3.

> thousand years a seed and nothing but a seed, being planted in English soil, it developed itself, grew to greenness, and then fell to mould. So I. Until I was twenty-five, I had no development at all. From my twenty-fifth year I date my life. (Melville, *Correspondence* 193)

The composition of *Typee* in his twenty-fifth year marked Herman Melville's germination as a writer in the fertile soil of his imagination--an imagination that, as we shall see later in this chapter, was out of harmony with the cultural assumptions of the majority of citizens of the United States in the mid-1840s.

D.H. Lawrence stated that Herman Melville was born hating his culture (134). Melville did quarrel with his culture with increasing fervor as frustrations mounted over his lifetime. However, at the time he wrote *Typee* at the beginning of his career, he saw differently but not hatefully. More accurately, then, Lawrence's declaration describes the existence of Melville's cultural antipathy rather than properly classifying its origin or intensity.

It is a notable irony that the cultural dissatisfaction articulated in Melville's first works was expressed at a time when American nationalistic fervor was at an all-time high. In the decade of the 1840s, Melville wrote his first five novels, and the United States accomplished the greatest territorial acquisition in the nation's history. When James K. Polk assumed the office of the Presidency of the United States in 1845, "the national domain had not been enlarged

in a quarter century; its area had remained fixed at 1,788,000 square miles." In the period of Polk's four-year term, 1845-1849, the national domain was increased by 1,204,000 square miles (Merk vii), a sixty-seven percent increase, and representing forty percent of the total holdings.

What motivated such large land acquisitions was an ideology. "[T]erritorial expansion had come to be seen, by the 1830s, as a basic requirement for the nation's well-being, so basic that it became practically an alimentary need" (Dimock 3). And few felt timid about acquiring the land, since most Americans assumed a natural superiority regarding the "American race,"[13] economic and political systems, and national morality (Yoder 42). As Frederick Merk notes:

> In the mid-1840s a form of expansionism novel in name, appeal, and theory made its appearance in the United States. It was 'Manifest Destiny.' . . . [T]his precise combination of words was novel and right for a mood, and it became part of the language. It meant expansion, prearranged by Heaven, over an area not clearly defined. . . . It attracted enough persons by the mid-1840s to constitute a movement. (24)

The national rhetoric of the period cast Americans as secular and spiritual saviors extending freedom and carrying salvation in every direction; in fact, "'freedom' came to be

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[13] The term "American race" was one that in the mid-1840s was frequently used by the proponents of Manifest Destiny to define the American people as a people apart from all others--a people particularly marked by God's favor and having a peculiar role and destiny in his plans.

a code word for America's continental expansionism" (Dimock 9).

The mid-1840s, when Melville composed and published *Typee*, was indeed a time of grandiose national spirit and vision. A general understanding of American economic and political conditions, and a more particular focus on the religious attitudes of Protestant evangelicals in the mid-1840s are helpful in recognizing the potency of the influence on Melville's first American publisher John Wiley to create an expurgated Revised Edition of Herman Melville's *Typee*.

It is hardly surprising that America should be found flexing her muscles in the mid-1840s. A number of industrial economic developments were bearing fruit, provoking the imagination and expanding the vision of the American people. The economic system overall had gathered its momentum for its transformation from an agrarian-based economy of self-sufficiency to a capital-driven, production and market-based economy, a process begun following the War of 1812. The country was finally emerging in 1842-1843 from the five-year economic depression initiated by the Panic of 1837 (Silbey 22). Large public works projects like the Erie Canal had proven to some people what less expensive transportation could do for markets and commerce, but other developments in transportation held greater promise for economic expansion.

Steam technology had been harnessed for transportation and refined in the early decades of the nineteenth century, and by 1830 the steamboat dominated river transportation in America, serving as the most important mode of transportation in the United States until 1850 (Taylor 58). But it was the railroad that would conquer the varied and vast geography of the United States (Taylor 74). 10,000 miles of track would be built in the decade of the 1840s (Tindall 444). Developments in ocean transport were also occurring. In 1845, trans-Atlantic transport was available from packet services that departed New York three times a week for England or the continent (Tindall 447-48). As Harold D. Woodman has noted, these improvements in transportation resulted in increased commercialization and the creation of new classes of jobs. An intricate commercial infrastructure existed by the middle 1840s that was quite foreign to anything that had existed some two decades before (Woodman 67).

Besides transportation, another important technological advance showed the promise of shrinking geographical space and fed the psychology of American superiority and expansionism. Samuel F. B. Morse's telegraph was first demonstrated in 1843. For the first time, news and information were independent of transportation; messages could travel more quickly than messengers (Taylor 151-52).

Developments in agriculture accelerated in the 1840s, and became another synecdoche of American prowess. Wheat and livestock production soared, causing one Illinois Senator to call for the opening of foreign markets, boasting that the production of only ten Illinois counties was needed to feed the whole United States (Silbey 22). But it was cotton, from the mid-1830s until the Civil War, that accounted for more than half the value of all United States' exports (Tindall 435) and provided the raw material of the burgeoning Northern textile industry. As a result of cotton's economic importance, slavery was defended by a majority of citizens as vigorously in the North as the South until the Compromise of 1850 and its fugitive slave provision began to turn the tide of public opinion. However, there was a dissatisfied minority.

Abolitionists had begun agitating for the complete eradication of slavery in the United States in the early 1830s, and by the mid-1840s the abolitionists had developed some political leverage. In 1840 a group of abolitionists, principally Whigs opposed to Kentuckian Henry Clay because he owned slaves, broke with William Lloyd Garrison and formed the Liberty Party, believing in a legislative rather than a militant solution to slavery. Importantly, in the election of 1844 the Liberty Party drew enough votes in New York to cost Henry Clay the state and its electoral votes. It was a decisive blow; James K. Polk carried New York,

which gave him the election. The political and literary fortunes of both Gansevoort and Herman Melville were dramatically altered by this outcome in the election. Polk appointed Gansevoort to a diplomatic post in London which led directly to the publication Herman's novel *Typee* in England, as discussed in detail in the next chapter.

By the mid-1840s the largely unforeseen consequences of another development in American culture were being played out: the rise of manufacturing. These events were set in motion in the 1790s, beginning with some stolen technology from England, Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin, and later, in mid-decade, his perfection of the techniques of mass production.[14] These innovations helped inspire the shift from agrarian production to manufacturing and the adoption of the factory system (Tindall 452).

Between 1820 and 1840, the number of Americans involved in manufacturing increased by a factor of eight, and the number living in cities more than doubled (Tindall 456). At first, manufacturing was dependent upon water power and developed near waterways, which transformed the rural landscape into industrial towns. However, the development of the stationary steam engine suddenly made water power an

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[14] England zealously guarded its manufacturing technology by forbidding the exportation of machines, plans or descriptions of machines, and even informed operators. In 1789 Samuel Slater arrived in the United States with the memorized plan for a "water frame" machine, and by 1790 had built a small mill in Pawtucket which produced cotton yarn (Tindall 450).

optional component. Older, established cities began to attract manufacturing interests because of their existing infrastructure and, most importantly, large pools of skilled labor (Tindall 460-61). Already commercial centers, cities soon became industrial centers drawing more of the nation's population into urban life.

These factors, combined with others which fall beyond the scope of this study, created urban conditions which for the first time challenged America's social consciousness, and, ultimately, had a large impact on the evangelical movement.

> The new and distinctly urban social patterns that emerged in the second quarter of the nineteenth century stimulated the discovery of urban society in American social thought. Men and women became more sensitive to the urban context of their lives; they began to explore the nature of their urban communities. . . . Americans were struck by the increasing visibility of poverty in their [urban] communities. . . . Antebellum cities exhibited festering slums marked by poverty, violence, sickness, and despair. These conditions were disturbing enough in their own right, but even more serious to the new city-dweller was what they represented: the fragmentation of the traditional community. (Bender 97)

This urban poverty and resulting social fragmentation challenged cherished concepts of community. The class problem was serious enough that William Ellery Channing emphasized it in 1841, saying that "'It is the unhappiness of most large cities . . . that, instead of union of sympathy, [people] consist of different ranks, so widely separated as indeed to form different communities'" (Bender

97). For Protestant evangelicals, such social fragmentation seriously undermined the foundation of "the city on the hill" and millennial kingdom as well. Consequently, it is no surprise that this rising urban social consciousness regarding the poor and their problems was translated into the activism that animated the flourishing and energetic reform movements of the time.

About the reform movements, it is safe to apply to America's eastern cities in general what Bender says of Lowell, Massachusetts, in particular. He explains that the ethos of the various antebellum reform movements, regardless of their manifold purposes, was that of the conservative Protestant middle class, who sought to promulgate middle-class values. More significantly, the ethos of the foreign missionary movement is aptly described by Bender's statement that the reform movements' underlying "assumptions were elitist in the sense that they felt free unilaterally to define cultural standards for the entire community" (Bender 126). This same elitist cultural bias fashioned the goals and defined the operating principles of the missionaries in spreading spiritual and social salvation and seeking the complete reform of native peoples both within and beyond the borders of the United States. These reform assumptions, both at home and abroad, were based on a firm belief in the concept of upward social mobility. Anyone could be taught,

and should be taught, how to discipline and improve their lives.

Such a belief in discipline and order was necessary because of the fear that such discipline was everywhere necessary to preserve the middle class itself. The poor not only presented a social problem, but also a threat to the foundations of the middle-class way of life. After all, America's whole industrial experiment had been launched with a firm hope against a nagging moral anxiety that man would not be forced "to sacrifice everything that raises him above a brute 'and makes him a MAN'" (Bender 62). These urban poor were evidence that all had not gone as hoped and that middle-class fortunes were being made from the moral denigration of others. Dimock has persuasively argued that these working-class poor were classed as "barbarians," precisely on par with the other "savages" of the landscape: the American Indians (18-19). Thus, Melville's advocacy in *Typee* of the undefiled communal nature of the primitive Typee society as civilized is more significant when viewed in the context of America's rising urban sensibility; it was a goad thrust into the festering flesh of Protestant middle-class America's own troubled social experiment.

By the 1840s, political partisanship had reached its highest pinnacle to that time. Two major political coalitions had emerged out of the earlier Jacksonian era

(1828-1836), and a sequence of third parties was begun with the Liberty party in 1840 (Rose 55).[15] The Democratic Party was established as a movement with the ascendancy of Andrew Jackson in the mid-1820s, and the Whigs, an opposition party founded by Daniel Webster and Henry Clay, formed in 1832 with Jackson's reelection. Serious philosophical and political differences divided the parties.

In 1843 Horace Greeley wrote an editorial in his New York *Tribune* entitled "The Grounds of Difference Between the Contending Parties." Greeley's editorial is a window that opens on the contemporary political scene of the mid-1840s, and identifies the "generic or fundamental" differences between the two parties, followed by an analysis of their respective outlooks on the four major issues of the period: tariffs, currency, public works and public lands.[16]

The essential difference between the parties, as described by Greeley, is that Whigs favored a strong central government implementing policies for the benefit of its citizens at the national level, while the Democrats wanted extremely limited central government, preserving the right to set policy for the various states.

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[15] Others are the Free-Soil party in 1848, and the Know Nothings of the 1850s. The Whigs would disintegrate in the 1850s, and the Republican Party would emerge as a major party in 1856.

[16] As will be seen momentarily, the matter of slavery was never discussed during this period as a campaign issue by the mutual consent of the parties.

Greeley was a staunch Whig. The editorial recapitulates the merits of Henry Clay's American System, the political platform of the Whig Party in the election of 1844.

Clay's American System "was a neofederalist program of a national bank, a tariff to promote and protect domestic industry, and congressionally financed internal improvements" (Foner 35). The Democrats opposed these national measures in favor of states' prerogatives. Besides tariffs, currency matters and internal improvements, the issue of annexation and policies regarding the disposition of proceeds from the sale of public lands also divided the parties, with most Whigs opposing expansionist policies like annexation, and most Democrats supporting them. The largest political question in the presidential campaign of 1844 was whether or not to expand the territory of the United States with the annexation of Texas and the resolution of a border dispute with Britain over the Oregon territory. One year later, in 1845, while Melville was composing *Typee*, Texas annexation and the resulting tensions with Mexico, as well as the Oregon dispute, were all political quandaries.

Before the 1844 election, President Tyler tried using the Texas issue to rehabilitate his own political prospects,[17] and land speculators were manipulating Tyler

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[17] Tyler, a Whig, became, with the death of William Henry Harrison a month after his inauguration, the first Vice-President to succeed to the presidency. His fervent defense of states' rights, a stance more in line with that of the Democrats, angered Whig nationalists and he was disowned by his own party; his actions did not win him the approval or

to make their fortunes in Texas. Inadvertently, they permanently reopened an old wound. By the mutual agreement of both parties, a gag-order had been imposed to keep abolitionist petitions out of Congressional debate. Tyler saw Texas as the vehicle to his reelection and moved secretly to annex Texas in early 1844. John C. Calhoun, trying to stop his nemesis Van Buren and win the presidential nomination for himself, wrote a letter to the British Ambassador that was read in the Senate, cleverly linking Texas annexation with increasing territory for slavery. Unwilling to alienate northern supporters who tolerated slavery where it already existed but who thought it should not be expanded, Van Buren and Clay came out in opposition to Texas annexation. On John Tyler's last day in office, 3 March 1845, Congress finally passed a resolution annexing Texas, making war with Mexico inevitable. However, Calhoun's tactic had begotten the belief that new southern territory would expand the practice of slavery, and the slavery issue reemerged in the political arena in spite of the great number of statesmen from both the North and South and the Democratic and Whig parties who had worked diligently to suppress it (Holt 58-63).[18]

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support of the opposition party either. He inhabited a sort of political no-man's land during his entire time in office.

[18] See Carolyn Karcher's *Shadow Over the Promised Land* for information on slavery as an important theme in Melville's work.

Entering office, Polk delayed action on Tyler's initiative until his Cabinet approved the plan. On 6 March 1845 Mexico severed diplomatic relations with the United States, and Polk ordered troops to guard the undefined border with Mexico. During a significant part of the time Melville was writing his first novel, the outbreak of war with Mexico was virtually certain. More significant for Melville writing *Typee*, however, was that the

> rhetoric supporting American attempts to take [territory] from Mexico was filled with claims of America's racial, cultural, and political superiority. Americans said they had no desire to be despotic conquerors; rather they understood themselves to be benevolent teachers who would help enlighten, educate, and redeem Mexicans from their slothfulness and ignorance, instill them with a love of free enterprise, and make the idle land productive. (Yoder 44)

Ideologically for Melville, it was a reenactment of the same scenario he had observed in the South Pacific in the attitudes of the Protestant missionaries toward the Polynesians. Such bombast in the national discourse must have heightened the indignation he already had experienced when he knew from personal knowledge that such cultural deprecation was largely in error. Thus the naive and ingenuous impulse to correct such false or overstated notions entered the discourse of *Typee*.

The other large issue immediately before Polk was the boundary dispute over the Oregon territory. Although Britain and the United States had agreed to joint occupancy, increased American occupation and the mood of Manifest

Destiny were driving forces for its acquisition. The proposed boundary was an extension along the 49th parallel, but a number of influential hawkish voices believed the United States' claim extended to 54° 40′ and were willing to go to war with Britain to prove their claim. "Fifty-four forty or fight," was their motto. The moral justification for claiming Oregon was that "American democracy was superior to British monarchy" (Yoder 39). The political reasons were to avoid appearing too prosouthern in acquiring Texas, to balance expansionist aims with both northern and southern territory, and to win western support for the Party. The Democrats made the Oregon issue part of the Democratic platform, calling for its immediate occupation (Holt 62-63). After a year of Polk's public bluster and quiet diplomacy, the British finally agreed to the 49th parallel boundary in June of 1846, relieving Polk the worry of fighting wars on two fronts. Gansevoort Melville was participating in these political negotiations while also negotiating on Herman's behalf with the English publisher John Murray for the publication of *Typee*.[19]

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[19] Evidently Herman's brother, Gansevoort, was himself hawkish on the Oregon issue, and quite an American chauvinist. He was appointed by Polk as the Secretary of the Legation to the Court of St. James in return for his help during Polk's campaign. According to G.P. Putnam, during some of the most intense negotiations of the Oregon question, Gansevoort attended a formal diplomatic dinner in London for the important foreign ministers in the absence of the Ambassador, Louis McLane. "Replying to a formal toast, 'The President of the United States,' the Secretary electrified the diplomatic circle by a Tammany speech, winding up somewhat thus: 'I was one who helped to place Mr. Polk where he now is, and I know that he will not *dare* to recede from 54.40!'" (qtd. in Leyda 201).

To avoid any threat or opportunity of slavery expanding into this new territory, on 8 August of 1846, two days after the Revised Edition of *Typee* was copyrighted and being sold by the booksellers, David Wilmot introduced in Congress the Wilmot Proviso which proposed making slavery illegal in any newly acquired territories. The debate over the Proviso was intense, and not until 1848 was it finally adopted. However, the debate itself further sectionalized the country, and slavery could no longer be politically ignored (Holt 196).

In spite of these significant social and political problems (i.e. the urban poor, territorial expansion, war and slavery), what is most significant about America in the mid-1840s was an attitude that had a number of manifestations, all of them grounded in the concept of United States cultural superiority. Many, if not most, citizens of this country during the mid-1840s believed themselves to be part of a racially, morally, politically, economically, and religiously superior people. For the entire world to be transformed only required the exportation of American institutions abroad.

Ernest Tuveson writes in *Redeemer Nation* that in the formulation of this cultural superiority,

> Self-interest and chauvinism were involved, but to attribute the whole conception to them alone is

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Gansevoort's negotiations with John Murray in London are discussed in the next chapter.

> misleading. What happened was that the possibilities for territorial expansion . . . came into a kind of chemical combination with the general Protestant theology of the millennium, and with the already old idea of the destined greatness and messianic mission of 'Columbia.' (125)

From contemporary documents, Tuveson shows that the American state itself was thought of as a spiritual entity that possessed a soul and moral sense that looked for celestial direction (125). So a host of different factors combined "to point to one race and one nation as chosen to perform God's work in the last days. It seemed as if the finger of Providence had pointed to the young republic of the West," and the majority of Trinitarian Protestants in the United States took such a view literally: America was the nation that would redeem all other nations (Tuveson x). Understanding the intensity of this phenomenon explains the evangelical zeal that characterized the Protestant religious institutions in the United States at the time.

What is especially telling about the intense nationalism in the United States during this period is the conspicuous link forged between the fortunes of the American people and their institutions, and the perception of divine destiny and favor. Foremost, many in the United States of the 1840s believed the virtue of the state and its institutions would reclaim the waste places and redeem the

degenerate and heathen peoples of the earth. As Karl Eric Valois observes,

> As this "civil millennialism" took hold, God's New Israel evolved into a "righteous empire," the principle vehicle for world wide millennial regeneration. *With an astonishing display of confidence, evangelicals set out to expedite the process through their own labors.* Sensing that the establishment of a heavenly realm on earth was within their grasp, they resolved to diffuse Christian morality across America and the globe. Operating on the basis that human beings were free moral agents who possessed the capacity for self-betterment, they strove to shape and reform individual character. (72-73, emphasis added)

America's success as a "redeemer nation" was inextricably linked with the inauguration of the millennial reign and the establishment of the heavenly realm on earth. Many Americans believed they had progressed to the point that the time had come, or was not far distant, when Christ himself would come and make his abode among them. On 22 October 1844, the very day Herman Melville travelled up the Hudson returning to his home in Lansingburgh after his four year absence in the Pacific, he would have seen the campsites of the Millerites on the opposite shore of the Hudson at Waterford (Parker 303).[20] However, if Miller and his sect were wrong about the time of the Second Coming, many Americans believed that their notion of the place had been right; the United States of America would fulfill God's

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[20] They were camped there awaiting the Second Coming of Christ, who had left his heavenly throne on October 13 and was due to arrive on the 22nd, making his way to the United States, not Jerusalem, for the ushering in of the Millennium (Parker 303; Numbers xv).

divine purposes and Biblical teleology, if not exactly at Waterford, then somewhere else within her borders.

But the idea of the United States as a "redeemer nation" from which blessings would also go forth is more to the purpose here. This attitude is exemplified by George Barrell Cheever, John Wiley's minister at the Congregational Church of the Puritans in Manhattan in 1846 when *Typee* was published. Cheever, himself a man of letters, wrote and published in 1841 a small book, *God's Hand in America*. Chapter Nine is entitled "The Chosen People." Cheever therein states:

> We cannot conceal from ourselves, nor would we wish to do it, that the responsibilities of every kind resting upon this country are mightier than those which belong to any other nation in the world. Especially is this the case with the religious responsibilities of a Christian church which God has so remarkably blessed. If we redeem them, it will be glorious for us and glorious for the world. (qtd. in Bode 313)

The commission from God was obvious, and it but remained to carry out His work.

Although Protestant-sponsored missionary work had begun abroad before the mid-1840s and people had travelled throughout the world to spread the Christian gospel, by the 1840s it was not just religion that was the message of salvation, but a whole cultural complex of ideas and institutions. Hawaii is perhaps the most complete example of a strategy that was applied by the missionaries everywhere they went, including the Marquesas and Tahiti,

where Melville also visited.[21] Since the instructions given by those administering the missionary work "seemed to enjoin upon its agents the transfer of much of the total New England culture to the Sandwich Islands, the missionaries set out to effect a complete transformation of Hawaiian life" (Phillips 97).

It was not good enough for people to believe in the same God and the same Bible in the same way, they also needed to be dressed alike, be educated and read the same books, and to participate in the same agricultural, economic and domestic endeavors (Phillips 97-98). Even political and legal systems were transported to the islands. Recording his experience as a missionary for twenty-one years in the Sandwich Islands, Hiram Bingham wrote:

> The spring of 1840 was a new era in the progress of the nation. A written constitution, or declaration of rights, and a new code of written laws were framed by the instructed natives, carefully discussed, and in the course of the year adopted. The mission rejoicing in every effort of the rulers to secure the just rights of the people, to encourage industry and thrift, to restrain vice and punish crime, took encouragement from this evidence of progress probably more than the mass of people themselves. (561)

Bingham's discourse shows how profound the changes were that the missionaries were making. Bingham's own ethnocentrism is evident when he mentions that the conflict between old

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[21] The Marquesan mission was unsuccessful and of less than a year's duration, established in August 1833 and abandoned in April 1834, eight years before Melville's arrival to the island of Nuku Hiva. This short tenure of the missionaries is another reason Melville found the Typees unspoiled.

customs and the new code of laws based on United States' jurisprudence sometimes caused the natives to apply the new laws "so incorrect[ly] . . . as to throw discredit on the law itself, or on the whole remodeled system" (561). The missionaries carefully explained the underpinnings of their home country's political and legal philosophy, and imposed it upon the islanders, gradually transforming the whole Hawaiian system. Kenneth Scott Latourette sums up the origin of this strategy very neatly: "One of the distinctive tokens of the Christianity and especially the Protestantism of the United States . . . was the fashion in which it conformed to the ethos of the [mother] country" (qtd. in Ahlstrom 858-59). Like America's other institutions, the ethos of the Protestant missionary movement was alive with activity, possessed a comprehensive elitist vision, was organized and funded for maximum effect, and enjoyed a broad base of lay support from among its congregations. Nor was there any room in this comprehensive vision of uniformity of purpose for revisionary views like those Melville would offer up in *Typee*.

Another example of Protestant conformity to a prevailing national ethos was evident in their interpretation of the Mexican War. Many of the Protestant clergy supported the war because they saw in it the "unfolding of a divine plan" to overthrow Catholicism in the new world; "God had reserved America for Protestantism and

Democracy" (Goodykoontz 271). Under the aegis of Manifest Destiny, a holy crusade had gone forth. Protestant Whigs, who were generally opposed to Manifest Destiny and Polk's hawkish expansionism, could find the silver lining of God's purposes fulfilled in Protestant America's triumph over Catholic Mexico and the vast reclamation of Romish territory with its hosts of occupants removed from the Pope's domination.

With the important commission of redemption to fulfill to all nations, it is not surprising that Protestants organized their efforts interdenominationally, creating various associations. In fact, a number of institutions sprang up to carry out their ambitious "mandate." In 1810 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions was founded, followed by the American Bible Society in 1816. In 1817 the American Colonization Society was organized; the American Sunday School Union in 1824; in 1825 the American Tract Society; and in 1826 both the American Home Missionary Society and the American Temperance Society (reorganized in 1836 as the American Temperance Union), to name some of the principal agencies. That all of these organizations were interrelated in their missions and relevant during the 1840s is evident when one considers that Theodore Frelinghuysen, Henry Clay's Vice-Presidential nominee in the campaign of 1844, was in that year concurrently either President or a high-ranking official of the American Board of Commissioners

for Foreign Missions; the American Tract Society; the American Bible Society; the American Temperance Union; the American Sunday School Union; and the American Home Missionary Society, not to mention Chancellor of New York University. Most of these groups started from small, independent grassroots movements, but by the 1840s local involvement was directed by national organizations through chapter memberships. Most national headquarters were located in Melville's home city of New York, with some located in Boston. This "whole cluster of benevolent societies . . . has sometimes been referred to as the 'benevolent empire' and it is true that their activities were closely coordinated through a series of interlocking directorates" (Slocum 64). It was also "a loose alliance of interdenominational organizations" (Valois 16). When Melville wrote critically of the missionaries' influence among the natives of the South Seas, he was attacking a strong and vast evangelical fortress with unity among its vassals.

The Benevolent Empire was effectively organized, its large membership zealously committed, and its influence felt nearly everywhere. One example of the magnitude of this enterprise is the American Tract Society, which began in 1825 and had, by 1877, printed and distributed over 370 million copies of its nearly 2,000 titles. The Society was "at the forefront in developing mass media in the United

States [and] became the largest publisher in antebellum America" (Valois 5-6). The number of Bibles, religious books and leaflets, and temperance tracts that were distributed is staggering. These evangelical efforts and their accompanying cultural elitism, in both ideology and deed, caught Herman Melville's attention as he travelled in the South Pacific, but the vigorous pursuit of the Benevolent Empire's goals was a sublimation of a broader impulse in American society driven by the presence of the Native American Indian.

Considering attitudes of the United States' populace toward Native Americans in the nineteenth century, Michael Rogin has shown that the collective imagination of the United States envisioned itself as filling a paternalistic role in regard to the Native Americans, a people who in the same imaginative scheme were seen as primitives and, therefore, as children. Given the United States' own history of deep perplexities and ongoing complex entanglements with Native Americans on its home frontiers, "the contrast between 'savagery' and 'civilization' *dominated the ante-bellum American imagination*" (*Fathers*, 166, emphasis added). Melville pointed to the implications of this national preoccupation regarding "the savage" Native Americans in a passage of *Typee*:

> Let the savages be civilized, but civilize them with benefits, and not with evils; and let heathenism be destroyed, but not by destroying the heathen. The Anglo-Saxon hive have extirpated

> Paganism from the greater part of the North American continent; but they have likewise extirpated the greater portion of the Red race. Civilization is gradually sweeping from the earth the lingering vestiges of Paganism, and at the same time the shrinking forms of its unhappy worshippers. (195)

For the evangelists the national preoccupation with the merits of civilization and its concomitant perspective of enlightened fathers and unredeemed children was effortlessly projected to include the civilizing of the primitives of other lands. Melville attempted to explode the myth:

> Heaven help the "Isles of the Sea!"--The sympathy which Christendom feels for them has, alas! in too many instances proved their bane.
>
> How little do some of these poor islanders comprehend when they look around them, that no inconsiderable part of their disasters originate in certain tea-party excitements, under the influence of which benevolent-looking gentlemen in white cravats solicit alms, and old ladies in spectacles, and young ladies in sober russet low gowns, contribute sixpences towards the creation of a fund, the object of which is to ameliorate the spiritual condition of the Polynesians, but whose end has almost invariably been to accomplish their temporal destruction. (195)

What was at stake in this whole issue of Protestant cultural imperialism was the definition of "civilization" itself. T. Walter Herbert, Jr. observes: "In the early nineteenth century the term 'civilization' had a more emphatic and limited significance than it has today; it was reserved for a state of society that stood at the head of a procession in which other societies had subordinate places" (78). Still, he explains, the term could be understood in two ways. The word "civilization" could apply to "the

advanced condition itself," or it could refer to the "process" by which that condition would be achieved (78). For Herbert the fact that the missionaries were privileging one definition, and others, including Melville, quite a different one is the core of the matter.

The missionaries saw themselves in the role of "spiritual liberators." They believed that all mankind was corrupted by original sin. The natives' primitive methods, their overt and excessive sexuality, and their awkward social structure were taken as evidence by the missionaries of their inherent spiritual corruption. Of course, the missionaries believed that the antidote to the natives' social and moral degeneracy was the redeeming power of God--provided in the religious and cultural gospel the missionaries had brought to preach to them. The missionaries believed that for a social and moral reformation to occur, the natives must undergo an *internal* spiritual transformation. As the hearts and minds of the natives were transformed and conformed to the will of God, they would alter their outward circumstances and social attainments, thus moving toward a "civilized" condition. However, in the missionaries' conceptual scheme, until "this radical alteration in his spiritual makeup [had] occurred, the savage was trapped in an endless cycle of depravity" (Herbert 76). The missionaries in the South Seas perceived, then, that civilization as an accomplished condition was

external evidence that an internal conversion and process had transpired. All the graces that mark civilized living, such as "law and commerce as well as technology," would be the fruits of this spiritual journey (Herbert 78).

For the missionaries and their like-minded evangelical benefactors in the United States, there could be no individual or social virtue found among these people who were living in such an unredeemed and degenerate state. Organized religion, with its entrenched orthodox structures and social conventions, was such a force in these evangelicals' lives and culture that it was impossible for them to conceive of any form of "natural morality"--the term would have been oxymoronic. Morality could not exist apart from religious principles and organized clergy. In their conceptual models the paradigm did not exist that permitted an alternate belief, nor was the Protestant evangelical imagination elastic enough to expand sufficiently to invent one. However, the paradigm did exist in other minds.

Captain David Porter was one whose mind grasped a different pattern. He commanded the United States warship *Essex* during the War of 1812, and carried out his orders to harass British shipping in both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. He arrived in the Marquesas in 1813 after devastating the British Pacific whaling fleet, and claimed the islands for the United States. His *Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean* (1815) was one of Melville's

sources in *Typee*. The journal not only reports on his military operations, but assumes a tone of scientific achievement when describing "hitherto little-known peoples" (Herbert 79, 9).

During Porter's stay in the Marquesas he tried to "civilize" the natives, but in quite a different fashion than that later employed by the missionaries. Herbert calls Porter's approach that of a "political educator." The political educator requires no prior internal regeneration as the basis of social progress, but rather "seeks to cultivate the abilities displayed in the savage state. He uses institutional arrangements as instructional devices, instead of assuming they flow from changes in the heart" (76). Porter was willing to recognize the superior quality of many of the utilitarian attainments of native life. He was impressed with the Marquesans' exquisite navigational skill, the design of their buildings (his own compound was erected using Marquesan designs), and their physical excellence. Porter believed

> men are civilized when they exercise their inherent capabilities on an exalted plane. The essence of a civilized community is not hidden, therefore, in the hearts of human beings, . . . instead it is manifest in architecture, commerce, science, government, and technology. (Herbert 78-9)

Unlike the missionaries and Porter, Herman Melville was not at first concerned with civilization, but spent his time among the insulated (from Western culture) Typees as an

escape from his own problems. Like Porter, he recognized superior qualities in native attainments. He would write in *Typee*:

> Civilization does not engross all the virtues of humanity: she has not even her full share of them. They flourish in greater abundance and attain greater strength among many barbarous people. . . . If truth and justice, and the better principles of our nature, cannot exist unless enforced by the statute-book, how are we to account for the social condition of the Typees? So pure and upright were they in all the relations of life. . . . 'They deal more kindly with each other, and are more humane, than many who study essays on virtue and benevolence, and who repeat every night that beautiful prayer breathed first by the lips of the divine and gentle Jesus.' I will frankly declare, that after spending a few weeks in this valley of the Marquesas, I formed a higher estimate of human nature than I had ever before entertained. (202-03)

However, later at Tahiti and the Sandwich Islands, the more Melville saw, experienced, and compared the unspoiled Typees with the natives who had been the subjects of overt Western influence, the more critical he became because he saw native virtues lost to the cultural demands of Westerners, particularly the missionaries, who were blind to their intrinsic worth. Worse, Melville believed the new cultural habits promulgated by the Westerners were not assimilated fully enough by the natives to compensate for the loss of their traditional social system. Consequently, Melville thought the native populations languished in a detrimental, insipid twilight between the two cultures that was undignified, unproductive, and, therefore, unredemptive.

Thus, Melville found himself in a counterstance to many popularly held Western ideals about civilization, and particularly opposed to evangelical idealism because of his experience among the Typees. Willard Thorpe has written:

> At the moment when young men in America, imbued with transcendentalism, were giving eloquent support to the doctrine of the manifest destiny of the nation and defied the world to show any civilization which could equal ours, Melville was studying with habitually clear eyes a savage society in the South Seas which had achieved an admirable social equilibrium. (qtd. in Yoder 13)

Melville's time among the unspoiled Typees left an indelible impression, especially when compared with his other experiences with natives in the South Seas and Hawaii who were living under the imposition of Western ideals and customs. These cultural encounters changed Melville in profound and enduring ways, and it is instructive to compare for a moment Melville's cross-cultural experience with that of a modern anthropologist or ethnographer.

Cultural anthropologist Victor Turner writes of the psychological impact experiencing other cultures can and should have for an anthropologist.

> I would like to revive our abiding anthropological concern with "experience." . . . It has long been the jest of anthropologists that field "experience" equals our "rite de passage." But this remark is no metaphor; *it describes a true psychological passage from one way of seeing and understanding to another,* a passage not vouchsafed to those who hold hard to the values, meanings, goals, and beliefs they have grown up to think of as reality. . . . "Good" fieldworkers are those who are prepared to . . . suspend as far as possible their own social conditioning in order to have sensory and mental knowledge of what is

> really happening around and to them. If they open themselves in this way . . . *they may well be transformed by fieldwork experience*. Not all experience is transformative; did not T.S. Eliot write: "to have the experience but miss the meaning?" Experience must be linked with performance for there to be transformation. Meaning is generated in transformative process as its main fruit. (205-06, emphasis added)

Herman Melville did not miss the meaning. If Turner is right, that the evidence of this psychological transformation is in performance, the text of *Typee*--where experience is converted into meaning--is the unequivocal evidence of that transformation. Moreover, Turner's stipulations for a productive field experience describe Melville's experiences in Polynesia as if they were defined with his case at hand. While Herman's young mind was not a *tabula rasa*, it was by no means socially or culturally engraved, either. His father's death and the continuing unsettled circumstances of his family, his youth (he was not yet 23 when he jumped ship), his diverse educational and occupational pursuits before shipping aboard the whaler, as well as his life aboard a whale ship isolated from his home society for more than a year, all predict the kind of openness and vulnerability to new experience that Turner refers to. He was also vulnerable in another way that Turner's conditions do not anticipate.

> [S]ignificant for Melville's estimation of Marquesan life . . . is the vantage that his place among them compelled him to take. Since he was entirely in their hands, it was necessary for him to view their customs with an eye to his own survival. . . .

> [This] perspective permitted Melville to notice aspects of Marquesan life that had been invisible to Western observers who enjoyed official backing, and to identify the source of certain false impressions they had broadcast. (Herbert 152)

Among the Typees--in an ironic similitude of the internal conversion the missionaries sought for the natives, both in cause and resulting vision--Melville underwent the profound and fundamental psychological transformation that Turner describes. Consequently, he learned to see and think of culture and civilization in new, even revolutionary ways. The dominant results of this new vision were on the one hand not privileging his own culture, rigorously maintaining a stubborn skepticism about its high claims, and "[n]ever again judg[ing] nonwhite peoples by ethnocentric standards" (Karcher 2). On the other hand, he had gained a willingness to advocate newly perceived yet real virtues of cultures considered inferior by his peers, and "began to reexamine his own society through the eyes of 'savages'" (Karcher 2). Most importantly, the experiences among the natives and the consequent internal transformation that made Melville a storyteller had also ensured an antagonistic relationship to the entire cultural field in which literary publishing was embedded--in no case more dramatically than that of John Wiley, the publisher of the American editions of *Typee*.

CHAPTER TWO

CIVIL AND IMPOLITE SKEPTICISM:

THE PUBLICATION AND RECEPTION OF *TYPEE*

> I think from what I read of [*Typee*] that it is sure to take to a satisfactory extent, if indeed it does not prove as good a hit as Dana's life before the Mast.
>
> --George P. Putnam to Evert A. Duyckinck, 2 February 1846

> There was a spice of civil scepticism in your manner, My Dear Sir, when we were conversing together the other day about 'Typee'--
>
> --Herman Melville to Evert A. Duyckinck, 3 July 1846

To expand the known publishing history of the Revised Edition of Herman Melville's first novel *Typee*, an understanding of how the first editions were published in England and the United States is important to this study and is, in its own right, a fascinating, if well-studied story. The novel appeared in the United States in what came to be a notable collection of works: the Library of American Books. In publishing the Library of American Books, John Wiley and George Palmer Putnam were contributing to "nothing less than the coming of age of American literary culture" (Greenspan 678).

The Library of American Books was the vision of Wiley & Putnam editor Evert A. Duyckinck, and it included titles by such authors as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Edgar Allan Poe, Margaret Fuller, William Gilmore Simms, John Greenleaf

Whittier, Caroline Kirkland, Joel T. Headley, Bayard Taylor, James Hall, and, of course, Herman Melville. Emerson, Longfellow, and Lowell were all solicited by Duyckinck, but Emerson, although tempted, was ultimately unwilling to participate, and Longfellow and Lowell were unable to. Thoreau offered Duyckinck his first book manuscript, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, but, in spite of Duyckinck's favorable report, Wiley offered Thoreau publication only at "author's risk" and he left to find better terms elsewhere (Greenspan 683-87, 690). Clearly, John Wiley was at the heart of American literary culture during the period of 1845-1847 when the Library was being published, just as his father Charles had been at the heart of the American literary scene two decades earlier.

Charles Wiley founded a small printing shop in New York City in 1807. The next year, 1808, his son John was born on 4 October in Flatbush, Long Island (Wilson 281). In these early years, and for some time after, no clear distinction existed between the operations of printing, publishing and selling books. From 1807 to 1814 Charles Wiley was primarily, if not exclusively, a printer. In 1814, when Wiley went into partnership with the established printer Cornelius Van Winkle at the prestigious address of 3 Wall Street, this location likely served as a bookstore. The partners were involved in publishing as well as printing. Over the next four years, the firm of Van Winkle & Wiley

sometimes acted as both printer and publisher, sometimes in the capacity of publisher only while contracting with other printers for printing services, and sometimes solely as printer, acting on the instructions of authors or other "publishers" (Moore 8). When Van Winkle & Wiley terminated their partnership in 1819, Charles Wiley's days as a printer were over. Van Winkle maintained the presses and continued printing, and Charles Wiley retained the Wall Street offices and became a publisher and bookseller (Wiley 8; Moore 11).

In his first years of publishing in his own right, Charles Wiley helped establish the careers of some of America's most successful early authors. His first literary venture was also a successful one. In 1819 Charles Wiley published Fitz-Greene Halleck's poem of social satire, *Fanny*, which quickly sold out. Wiley commissioned a sequel and issued a second edition in 1821 which was also successful. Having to borrow $700 against his Accounts Receivable to have liquid cash to meet ordinary business expenses (Wiley 8), this publishing success was more than ordinarily gratifying to Charles Wiley and probably had a significant impact on subsequent events. John Hammond Moore has observed that "[t]he success of this venture in American literature may have caused Wiley to look with favor on the work of other native-born writers; if so, then this was a turning point in his career" (Moore 11).

Whatever his motive, Wiley followed Halleck's poem with

publications of other American writers. He published an American edition of Washington Irving's *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon* in 1819, and published James Fenimore Cooper's first successful novel, *The Spy*.[1] In all, Cooper would publish five novels with Charles Wiley between 1821 and 1825.

Success and some public recognition blessed Charles Wiley for a time. He set aside a room at the back of his store he called the "Den," and soon No. 3 Wall Street was well known as the meeting place for many of the New York *literati*. Besides Cooper and Halleck, James Kirke Paulding, William Cullen Bryant, Gulian Verplanck, William Leete Stone, the painter Samuel F.B. Morse and the playwright and inventor Mordecai Manuel Noah frequented Wiley's address, and his imprint appeared on a number of their works (Wiley 9; Moore 11, 23-4).

By 1824 another was regularly present at the store. John Wiley, Charles' son, had been well educated up to college age, but now left school at age sixteen to begin an apprenticeship under his father. It was, however, an apprenticeship that would be short-lived.

After the 1822 yellow fever epidemic in New York City, Charles Wiley's health gradually declined. In spite of his publishing successes he continued to be troubled

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[1] Cooper's first novel, *Precaution*, was published by Wiley's former partner Van Winkle, and had done poorly, not in little measure, Cooper believed, because of manifold compositor and printer errors.

financially. It is likely that Charles Wiley let the friendship and literary camaraderie of the writers he published influence his business decisions. And it is doubtful that Wiley's business practices were an anomaly in the "industry" of the time. Undeniably it was a period in the publishing-bookselling trade when business procedures were unaggressive and standards of success were based on modest expectations. Payment terms on sales to other booksellers were quite liberal, and the only way Wiley could generate immediate revenue was from his own retail sales of books. This retail income did not go far enough in offsetting production costs, and Wiley was probably overextended much of the time when it came to his actual cash needs.[2] When Charles Wiley died in 1826 at age forty-four, his son John, just eighteen years old, took over the business with only two years' experience. John Wiley's involvement in the publishing world came then not by chance, but rather by patrimony. Yet while John would inherit the business, he would reject his father's unprofitable ways.

Undoubtedly, John's firsthand observations of his father's financial difficulties dramatically influenced his attitude and approach to the business. John Hammond Moore comments that the son's way of doing business was very different from his father's. John Wiley was foremost a

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[2] Cooper biographer Henry Walcott Boynton says that in late 1825 and early 1826 Cooper paid off two notes he had guaranteed for Charles Wiley when the latter was unable to meet the obligations (134-35).

businessman with no interest in following his father's example of patronizing literary artists until much later in his career. He had a much better head for figures and a greater understanding of financial matters than his father; he could read a profit and loss statement and a balance sheet with more finesse than a poem or novel. Temperamentally he was less speculative and, unlike his father, had to be pressed to take risks with unknown writers. No doubt his cautious demeanor was the product of seeing firsthand his father's and grandfather's arduous financial travails. He "bore the scars of their economic setbacks throughout his long career" (Moore 30).

Recognizing publishing for the risky business that it was, John Wiley first focused his efforts on bookselling. At the time, Philadelphia was the publishing center of the United States, and John Wiley became "the New York agent for two Philadelphia publishers, Carey & Lea, where Cooper had taken his books, and Thomas Wardle, the country's leading importer of foreign books" (Wiley 11). This emphasis on retail sales would gradually incorporate the publishing of texts, but only those that John Wiley believed were certain to generate a profit. The business was a very small operation--a second-story bookstore, one or two clerks--and chiefly consisted of taking orders, receiving shipments, uncrating books, billing customers and keeping accounts. John Wiley's primary interest seems to have been the

marketing and distributing of books rather than the creating or publishing of them (Moore 30). However, he would soon have a partner whose chief interest was the publication and production of books.

After becoming the head of the business, John Wiley entered into two short business partnerships before beginning his longer and most significant association with George Palmer Putnam (Moore 33). In 1836, Putnam bought into the firm for $150, and as a junior partner was dispatched that same year on an eight-month buying trip to Europe. Two years later, in 1838, the firm became known as Wiley & Putnam. Immediately they established a London branch of the firm which Putnam would operate.[3]

In 1839, in London, George Putnam met the third man who would have a direct impact on Melville's *Typee* and its publication in the United States, Evert A. Duyckinck, the son of a prominent New York publisher. Putnam met Duyckinck while they were staying at the same rooming house. As early as the mid-1830s Duyckinck had been formally promoting the cause of American literature and letters. Duyckinck availed himself of Putnam's connections to meet a number of English publishers and writers. Likely within a short time of Duyckinck's return from Europe in 1839, but certainly by

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[3] Putnam's memoir, written by his son George Haven Putnam, says that the London office was established in 1841. Putnam's son's account is suspect on this matter because it also states that his father became partners with John Wiley in 1840, a date clearly in conflict with other sources by two years. (See Putnam 27, 63; and Moore 34-35.)

1841, Duyckinck met John Wiley. Just a few doors down from the offices of Wiley & Putnam, Duyckinck was publishing *Arcturus*, a high-quality literary magazine to advance the work of native writers.[4] In 1842 Duyckinck was frequently trading at Wiley & Putnam's.[5] To further promote American letters, in August of 1843 Duyckinck took a principal role in organizing a meeting of prominent literary men to establish the American Copyright Club (Greenspan 679-80).

Duyckinck wanted to begin immediately to implement his vision of literary nationalism that he had articulated in the pages of *Arcturus* (the magazine had failed in 1842). In early 1844 he decided to find "a receptive publisher willing to publish in series form a group of contemporary American and foreign works" (Greenspan 681). This decision left Duyckinck with two problems to solve: he had to find the American literary works to make up such a series and to find a publisher willing to take "the untested step of issuing them" (Greenspan 681). Duyckinck's ambitions ultimately led him to Wiley & Putnam and created the market that would make *Typee* publishable in the United States, but to understand how daunting a task this search for a publisher was for Duyckinck and to fathom certain pressures acting on John

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[4] It may be that Duyckinck had some awareness or acquaintance with John Wiley even earlier, for Duyckinck's father and Charles Wiley had jointly published a number of projects in the 1820s.

[6] Early in 1843 Duyckinck wrote in his diary that he had paid his yearly bill to Wiley, "which by some little exercise of fortitude was only about sixty dollars." Diary of Evert A. Duyckinck, 4 February 1843. Duyckinck Family Papers. New York Public Library.

Wiley in his later publishing decisions regarding *Typee*, a brief treatment of practices in the American publishing establishment of the 1820s-1840s is helpful.

The overriding fact of the American publishing industry in the first half of the nineteenth century was literary piracy in the form of reprinting foreign books. This piracy occurred because American copyright law did not recognize foreign copyrights. Reprinted foreign works, particularly those of popular British writers, could be done so cheaply that the products could be sold at very high and profitable discounts--usually 33⅓%, but in some cases they were as much as forty and fifty percent. However, American copyright law did protect native writers in the United States and required compensation for their work. Therefore, publishers allowed only a twenty-five percent discount on native works, resulting in lower profits to the booksellers, higher prices to consumers and less marketing incentive overall (Charvat "Authors" 41-2). Consequently, the competition to "pirate" or reprint profitable foreign works was keen. It was a risky business. If a publisher was but a few hours slower than his competition in printing, binding and distributing his books, he could find that there was no ready market for his goods. This reliance on printing foreign works was so important, according to William Charvat, that Philadelphia dominated the American publishing scene for two decades because of its access to a regular packet ship line running

between there and England ("Literary" 285).[6]

One of the most notorious publishing houses that built its fortune and preeminence through literary piracy was Harper Brothers of New York. For example, in 1823, before the packet ship from England had even docked, Harpers took the third volume of Sir Walter Scott's *Peveril of the Peak* off the boat and by working continuously through the night got the book "into the bookstalls only twenty-one hours later" (Tebbel 274). The piracy continued unchecked, and, if anything, grew more intense with the passing of each decade into the 1840s.

Nor was literary piracy only an American phenomenon. John Tebbel observes that "[b]etween 1841 and 1846, 382 American books were reprinted in England, and most of them had been pirated without permission or royalty payments. Even worse, from the standpoint of the authors, titles were often changed and texts freely altered to suit English tastes and prejudices" (209). However, under English copyright law a publisher was given exclusive rights to a publication if he could demonstrate that it had not been previously published overseas. American copyright law only protected the rights of American authors in the United States. Thus many American authors made complicated

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[6] Before the advent of "packet ships," ships sailed only if they had a full complement of cargo and passengers, and then only in good weather. Packet ships were the first ships to sail at a scheduled time whether or not they were fully loaded, and regardless of weather.

arrangements to publish simultaneously, or nearly so, first in England to gain the protection of English copyright law, then in the United States to protect the work there. The publication agreement for *Typee* was just such a contract. It called for dual and simultaneous publication in both countries (although the United States' edition was actually published three weeks after the British edition) and caused John Wiley to rush publication of the first edition. The aim then of this dual publication scheme was to achieve the maximum amount of protection for the American writer's work, which was still tenuous at best.

Attempts to pass an international copyright law were begun in the United States in 1836--the same year George Palmer Putnam joined Wiley & Long as a junior partner--but they always went down to defeat.[7] The reasons are not hard to fathom. Congress was engrossed for years in stabilizing the national fiscal crisis created by the Panic of 1837, and the international copyright law seemed insignificant in the midst of such overwhelming national financial concerns. Moreover, the American public was unsympathetic to a copyright law because it did not want to forfeit the privilege of buying cheap books (Lehmann-Haupt 108). It was

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[7] In 1836 an Englishman, Frederick Saunders, carried a petition signed by British writers to Congress. Henry Clay was the great champion of copyright matters in the United States, introducing legislation several times between 1836 and 1842 without success. In large measure, Charles Dickens made his 1842 tour of the United States to promote copyright legislation.

on such a vast and turbulent ocean of cutthroat business practices and desperate economic times that the firm of Wiley & Putnam was launched in 1838, a time when the major publishing houses of the United States were almost totally oriented to the republishing of inexpensive uncopyrighted foreign works in "low-priced, cheaply made American editions" (Greenspan 680).

Just how cheaply some of these editions were made was an ethical publisher's nightmare. The "battle of cheap books" began in 1839 when books were first printed on cheap newsprint so they could be classified as "newspapers" and thus qualify to be mailed at the lowest postal rate: a penny within a hundred mile radius and a penny-and-a-half over a hundred miles (John 54). These penny publishers sent their newsprint books "to every inhabited part of the country" (Madison 25), and developed a massive reading audience.[8] Prices dropped. Soon complete novels were selling for as little as 6¼ cents per book for shorter titles, and anywhere from 18¾ cents to 37½ cents for longer ones (Tebbel 244).[9] Two important outcomes from the publishing war were that a whole new class of readers was established, and prices in the book trade were permanently reduced.

Yet even during the battle of cheap books there were

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[8] These newsprint books were called "extras" or "supplements" (Cayton 2437; Madison 24-5).

[9] Clothbound books, by contrast, were priced at a dollar or two.

publishers with high ethical standards. However, high standards were no guarantee. Even the most ethical publishers like Wiley would often proceed and publish if permission was not forthcoming. For example, John Wiley was a great admirer of John Ruskin. In 1859, well after Wiley and Putnam had amicably ended their partnership in 1848, Wiley sought permission to do an American edition of Ruskin's works. Ruskin refused and Wiley went ahead with his plans and published a number of works by Ruskin anyway. Profits and personal interests can prove a sore trial to anyone's most cherished ethical principles, as Herman Melville would soon discover.

Given the renegade circumstances governing publishing and the certain bias for foreign works, Duyckinck's quest for a publisher to publish his American library, then, was indeed a formidable one. Nevertheless, in the mid-1840s he went about the task of finding one. Duyckinck renewed his call for the proper treatment of American authors in the February 1845 issue of *The American Review*[10] in an article entitled "Literary Prospects of 1845." Duyckinck wrote:

> The opening of a new department of literature by native authors may be as well worth talking about as the acquisition of Texas. . . . America has a great and noble task before her in literature, and we firmly believe the power and capacity to do it. The beginnings are faint and scattered, but the

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[10] In 1845 Wiley & Putnam was publishing the prestigious *American Review: A Whig Journal of Politics, Literature, Art and Science*, a journal begun late the previous year to advance the Whig cause and insure the election of Henry Clay in 1844.

> elements are here. . . . The *taboo* of the American author in the booksellers' stores in Broadway, Cliff, Chestnut and Washington streets must be broken. The good manuscripts, which lurk here and there in desks and portfolios, must be drawn forth and published . . . actually published as if the world were not ashamed of it. (146, 149-151)

To ensure the immediacy of his call, he added, "Let some of this work be done in 1845" (150). Duyckinck's timing was ripe. The intense hubris manifest in the mid-1840s with the continuing rise of American nationalism predicted an increased interest in native materials by native authors. Furthermore, the penny publishers had tremendously expanded the American audience, but could not supply it after May 1845, when the last penny publisher folded (Tebbel 245).[11]

Evert Duyckinck approached John Wiley not later than early 1845, and all three men--Wiley, Putnam and Duyckinck--shared the belief that the time for an experiment with American materials was auspicious. This led to an agreement in 1845 between Duyckinck and Wiley & Putnam to bring out Duyckinck's library, naming "Duyckinck to serve as house literary editor with operating power to choose titles for the Library, to solicit contributions, and to help promote the new works via his pen and his numerous contacts in the press; and Wiley and Putnam to issue the works in attractive

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[11] Late in 1843, Congress revised the postal regulations and required the penny publishers to mail their wares at the "book rate" instead of at the newspaper rate. The change was the death knell of penny publishing. In January 1844, *Brother Jonathan*, the original penny publisher, sold out to the *New World*, which struggled on but was at last obliged to close its doors in May 1845 (Tebbel 245).

but inexpensive fashion both in New York and London" (Greenspan 682).[12] What would emerge from this combination of vision, talent and resources was "the most important series of original works of American literature ever published to that date or since: Wiley and Putnam's Library of American Books" (Greenspan 678).

The first title in the Library of American Books was Horatio Bridge's *Journal of an African Cruiser*, which was edited by Bridge's good friend Nathaniel Hawthorne. Other titles quickly followed. According to the advertising matter (dated March 1846) in the front pages of the first edition of Melville's *Typee*, other volumes in the series were Poe's *Tales* (issued second) and his *The Raven and Other Poems*; two books by Headley, *Letters from Italy* and *The Alps and the Rhine*; *The Wigwam and the Cabin* by William Gilmore Simms; Cornelius Matthew's *Big Abel and Little Manhattan*; two titles by Rev. George B. Cheever, D.D., *Wanderings of a Pilgrim Under the Shadow of Mont Blanc* and *Wanderings of a Pilgrim Under the Shadow of the Jungfrau*; Caroline Kirkland's *Western Clearings*; James Hall's *The Wilderness and the Warpath*; and, of course, Melville's *Typee: A Four Months Residence in the Marquesas*. Four other titles were announced as "In press" when *Typee* went on sale: Simms'

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[12] The agreement also called for a splitting of the library: the Library of Choice Reading would contain foreign works, while the Library of American Books would publish titles by American authors only. The authors would be compensated by royalty or lump sum payments (Greenspan 682-83).

Views and Reviews in American History, Literature, and Fiction; Kirkland's *Spenser and the Fairy Queen*; Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse*; and Margaret Fuller's *Papers on Literature and Art*.[13] Obviously, Melville found himself launched in good company.

Duyckinck's agreement and editorship with Wiley & Putnam gave him broad and important powers, and by 1845 Duyckinck was even investing some of his brother's money in the Wiley & Putnam firm (Greenspan 679). Still it would be wrong to conclude that Duyckinck had final authority over the Library's destiny. John Wiley ran the company with a firm hand, and while trusting Duyckinck as his editorial associate, he did not hesitate to involve himself in publishing decisions. John Wiley left his indelible imprint on a number of the books in the Library of American Books. One of the most notable examples of his influence on the final shape of a literary product is Herman Melville's first novel *Typee*, a title published in the Library in March of 1846.

The publication story of *Typee* spans two continents and begins in New York City, but not at the firm of Wiley & Putnam. Herman Melville first took his first manuscript to Harper Brothers, which had become the largest publishing

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[13] No attempt will be made to catalog the complete Library of American Books. The purpose of this list is to simply place Melville among his peers at the time *Typee* was first published in the United States.

house in the United States (Madison 22). Harpers also had already published in 1840 the successful book most similar to what Melville saw himself doing: Richard Henry Dana Jr.'s *Two Years Before the Mast* (Parker 376). The manuscript of *Typee* was delivered to Harpers in early summer of 1845. In his report on the manuscript, Frederick Saunders wrote "'this work if not as good as Robinson Crusoe seems to me to be not far behind it'" (qtd. in Parker 376.) The Harpers, however, convinced that the tale could not be true, decided "it was therefore without real value" (Exman 242).

Melville was bitter about the rejection of *Typee*. He probably took the Harpers' response as the portent of what other publishers would say if he presented the manuscript to them; he thought the rejection absolute and universal (Parker 377). Furthermore, he had spent these months on the most fulfilling work he had ever done in composing his manuscript; he had not otherwise worked, nor was he prepared to enter any other vocation, and he despaired of earning an income. It must have been particularly frustrating to be told his achievement ranked near that of *Robinson Crusoe* and then to be ignored. Leaving the manuscript at Gansevoort's and Allan's law office in New York City, Herman returned to Lansingburgh "numbed by the crushing force of the Harper's arbitrary rejection" (Parker 377).

Herman was not the only Melville struggling through the disappointment of frustrated dreams during the spring and

summer of 1845. Gansevoort, who had proved so able in helping Polk achieve the Presidency, now waited restlessly for Polk to reward his labors. When significant time had passed without word from Polk, Gansevoort grew anxious, then despairing (Parker 355-60).[14] Desperate, in early May 1845 Gansevoort wrote Polk, saying that his failure to win an appointment had fallen upon him with "stunning force." Still there came no word from Polk, and gloom settled on the Melvilles: Gansevoort had no appointment and Herman had no publisher (Parker 373, 377).

However, the brothers' fortunes were about to change, and they would be inextricably woven together. First, word came on 16 July 1845 from Secretary of State James Buchanan that Gansevoort had been appointed to a London post as the Secretary to the Legation at the Court of St. James. Gansevoort began to make immediate preparations for his departure to London (Parker 377). The news of the appointment was a relief for Gansevoort; still it was less than what he had hoped for, even less than what he needed.[15] However, the implications of Gansevoort's appointment for Herman and his *Typee* manuscript were more

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[14] Probably some imprudent remarks made during a campaign speech at Elyria, Ohio in early October 1844 that had embarrassed the Democratic party made it difficult for Polk to recognize Gansevoort (Parker 326-27).

[15] Thomas Low Nichols wrote this about Gansevoort's appointment as Secretary to the Legation: "The American Minister in London must be a man of fortune--the secretary is likely not to be, and gets through his four years of service covered with debt, if not with glory" (1:344).

auspicious, if at first unrealized by the author and his family. In a reminiscent account, Thomas Low Nichols, a journalist friend of Gansevoort's, tells of stopping by the law office to congratulate and commiserate with him on his appointment.

During discussion of Gansevoort's political "fortunes," the subject of a "third brother" arose whom Nichols had never met. It was a fortunate moment for the literary world. According to Nichols, Allan Melville explained that Herman

> had been a little wild, and some years before had run away to sea, first to Liverpool and then in a whaler to the South Pacific. This was nothing strange--what followed was.
>
> 'He got home a few months ago,' said the young lawyer, 'and has been writing something about his adventures among the cannibals. Would you like to look at it?'
>
> I had a couple of hours to spare, and took the package of the sailor boy's writing. It was the manuscript of 'Typee, . . .'
>
> I read 'Typee' at one sitting, and had, of course, no doubt of its success. (1:344-45)

Nichols suggested Gansevoort take the manuscript with him to London and have it published there with arrangements for simultaneous publication in New York. Nichols believed that the English reception of the novel would guarantee its success in the United States, but did not think that the reverse would occur (1:345). When the *Great Western* departed for London on 31 July 1845, both Gansevoort and the full fair copy manuscript of *Typee* were aboard (Parker 378-

79).[16]

In October 1845 Gansevoort took a portion of the *Typee* manuscript to John Murray in London. Murray wanted *Typee* as one of the volumes in his portable Colonial and Home Library, a collection of factual narratives priced to reach a mass audience. The authenticity of the collection was paramount. "Murray . . . was attracted by the dramatic interest of the narrative and the raciness of the style [of *Typee*], but he scented the forbidden thing--the taint of fiction" (Paston 51). In spite of any reservations, on 17 October 1845 Murray asked for the rest of the manuscript. Murray's letter to Gansevoort Melville has not been found, but Murray's records contain Gansevoort's acknowledgement, and the general contents of his letter can be gleaned from Gansevoort's response:

> the rest of the MS . . . is herewith forwarded in compliance with your request.
>
> The Author will doubtless be flattered to hear that his production seems to so competent a judge as yourself that of a "practised writer"--the more so as he is a mere novice in the art, having had no experience; for it is within my personal knowledge that he has never before written either book or pamphlet, and to the best of my belief has not even contributed to a magazine or newspaper. (qtd. in Parker 383)

The letter clearly indicates that Murray at least wanted

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[16] The stories of *Typee's* subsequent publication in England by John Murray, as well as Gansevoort's negotiations in London with George Palmer Putnam for the first American edition are sufficiently known, so only certain noteworthy particulars will be repeated here. For a discussion of what is known of this publication history, see Leon Howard's "Historical Note" in the Northwestern-Newberry edition of *Typee*, 278-85; *Gansevoort Melville's 1846 London Journal* edited by Hershel Parker; and Parker's *Herman Melville: A Biography*, 376 *ff*.

reassurance of authenticity and preferred documented evidence that the writer was a neophyte as claimed. Apparently, the *Typee* manuscript seemed to Murray too polished for any first-time effort of a young, new writer.

Murray was also evidently suspicious about the common identity of the writer and the adventurer. Gansevoort's letter provides reassurance on this matter too: "In regard to the other point to which you allude I can only give you the assurance of my full and entire belief that the adventurer, and the writer of the adventure are one and the same person" (qtd. in Parker 383-84). Murray knew that the question of an ordinary seaman creating such a wonderful tale was one that his class-conscious British audience would raise, and the integrity of his Library was at risk. Murray's concerns are, of course, a tribute to Melville's native talent at storytelling and authorship.

By early November 1845 Gansevoort had, he wrote his mother, "good hopes" of *Typee's* success, but a more interesting matter arises out of a letter dated 18 November 1845 to his brother Allan. Therein Gansevoort indicates that he is "estopped" and can not proceed with *Typee* until he has the additional "Mss chapters" Herman is sending (Parker 384). Where the idea originated to provide these additional chapters for *Typee* has been the subject of some scrutiny. Most of the additional material Gansevoort expected from Herman turned out to be three new chapters:

20, 21, and 27, which all contain ethnographic type descriptions of the Typee Valley and its inhabitants and their history and customs. Melville used Captain David Porter's *Journal of a Cruise Made to the Pacific Ocean* as a source for these chapters to help give them an eyewitness flavor (Parker 384-386). Previously it was thought that Melville responded to demands from Murray to add material that would make his tale more authentic (Howard "Historical Note" 280). Recent scholarship, however, suggests that Herman Melville himself initiated these changes. An examination of shipping schedules of trans-Atlantic voyages in the fall of 1845 has shown that there would have been insufficient time for Murray to forward a request to Herman for additional material, and then for Herman to compose the chapters and send them back to London by the time Gansevoort actually received them in late November or early December 1845 (Parker "Evidences" 410-13). Most likely, then, Herman, remembering the reason for Harpers' initial rejection--that his tale could not possibly be true--, anticipated Murray's questions of authenticity. Melville began, perhaps as early as August or September, making some corrections to overcome the kind of objections that the Harpers firm had expressed and that he believed any publisher would have (Parker 385). Even at this early stage of his development as an author, while working with the literary content of what would become his most well-known

and popular work published during his lifetime, Melville finds himself modifying his own aesthetic vision to meet publisher expectations simply to get his writing into print. And Murray planned further changes of his own.

On the evening of 3 December 1845, John Murray tendered an official offer to Gansevoort to publish *Typee*. "I have carefully examined the MS. placed by you in my hands entitled 'Typee' and am willing to publish it--*making a few slight omissions*--which on the score of taste I have no hesitation in saying will be for the benefit of both author and book" (qtd. in Parker 387, emphasis added). Murray offered Herman one hundred pounds for the right to publish one thousand copies and hold the English copyright.

During the time Gansevoort Melville was negotiating with Murray, he was editing the *Typee* manuscript, making changes on both Herman's and Murray's separate instructions. He was also very busy at the Legation, the minister, Louis McLane, being away in Paris (Munroe 527). In late December 1845 Gansevoort had finished with the manuscript, on 1 January 1846 he sold at discount Murray's note for one hundred pounds, and on 3 January he wrote Herman, telling him Murray had purchased the *Typee* manuscript and sent his brother five pounds (Parker *Journal* 18-19).[17] Three days later, on Tuesday, 6 January 1846, the series of events

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[17] The discount rate and precise disposition of the remainder of the money is not clearly known. For available details of the transaction see Parker's biography (392).

began that would lead to the publication of *Typee* across the ocean in the United States by Wiley & Putnam.

In one of those lucky but profound accidents of history, Washington Irving came in to the Legation to see Ambassador McLane while he was away in the country. (Irving had just posted by steamer his resignation as United States Ambassador to Spain.) Finding McLane absent, Irving spent two hours in frank conversation with Gansevoort, to their mutual delight, and accepted Gansevoort's invitation to breakfast the next morning. At breakfast Irving and Gansevoort were joined by John Murray, whom Gansevoort had also invited, and Irving was delighted "to meet the son of his old friend." When Murray left at noon, Gansevoort "read to Mr. Irving various parts of the first 10 chapters of Herman's forthcoming book. He was very much pleased--declared portions to be 'exquisite', s[ai]d the style was very 'graphic' & prophesied its success." At the conclusion of Gansevoort's reading, he and Irving "walked arm in arm to Wiley & Putnams" (*Journal* 21). Irving there introduced Gansevoort to George Palmer Putnam and informed him that the young man was in possession of a manuscript that held great promise, then took his leave. Putnam and Gansevoort arranged to meet the next morning.

Irving visited with Gansevoort again for more than an hour on Saturday 10 January, evidently taking an active interest in the young man from New York. More importantly,

Gansevoort "Handed the first 107 pp proof sheets of Hermans [sic] Mss to Mr Putnam to read" (*Journal* 22). The next evening, Sunday, 11 January, Gansevoort saw George Putnam at McLane's home. Putnam reported that he had got so caught up in the opening chapters of *Typee* that his reading had diverted him from church, and that the novel "had all the interest of Robinson Crusoe, superadded to that of being a work of fact. He expressed his desire to publish it in N[ew] Y[or]k in Wiley & Putnam's Library of Choice Reading" (*Journal* 22).[18] On Friday, 16 January, Gansevoort "called on Putnam & finally arranged with him to publish "Typee' [sic] in the U.S. He will bring it out in 2 nos at 3/ ea in the "Library of choice reading" (*Journal* 25). In order to "secure" copyright their agreement called for simultaneous publication in the United States and England. To meet this schedule Putnam wanted proof sheets in the mail bag on the 4 February steamer. Gansevoort called on Murray, who promised the proof sheets for 3 February. While there Gansevoort learned that Washington Irving had spoken highly of the book's prospects to Murray (*Journal* 25).

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[18] The following evening, Gansevoort recorded Putnam's formal verbal offer to publish *Typee*

> on joint a/c [account], or allow the author 12½% on the retail price of the book on each copy sold, making a settlement each July & January, & leaving it optional to settle with the author to select either mode of settlement when the time shall arrive. He will publish it in March at 50 c[en]ts-- This would on the 12½% principle give Herman 6¼ c[en]ts on each copy sold. I anticipate a sale in the U.S. of not less than 5000 copies in 12 mo[nth]s. He is to make his offer in writing tomorrow. (*Journal* 23)

Gansevoort corrected the last of Murray's proof sheets early on the morning of 3 February 1846, and delivered them to Putnam at his office for transmittal to the United States, thus fulfilling their agreement for publication. Gansevoort recorded that on the same day at the office of the Legation "Washington Irving read the Preface & Appendix to Typee . . . & expressed himself highly pleased--[and again] prophesied its success" (*Journal* 34). As Parker comments, "The greatest American writer had played fairy godfather to *Typee*" (396).[19] Anticipating receipt of the proofs, Putnam wrote Evert A. Duyckinck 2 February 1846, and recorded his own prophecy: "The 'Marquesas' narrative (completed) is the only *early* book by this steamer. I think from what I read of this that it is sure to take, to a satisfactory extent, if indeed it does not prove as good a hit as Dana's Life before the Mast" (G.P. Putnam). If Putnam had read the book entire he might also have predicted his partner's reaction to the manuscript. The circumspect publisher John Wiley--a book never would have kept him from church--and budding author Herman Melville yet had some future discussions awaiting them "on the score of taste."

As the steamer carrying the proof sheets of *Typee* was arriving in the United States, Murray was ready with *Narrative of a Four Months' Residence Among the Natives of a*

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[19] For a discussion of Irving's conspicuous non-presence in Melville's subsequent career, see Parker 397.

Valley of the Marquesas Islands; or, A Peep at Polynesian Life. Somewhat ahead of schedule, Murray presented a review copy to the London *Atheneum* on 21 February, and presented Gansevoort with six complimentary copies--"It looks well--God speed it," he wrote in his journal--on 24 February (*Journal* 43).[20] Murray's rejection of Herman's preferred prefatory title word "Typee" and insistent use of "Narrative"[21] accurately reflects Murray's anxiety that the book be perceived as a true account of foreign travels, and marks another occasion where the author's design for his book was ignored.

When the proofs from London reached the New York office of Wiley & Putnam, copyright vulnerability and the simultaneous publication deadline arranged by Gansevoort and Putnam in London dictated great haste. Within a few days Wiley and Duyckinck had a set of their own proofs, but the hurry had caused a number of careless errors. In addition, Wiley realized there was some subject matter in the text that was objectionable and had some brief passages expurgated, all from the very early pages of the book

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[20] The contractual publication date had been 26 February and the advertised date 27 February 1846.

[21] For brevity's sake, I refer to both the British and American editions of the book simply as *Typee*, relying on context to keep the reader oriented as to the edition under discussion. This is further justified by the fact that Murray would accede to Melville's wishes and use "*Typee*" in subsequent printings of the book.

(Parker 405).[22]

The two volumes of *Typee* issued by Wiley & Putnam appeared in the United States on 17 March 1846 as Volume 13 of the Library of American Books.[23] By 30 September 1846, Melville's Wiley & Putnam account showed 1,696 copies of *Typee* had been sold--428 in cloth and 1,268 in paper--and 100 given away. The total net-profit was $172.52, and Melville's half was $86.26 (Tanselle 206).[24] *Typee* sold at a pace that, by 1840s' standards, soon marked it as a best-seller, but the book's fame and notoriety outstripped its sales.[25] The reviews came quickly, and they were important because they significantly affected the reputation and wide renown of the book.

Although William Charvat is right in saying that book

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[22] These changes were in fact bowdlerizations of the English text. The first change made occurred on page 6 of the American edition and was a reference to an incident among the early missionaries in the South Seas wherein the natives mistook the wife of one to be a goddess and stripped her of her garments. Melville wrote originally, "She was not sufficiently evangelised to endure this." It was changed to read, "She could not endure this." Two pages later a scene was omitted that described French naval officers, an old American sailor, and a native queen who, admiring the American's tatoos, turned around and "threw up the skirts of her mantle" to allow him to admire her "hieroglyphics." Wiley omitted the pirouette and the raised skirts. The last expurgations occurred on page 15 of the American edition, and had to do with the temptations for bachelor sailors on the vessel as it arrived in the harbor and was welcomed by the naked island girls swimming out to greet them. Melville said, "Not the feeblest barrier was interposed between the unholy passions of the crew and their unlimited gratification" (Howard "Note" 283-84; Parker 406).

[23] Wiley or Duyckinck altered Gansevoort Melville's original contract with Putnam to publish *Typee* in the Library of Choice Books.

[24] For an example of how half-profits accounting was done see Tebbel I:274-75.

[25] For discussion of *Typee* as a best-seller see Sheila Post-Lauria's *Correspondent Colorings* 42-3.

reviews are not reliable in determining whether a book could actually be deemed "successful" (Charvat "Literary" 291), Perry Miller is also correct in pointing to their tremendous influence, if not upon sales, then at least upon the perceptions of a then contemporary readership. Since the medium of advertising was still in its infancy as an art, reviews "were the principal means, next to word of mouth, for attracting notice" (Miller 6). Moreover, it is also true that Melville read his reviews, collected them, and recognized their power. From the beginning of his career, the reviews did affect sales of his published works, and often had a direct bearing on the composition of his next book. And negative reviews of a previous work sometimes dissuaded publishers from accepting a subsequent manuscript.[26] Consequently, "to speak of Melville's contemporary reviews as 'influencing' his career is to employ a gross understatement" (Higgins ix). Not only did the reviews influence Melville, more importantly for our purpose here, they also influenced his publisher, John Wiley.

It is accurate that *Typee* was a hit with most reviewers in England and the United States. However, the English

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[26] For example, the reviews of *Pierre* (1852) were so hostile that no publisher would accept Melville's next manuscript, *The Isle of the Cross*, which was completed in late spring 1853. It appears that it was never published, and the manuscript was lost. An 1860 manuscript collection of poems encountered the same fate in the wake of the derision cast upon his 1857 book, *The Confidence Man* (Higgins ix).

critics, while praising the novel, had trouble believing Melville's claims of being both the author and the adventurer, or that *Typee* was the production of a first-time author. Thus, many believed the work more a romance than a factual narrative.[27] However, quite a different reading was evolving in the United States; *Typee* would come to be read here as a realistic novel containing controversial claims that would be vigorously attacked. Yet, as Thomas Low Nichols predicted, the generally positive British reception greatly helped the book's success in the United States. Melville "became overnight one of the best known, or at least most sensational, writers in America. On the relative scale, he rivaled Byron: he awoke to find himself famous" (Miller 4).

Most American reviewers initially commented favorably on *Typee's* originality, graceful style, freshness, and raciness in sensuous depictions of life in the South Seas, as well as noting the author's writing genius. (Even those who repudiated the book because of its representations of "savages" and of missionaries acknowledged its literary merit.) One of the first was a review appearing in the New York *Morning News* of 18 March 1846. Unsigned, it was

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[27] The socially stratified British audience could not understand how a common seaman could have the education or ability to write as well as the author of *Typee* wrote. As a result, Murray continued to press Gansevoort for documentation of the authenticity of his brother's adventures to vindicate his Library.

written by Evert A. Duyckinck himself.[28] Duyckinck attempted to anticipate some problems and set the tone for the critical response, as well as to stimulate his audience. One problem was literary genre--and the book's status as reliable fact or fictional romance. Duyckinck generously suggested it could be both.

> *Typee*, in fact, is a happy hit whichever way you look at it, whether as travels, romance, poetry or humor. It has a sufficiency of all of these to be one of the most agreeable, readable books of the day. Curiosity is piqued, good sense flattered; there is a dash of Rousseauism, with now and then a shadow of the Cannibal as a corrective. The peculiarity of the book, to us, is the familiar and town life of the author among a race of naked savages. (Higgins 17-18, emphasis added)

Duyckinck also foregrounds one of the novel's controversial features--the issue of savagery and civilization--when he discusses Melville's treatment of the Marquesan cannibals. Their only defect is the occasional consumption of human flesh, but otherwise they are "'humane and virtuous'" (Higgins 18). The reviewer for the New York *Spirit of the Times* remarked, "The writer's style is not only agreeable but delightful, and his descriptions give us a better idea of the country to which they relate, than any we have ever before encountered" (Higgins 21). The New Bedford *Mercury* stated the author's "descriptions of Polynesian life are characterised with a careless elegance of style which suits admirably with the luxurious and tropical tone of the

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[28] This practice of publishing biased reviews was called "puffing," and was common in the book trade.

narrative" (Higgins 22). The Melvilles' "hometown" Albany *Argus* described *Typee* as "a decidedly interesting book, embodying valuable information and amusing narrative" (Higgins 23). Nathaniel Hawthorne[29] reviewed *Typee* at the request of Evert Duyckinck. In an unsigned review in the Salem *Advertiser* of 25 March, Hawthorne presents the image of *Typee* as a documentary of vanishing native culture and, sensationally exaggerating the role it plays in the text, playfully puns with the subject of cannibalism.[30] Hawthorne then takes up the issue of the book's raciness and sensuality.

> The author's descriptions of the native girls are voluptuously colored, yet not more so than the exigencies of the subject appear to require. He has that freedom of view--it would be too harsh to call it laxity of principle--which renders him tolerant of codes of morals that may be little in accordance with our own. (Higgins 22-23)

Hawthorne does an admirable job of titillating his readership while still preserving what most would have considered essential: a moral quality in the book. Here also, given the references to the sensuality of the natives by Hawthorne, and to their cannibalism by both Duyckinck and Hawthorne, we see conscious appeals to the genres of erotic

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[29] Hawthorne, as editor of Horatio Bridge's *Journal of an African Cruiser*, had already been published in the Library of American Books, the title appearing as the first number of the series.

[30] "The gentleness of [the native's] disposition . . . is shown in contrast with traits of savage fierceness;--on one page, we read of manners and modes of life that indicate a whole system of innocence and peace; and on the next, we catch a glimpse of a smoked human head, and the half-picked skeleton of what had been (in a culinary sense) a *well-dressed* man" (Higgins 22).

and sensational literature that were in vogue in the United States at the time.[31]

Charles Fenno Hoffman, in his unsigned review for the New York *Gazette and Times* of 30 March, calls *Typee* "one of the most delightful and well written narratives that ever came from an American pen." He also mentions the missionary material, but leaves it to others better informed than he to verify or rebut Melville's claims from that quarter (Higgins 28).

Duyckinck also asked Margaret Fuller to review Melville's book.[32] In an unsigned review appearing in the 4 April edition of the New York *Tribune*, Fuller compares Melville's ability to render a scene favorably with Dr. Johnson's. She regards many incidents described in the book as true, but particularly focuses upon Melville's representation of the missionaries, and, unlike Hoffman, pronounces judgment. She earnestly recommends that the sewing societies raising and donating funds to the South Pacific missionary effort read Melville before continuing their efforts.

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[31] For discussion of the extensive presence of sensational and erotic literature in the United States see David S. Reynolds' *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1988. 169-224.

[32] Fuller's own *Papers on Literature and Art*, like Hawthorne's *Mosses*, was then in preparation and also listed in *Typee* as a forthcoming volume in Wiley & Putnam's Library of American Books.

For the reviewer of the monthly *American Whig Review*,[33] Melville's style was "plain and unpretending, but racy and pointed," the adventures imbued with enough "romantic interest" that most readers will find them "highly charming." Writing in concert with his own biases, the reviewer naively and ironically dismisses Melville's claims against the missionaries as "prejudiced and unfounded," while admitting Melville's "own adventures carry with them an air of truthfulness and fidelity." The reviewer also is offended that Melville describes the primitive native culture of the Typees as "far superior to that [of the United States] which is the growth and creature of civilization and religion," and suggests Melville, for his own happiness, return to his island forthwith (Higgins 34-36).

A review that upset Melville appeared in the 17 April New York *Courier and New-York Enquirer*. After the usual obeisance to *Typee's* style and original incidents and anecdotes, the anonymous reviewer attacks the novel's credibility. "We should not express our candid opinion, however, did we omit to say that in our judgment, in all essential respects, it is a *fiction*,--a piece of Munchausenism,--from beginning to end" (Higgins 46). Melville feared this review would do much harm and took

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[33] Wiley & Putnam was the original publisher of *The American Whig Review*, a role they had relinquished by the time this review appeared.

steps to answer it which apparently never came to fruition.[34] Melville's instinct of impending harm was proven when Lewis Gaylord Clark reprinted the complete *Courier and Enquirer* review in the May 1846 issue of his influential *Knickerbocker* magazine.[35]

From this sampling of the reviews it is obvious that *Typee* was not only a popular book, it was a controversial one, and for different reasons depending on which side of the Atlantic you called home. As Leon Howard has noted, Melville was attacked from two directions--"quietly for his romance," which refers to the questions raised about the authenticity or fictionality of the work by British and American readers, and "vociferously for his realism," which describes the evangelical religious response to *Typee* in America (Howard 1961, 9). Many in the United States believed Melville's claims regarding the injuries done among native populations by the foreign missionaries of evangelical Protestantism.[36] And, of course, the

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[34] A review including a testimonial of Melville's was published in the Albany *Argus* sometime before 21 April. Melville also wrote a rebuttal to be published in the *Courier and Enquirer* and sent it to Gansevoort's friend, Alexander W. Bradford, an editor at the *American Whig Review*, relying on Bradford's influence to get it into the *Courier*. The rebuttal has never been found and apparently was never published. See Horth, *Correspondence* 35, 37.

[35] Clark's impact upon Melville's career is the subject of Perry Miller's study *The Raven and the Whale*.

[36] Given the Protestant evangelical hostility to "Romanism," it is interesting to note that the *United States Catholic Magazine* reviewed *Typee* late in 1847 as the anti-Catholic nativist movement was gaining headway; it sided with Melville on the damage caused the natives by the Protestant missions (see Higgins 77-78).

evangelical movement could not let such charges go unchallenged on principle, nor could they leave them unanswered for fear of their effect upon fund raising for the foreign missions--withholding and scrutinizing donations being the precise mandate of Fuller's commentary. The first negative review of *Typee*, published a week before the *Courier and Enquirer* review, appeared 9 April 1846 in the foremost Protestant religious weekly, the New York *Evangelist*. Its impact on the final cast of Melville's book was enormous.

The reviewer wastes no time, his first words scorching Melville's novel:

> If this be not sheer romance, (which there is reason to suspect,) it is the extremely exaggerated, but racily-written narrative of a forecastle-runaway from an American whale ship, who met the fortune those fish did in fable, that jumped out of the frying pan into the fire. He had life among Marquesan cannibals to his liking; a plenty of what pleases the vicious appetite of a sailor, or of sensual human nature generally. He seems to have been pleased enough with his captors, but glad to get away uneaten. "Horrible and fearful (he says) as the custom of cannibalism is, still I assert that those who indulge in it are in *other respects humane and virtuous!*" (*Evangelist* 60)

The attack on the novel's status as a romance taps a deep tradition of evangelical Christian prejudice toward fiction. The imaginative processes that a book like *Typee* provokes create a moral confusion between truth and falsehood. Romantic fiction is the most pernicious of all types of fiction for polluting one's proper mental powers and should

be avoided like poison. "At stake in the *Evangelist's* suspicion that *Typee* is 'sheer romance' is the effort of orthodox believers to keep their systems of moral reality firmly in place" (Herbert 183).

The reviewer's emphasis on Melville's statement about the morality of the natives serves two purposes. First, as Herbert mentions, it is used to show how inverted Melville's morals were (186). Moreover, it points to Melville's egregious error to the evangelically minded in *Typee*: presenting primitives as civilized, portraying natives as enlightened, depicting heathens as virtuous. Such positive colorations of "savage" life struck at the core assumptions of the Protestant evangelical missionary movement, which believed it to be its duty and opportunity to fulfill a divine mandate to rescue these benighted people and reclaim them from their pernicious and slovenly ways.

The second paragraph continues the latter theme. "The book abounds in praises of the life of nature *alias* savageism, and in slurs and flings against missionaries and civilization" (60). Then the reviewer attacks Melville's defense in the Appendix of Lord Paulet and criticism of the missionaries at the Sandwich Islands, saying Melville "shows the sheerest ignorance, and utter disregard of truth," the reviewer presenting himself as one who can speak with authority on matters regarding the missionaries in the Sandwich Isles (60).

The third paragraph argues that the book was written with a more liberal and sensual, and less modest, London audience in mind, and then hurls a direct barb at the publisher. "We are sorry that such a volume should have been allowed a place in the 'Library of American Books'" (60). The next sentence is some attempt to exculpate John Wiley: "[Publication by Wiley] can only have been without reading it beforehand, and from deference to the publisher on the other side [of the Atlantic]." Of course, the publisher "on the other side" is George P. Putnam, who contracted for *Typee* with Gansevoort Melville in London.

The fourth and final paragraph consists of two sentences that acknowledge the "attractive vivacity" of *Typee*, but further insinuate a perspective toward the novel that is damning.

> We have long noted it as true in criticism, that what makes a large class of books bad, immoral, and consequently injurious, is not so much what is plainly expressed, as what is left to be imagined by the reader. Apply this rule to the work in hand, and while everybody will admit it is written with an attractive vivacity, and (except where it palpably lies) with great good humor, it cannot escape severe condemnation. (60)

Reiterated here is the theme of romantic poison that this novel will disseminate among its readers, and the authority of the reviewer to know the truth of matters of which *Typee* speaks.

The *Evangelist* review is significant for a number of reasons, but primarily because it began the crusade against

Typee that led to the expurgated Revised Edition of the novel four months after its first publication in the United States. There were other attacks in the religious press,[37] but the *Evangelist* changed the tide and Wiley's mind. The review undoubtedly affected the sales and the notoriety of the novel by increasing the controversy surrounding it. It is hard to determine whether sales were ultimately increased or decreased.[38]

The second reason the *Evangelist* review is important is deliciously ironic, given the editorial objective of discrediting the novel. The review actually unearthed the only possible witness to the authenticity of Melville's claims, his companion Richard Tobias (Toby) Greene. In the 1 July 1846 issue of the Buffalo *Commercial Advertiser* an editorial ran entitled 'How Strangely Things Turn Up!' Acknowledging the fact that many readers had dismissed *Typee* as an adventure too incredible to be taken as reality, the

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[37] A particularly vicious review appeared in the July 1846 Number of the New York monthly *Christian Parlor Magazine*, "*Typee*: The Traducer of Missions." Mott notes the general hostility of this magazine's editorial policy toward fiction of any kind (746), and its enmity could have only been made more venomous by Melville's attack on a holy cause. More importantly, this review could *not* have initiated but rather only served to confirm John Wiley's decision to publish a new edition since the Revised Edition was already underway. For further discussion of this review, see Herbert's *Marquesan Encounters* (184-87), and Mentor L. Williams' "Some Notices and Reviews of Melville's Novels in American Religious Periodicals, 1846-1849" (120-23).

[38] Although Perry Miller believed the controversy caused "hundreds of the righteous" to buy it (6), *Typee* would have held more enjoyment for less prudish readers. As T. Walter Herbert suggests: "The evidence from the sales of *Typee*, and from the bulk of the reviews, is that the general public was delighted by the book to such an extent as to suggest quite clearly that the missionary vision of Polynesian savagery (and of American civilization) was losing a grip on the popular mind that had been virtually unchallenged for some fifteen years" (188).

editorial admits its own error in judgment and consequent surprise. The paper reprinted Toby's letter to the editor:

> In the *New York Evangelist* I chanced to see a notice of a new publication . . . called *Typee* . . . . The *Evangelist* speaks rather disparagingly of the book as being too romantic to be true, and as being too severe on the missionaries. But to my object: I am the true and veritable 'Toby,' yet living, and I am happy to testify to the entire accuracy of the work so long as I was with Melville, who makes me figure so largely in it. (Higgins 58)

Toby was working in Buffalo as a sign painter and Melville, believing him dead, was ecstatic to find him. Here was his vindication, his "comeuppance" to the nay-sayers. He wrote Evert Duyckinck on 3 July 1846

> There was a spice of civil skepticism in your manner . . . when we were conversing together the other day about "Typee"-- What will the politely incredulous Mr Duyckinck now say to the true Toby's . . . vouching for the truth . . . of the narative [sic]. . . . -- Give ear then, oh ye of little faith -- especially thou man of the Evangelist. . . . (*Correspondence*, 50)

Melville lost no time in meeting with Toby and getting his story. By this time in early July, plans for the Revised Edition were underway, and Melville wanted to publish Toby's story in the new edition to establish his credibility.

The third reason the 9 April *Evangelist* review is important relates to the identity of the reviewer, which has been guessed at--possibly since the review was written--but until now has remained unknown. The reviewer of *Typee* knew John Wiley and others of his personal circle. When the identity of the reviewer is revealed and placed within the

complex of relationships and events that comprised a significant element of John Wiley's personal life, it is evident that Melville's novel was utterly antithetical to the undeviating ideals, the primary purposes, and the personal experience of these devout people. Melville struck a raw nerve because couched between the covers of *Typee* was a double threat to the ideals of Protestant evangelicalism. The novel not only violated religious convention in mixing fact and romance--a danger to moral rectitude in itself--but it also implicitly attacked the very moral certainties that undergirded the suspicion of romance. Melville did not just arouse "unholy" passions with depictions of beautiful native girls sporting in a sensual paradise, he put in question the "holiness" of the Protestant evangelical ethos, including its standards for judging human behavior. Melville's book was a challenge that could not go unanswered. *Typee's* extensive revision and reappearance in a new, thoroughly expurgated edition was a foregone conclusion.

CHAPTER THREE

SAVAGING AND SALVAGING *TYPEE*:

JOHN WILEY'S RELIGIOUS CIRCLE

As wise a man as Shakespeare has said, that the bearer of evil tidings hath but a losing office; and so I suppose will it prove with me, in communicating to the trusting friends of the Hawaiian Mission what has been disclosed in various portions of this narrative.

--Herman Melville in the First Edition of *Typee*

Typee has come out measurably unschathed [sic] from the fiery ordeal of Mr Wiley's criticisms. I trust as it now stands the book will retain all those essential features which most commended it to the public favor.

--Herman Melville to Evert Duyckinck, 15 July 1846

The *Revised* (Expurgated?--Odious word!) Edition of Typee ought to be duly announced--& as the matter (in one respect) is a little delicate, I am happy that the literary tact of Mr Duyckinck will be exerted on the occasion.

--Herman Melville to Evert Duyckinck, 28 July 1846

On 7 May 1846 Herman Melville wrote Wiley & Putnam, his publishers, about some minor changes he wanted made in the second edition of the novel. "Gentlemen--Herewith you have a corrected copy of Typee. Besides correcting mere typographical errors, I have made two or three slight alterations" (*Correspondence*, 36). If only a few slight changes besides typos were necessary in Melville's mind, in large measure, then, Melville was pleased with *Typee* and did not foresee any major changes to the novel. Notice too that the editing was done by simply marking up a copy of the first edition of the book and sending the "corrected copy"

to the publisher.

The remainder of Melville's letter about the corrected book reveals the tension between Melville's aesthetic preferences for his text and the economics of book publishing, and exhibits the limited control a new and inexperienced author possesses over his work as compared to the authority of an experienced publisher such as John Wiley. Melville continues:

> --I do not know exactly to what extent you can, without incurring much expence, alter the plates-- But I hope that you will see, that all my alterations are attended to, except such as would be attended with any considerable trouble or expence. Of course, all the mere verbal corrections can be easily made. (*Correspondence*, 36)

Melville's deferential tone to John Wiley regarding the changes reveals a power structure in this author-publisher relationship that is pitched heavily in the publisher's favor. Ironically, John Wiley wields this power not by limiting changes, as Melville's letter here presumes, but by commissioning a new, revised and expurgated edition of *Typee* that would delete some thirty-six pages of material and incorporate refined word changes that would alter the racy style most of the reviewers had prized in the first edition of the novel.

On 6 August 1846, less than five months after the publication of the first American edition in March, Wiley & Putnam published the expurgated Revised Edition of *Typee*. The novel was significantly different from its first

incarnation. All comments critical of the missionary enterprise and the commentary on recent political events, specifically the controversy over the 1843 cession of the Sandwich Islands to the British, were taken out of the novel. These large expurgations cut

> half of Chapter 1, all but the first line of Chapter 3, the latter part of Chapter 4, nine paragraphs of Chapter 17, almost six paragraphs of Chapter 24, deleted portions amounting to half of Chapter 26, and the Appendix--all material to which references were changed in the Preface and Contents. These were excisions rather than revisions, for their removal required only four lines of rewriting in Chapter 17 and less than a dozen in Chapter 26. They also accounted for 31 of the 36 pages by which the new version was shortened. (Howard 289-90)

Wiley hoped the removal of the missionary material would placate the "religious audience" and quiet the controversy over *Typee*. Interestingly, however, Wiley had recently published at least one book offensive to religionists and had not chosen to expurgate it, employing a different tactic to defuse the situation.

In 1845 Wiley & Putnam published a book by the Englishman Robert Chambers entitled *The Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*. Essentially the book was a pre-Darwinian treatment of evolution, i.e. natural creation. Religious interests were highly offended and the reviews in the religious press were damning. Nevertheless, since the book was selling well, Wiley printed a second edition. Wiley's strategy to appease the religious audience was simply to print a rebuttal essay by a prominent clergyman,

Rev. George B. Cheever, and bind it in the book as an introduction. This approach required little expense and bother to accomplish. However, with *Typee*, which had been stereotyped, Wiley chose to expurgate the novel--and changing the plates involved more expense than the publication of a disclaimer. John Wiley showed Melville the changes to make, and Howard says that Melville then did the work of expurgating the novel, a conclusion that will be scrutinized later in this chapter (288).

Scholars have accepted that in expurgating *Typee*, John Wiley was acting on his own religious scruples and shrewd business acumen. With information about John Wiley being so scarce, it was a fair and logical conclusion--and correct as far as it went--but the true situation was far more complex. Perry Miller said, referring to the expurgation of *Typee*, that "John Wiley was never a man to gag over whether a book was true or not as long as it sold . . . , and was concerned only with placating the religious audience. He wanted the passages on missionaries cut" (166). The view of the "religious audience" Wiley wanted to placate has been interpreted as the large religious reading public--especially those of Protestant evangelical persuasion.

At the same time the Revised Edition of *Typee* was creating such a controversy, Margaret Fuller, under Duyckinck's editorship, was revising her New York *Tribune* articles into a book that would, like *Typee*, be published by

Wiley & Putnam in the Library of American Books in 1846, and would be titled *Papers on Literature and Art*. Wiley's motive of "placating the religious audience" is confirmed in an important letter from Margaret Fuller to Evert Duyckinck, that is revealing about John Wiley as a publisher. Fuller suggests that Wiley's own view of the "religious audience" was more narrow than scholars have proposed, and refers to the specific situation John Wiley occupied in the spring and summer of 1846.

On 27 June 1846, Fuller received a note from John Wiley about the content of her forthcoming book. On 28 June she sent Duyckinck an indignant private response.

> I received a note yesterday from Mr. Wiley, requesting that I would omit the article on Festus from the forthcoming volumes and "all other matter of a controversial character or likely to offend the religious public." . . . I consented to take counsel as to the selection of pieces with *you*, because you can understand. . . . I hope it is clearly understood that in those I *do* publish, I shall not alter a line or a word, on such accounts. They will stand precisely as they were originally written and if you think Mr. Wiley will not be content to take the consequences you had better stop the transaction now. . . . Only make Mr. Wiley understand that . . . I give him no vouchers that there shall be nothing to offend his religious public in the book. (Hudspeth 212-13)

Several important ideas that bear on Melville and *Typee* are evident in Fuller's letter. First, both the timing and the language indicate the likelihood that Fuller's work was caught in the backlash of the *Typee* imbroglio and reflect John Wiley's heightened sensitivity to the opinion of the wounded religious community. Second, later correspondence

by Fuller makes it clear that her book was changed, possibly without her knowledge, and certainly against her will, demonstrating John Wiley's willingness to exercise his authority as a publisher to make changes in spite of an author's wishes.[1] Third, it is clearly evident that Wiley could get personally involved and supersede at will Duyckinck's editorial authority. Wiley did not completely rely on Duyckinck in circumstances where he felt personally at risk. Last, although more ambiguously, there is the curious remark personalizing the religious public as Wiley's own when Fuller says "*his* religious public." Granted that this may simply be Fuller's tactic for disassociating herself from such people generally (she indicates she does not understand them early in her letter). It may also mean that she knows Wiley has specific persons particularly in mind that he does not wish to offend. In fact, it is now clear that the personal interpretation of "his religious public" is correct. Wiley expurgated *Typee* and required the omissions to Fuller's book because of his own religious activities and personal associates at the time Melville's novel and Fuller's book were published.

Details of John Wiley's personal life are sketchy. His obituary describes him as "an unostentatious, modest man,

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[1] In a letter to Duyckinck from London dated 30 October 1846, Fuller writes: "It is a real misfortune to me that Mr. Wiley took the course he did with my miscellanies; the vol[ume]s have been kindly rec[eive]d but every one mentions their being *thin*" (Hudspeth 234).

who nevertheless, in his leisure moments, performed a great deal of good work in philanthropic and missionary fields."[2] To describe John Wiley as "unostentatious" and "modest" may be understating the case. If remaining records are any indication, John Wiley was virtually self-effacing.[3] As mentioned previously, in 1826, at age eighteen, he took over his father's business. In 1833 he married Elizabeth B. Osgood, the daughter of a Congregational minister, Samuel Osgood, of Springfield, Massachusetts. Eleven children were born to the couple over the next twenty years, but only five survived to maturity.

Nothing is known of any personal activism by John Wiley in politics (although given his business interests he was almost certainly a Whig) or in such social causes as temperance reform and abolition, but he was one of the principle organizers of a new church congregation in New York City and chose as pastor a clergyman, George Barrell Cheever, with a reputation as an uncompromising reformer in various social arenas, including temperance and abolition.[4] New archival information connecting Cheever and Wiley sheds

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[2] *Publishers' Weekly* 28 February 1891: 336.

[3] See Introduction for information on the status of documents pertaining to John Wiley.

[4] Cheever was an ardent abolitionist, and he and Henry Ward Beecher were the first two men-of-the-cloth in the entire country to use the pulpit as an abolitionist platform. Cheever's incendiary use of the pulpit to promote abolition was unsettling enough to many of his congregation that it ultimately caused his dismissal in 1867. John Wiley left Cheever's congregation in 1855 when he moved to East Orange, New Jersey.

significant light on John Wiley's personal religious activities and associations during the crucial period of *Typee's* publication.

John Wiley was a devoutly religious man in the Protestant evangelical tradition. Evidently, his wife Elizabeth was devout too, because Wiley pressed his suit with her with gifts of religious books. In the mid-1840's when *Typee* appeared, Wiley was linking his personal religious interests with his business ventures. He was publishing *Bibliotheca Sacra*, the erudite journal of the Calvinist Seminary at Andover which he personally enjoyed, and he was publishing most of what was written by his minister, the Reverend George Barrell Cheever (Moore 60-62). Cheever emerges as a pivotal figure in John Wiley's personal and professional life because of an incredible overlap of business and personal concerns and relationships that unite the two men. The path to the Revised Edition of *Typee* is significantly marked by the influence of George Barrell Cheever.

Cheever was the eldest son of four children born to Nathaniel Cheever and Charlotte Barrell. Cheever's father edited and published a Democratic-Republican newspaper in central Maine, as well as working as a contract printer and retail book seller. Nathaniel Cheever died when George was twelve years old and his pious mother--an ardent Federalist in her politics and devout Congregationalist in her

beliefs--wanted him to embrace her politics and religion (York 5-9, v). The political conversion was accomplished easily, but the religious one was more difficult.

The now forgotten Reverend Cheever was a famous clergyman in the fiery, harsh, traditional Puritan style and an ardent social reformer in a number of causes from the 1830s to the 1870s--such as anti-Unitarianism, temperance, capital punishment, the continental Sabbath, abolition, and Civil Rights for African Americans. His obituary accurately describes him as "one of the most active spirits of his time."[5] A graduate of the Calvinist Seminary at Andover in 1830, he entered the ministry during the intense revivalism of the Second Great Awakening, and Cheever preached with and served under Charles G. Finney, the charismatic, itinerant preacher who sparked the revival movement. Cheever first achieved national fame in 1835 with a temperance tract entitled "Inquire at Amos Giles' Distillery." The tract was a thinly disguised polemic of a local Unitarian Deacon who sold distilled spirits and Bibles on the same premises. Cheever was horsewhipped on the street by a distillery foreman and, in a sensational trial, was convicted of libel, sent to jail for a month and fined $1,000.[6] Cheever never expressed any regret, believing himself in the right. His

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[5] See *Harper's Weekly* 11 October 1890. 798.

[6] The appeal of his conviction was heard by Judge Lemuel Shaw, Herman Melville's future father-in-law. Shaw upheld the verdict of the lower court.

national reputation made, he received attractive offers to fill various pulpits. Accepting the pulpit of the Allen Street Presbyterian Church in Manhattan in 1839, he arrived there a zealous, uncompromising reformer and known champion of social causes. He possessed an unswerving conviction that he knew the way of righteousness, and manifested a formidable determination to persuade others to follow him.

Interestingly enough, Cheever had not always planned to enter the ministry. A member of the famous Bowdoin class of 1825 that graduated Hawthorne, Longfellow, Johnathan Cilley, Franklin Pierce and Calvin Stowe, literature was Cheever's first passion. He left Andover in mid-course because of religious doubts and seriously considered a literary career, but returned after a year to complete his studies and accept his ordination. While a student at Andover he was a regular contributor to various literary and religious journals, such as the *Spirit of the Pilgrims*, the *North American Review* and the *American Monthly Magazine* (York 55-60). While completing his studies at Andover, he edited and published two "literary" volumes--a collection of prose and a collection of poetry. Another collection of poetry was published in 1831, the year following his graduation.[7] As expressed in the Prefaces of these works, his motivation was

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[7] In 1828, Cheever, as editor, published *The American Common-place Book of Prose;* a text-book in 1830, *Studies in Poetry: . . . Designed to Illustrate the Principles of Rhetoric, and Teach Their Application to Poetry;* and, in 1831, *The American Commonplace Book of Poetry.*

primarily educational: to cultivate social refinement, to improve literary taste, to heighten intellectual awareness, and to provide highly moral reading matter for careful study. Cheever placed strong, repeated emphasis on the importance of the moral quality of literature and its importance in shaping the individual and national character.[8] Unsurprisingly, he was a champion of Bowdler's edition of Shakespeare. These moral principles reflect the Protestant evangelical ethos, particularly the more conservative Congregational strain. It is important to recognize that Cheever, rather than abandon his literary aspirations, consolidated them into his ministry, and literature remained a very important influence and significant part of his life.

Cheever judged himself an expert in literary matters, and the public viewed him the same way. One review of Cheever's writing states: "Dr. Cheever is one of our most popular religious writers."[9] In 1843 he was included as a voting member of Evert Duyckinck's Copyright Club, one of only twenty-five prominent literary men--the likes of Cooper

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[8] By Cheever's time, the tradition of a link between literature and moral character, both individual and national, was well established by such writers as the Connecticut Wits and other post-Edwards Yale graduates who were affected by the work of Kames and Beattie and their Scottish Common Sense philosophy and Scotch Calvinism.

[9] Unsigned Review. *The American Review* 3.5 (May 1846):562-63.

and Bryant--so noticed.[10] The New York *Evangelist* described Cheever as being "widely known as one of the ablest and most vigorous writers of the day."[11] The claim was no exaggeration. Cheever authored nearly sixty books and pamphlets on assorted subjects over his career, not to mention his unpublished sermons and frequent public lectures. Cheever's public prominence in religious matters, social causes and literary affairs had an enormous impact on John Wiley, Herman Melville and *Typee*.

Prior to 1845, Cheever travelled twice to Europe. During the second trip, in 1843-1844, he was a secret travelling correspondent for the New York *Evangelist*. After his return from Europe in late 1844, Cheever became General Editor of the *Evangelist*, and occupied that post on 9 April 1846 when the aforementioned hostile review of *Typee* was published in the *Evangelist*.[12]

Cheever wrote up his columns and other pieces concerning Europe as two travel narratives, both published by John Wiley in "The Library of American Books," where

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[10] Cooper declined to accept the appointment as the Club's President; the honor was then conferred upon William Cullen Bryant. See Duyckinck's Minute Book of the Copyright Club, Duyckinck Family Papers, Box 36, Folder 1, New York Public Library.

[11] See the New York *Evangelist* 28 November 1844. 190.

[12] For information regarding Cheever's appointment as the *Evangelist's* editor, see the New York *Evangelist* 28 November 1844, 190.

Typee itself would soon find a home.[13] Both of these books treat such subjects as church history, church architecture and church membership in the parts of Europe through which Cheever travelled. A review mentions that the two books had a "large circulation, and deservedly so," but the reviewer went on to say:

> The books, however, have one great fault. There is too much *preaching* in them. This is not natural. . . [but stems] from [Dr. Cheever's] desire to sustain his clerical character, and from fear of detracting from the dignity of his book if he occupied it merely with description."[14]

George Barrell Cheever never stepped out of character as a clergyman, and the fact that his own pious observations about European Protestantism were close company to the heretical *Typee* in the Library of American Books would have been irritating to the intolerant moralist. The proximity of the two books in that collection is one of the reasons that the *Evangelist* review, as discussed in the preceding chapter, tried to exculpate John Wiley for *Typee's* publication and portray the inclusion of Melville's novel in the collection as an aberration. But in early 1846 Cheever had another important reason to be concerned about the company both he and his books kept. When *Typee* first

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[13] The first volume to appear by Cheever, *Wanderings of a Pilgrim Under the Shadow of Mont Blanc* was published in 1845 as Volume Six of Wiley & Putnam's Library. The second, *Wanderings of a Pilgrim Under the Shadow of the Jungfrau* shortly preceded *Typee's* publication and appeared as Volume Eleven in the Series.

[14] Unsigned Review. *The American Review* 3.5 (May 1846):562-63.

appeared in print in the United States, George B. Cheever and John Wiley were central figures and deeply involved in what could be termed a religious revolution.

An 1808 agreement between Congregationalists and Presbyterians called the "Plan of Union" geographically divided the country between the two denominations. As a result of the pact, Congregational societies were found in New England and were actually prohibited from organizing in New York State and the West, which became territory reserved for the Presbyterians. By the mid-1840s many Congregationalists thought the Plan of Union was outmoded.[15] The vast expansion of the national domain under Manifest Destiny meant that the Presbyterians would prosper by default. Moreover, the commercial success of New York City had caused large numbers of New Englanders, who preferred the Congregational system of church government, to relocate there. The Plan of Union limited them to associating with Presbyterian churches. This transplanted population was wealthy and influential and by mid-to-late 1845 had created a groundswell of patronage for the establishment of Congregational churches in New York City in

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[16] It should be mentioned that the Plan of Union had already been slightly weakened, coming under fire from the Presbyterian quarter. A schism between the "Old School" Presbyterians and the more liberal members of the "New School" movement had occurred in 1837. The disciples of the New School were expelled in 1837 from the general convention by the Old School proponents. Given that the New School had accepted the Plan of Union as part of its doctrinal position, the Old School formed its own missionary organization and repudiated the Plan of Union. The New School continued to honor the agreement (York 122).

defiance of the Plan of Union. The most famous of these Congregational churches were The Church of Plymouth and The Church of the Pilgrims, both located in Brooklyn, and, in New York City, The Church of the Puritans (York 122).[16] George B. Cheever's services were sought by The Church of the Pilgrims after George Shepherd declined their offer and recommended Cheever for the position. Cheever was very interested in and hopeful about the job, but an active minority opposed his appointment.

While Cheever waited to see if matters could be resolved in Brooklyn, he was approached by Congregational organizers from New York City, specifically John Wiley.[17] On the evening of 23 September 1845, John Wiley called on Cheever at his home and asked him to take the pulpit in the new Church to be built in prosperous Union Square, New York City, and to be called the Church of the Puritans. Wiley and other wealthy, influential friends were organizing and backing the project. Undoubtedly, Wiley was the most logical person to pitch the plan to Cheever because of Wiley's professional relationship with Cheever as his publisher and Wiley's deep involvement in founding the church. By then, it is also quite possible that the two men

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[16] In 1847 Henry Ward Beecher would accept the pulpit of The Church of Plymouth and remain in that post for the rest of his career. Richard S. Storrs became pastor of The Church of the Pilgrims. The appointment of the pastor of The Church of the Puritans is detailed in the text.

[17] Letter of Henry T. Cheever to his mother Charlotte Barrell Cheever, 24 September 1845. Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

were friends.

Cheever accepted Wiley's offer, and the first services of The Church of the Puritans were held in the chapel at New York University on 15 March 1846, two days before Wiley published *Typee*.[18] On 10 April 1846, one day after Cheever published the negative review of *Typee* in the *Evangelist*, the organizational meeting of the Church of the Puritans was held in Manhattan and forty-six parishioners founded the new congregation and formally made their Confession of Faith that evening.[19] John Wiley was prominent among them, he and his wife Elizabeth being entered as the third and fourth members in the records of the church. Wiley was also immediately made an officer with an appointment to the Prudential Committee.[20] Cheever was formally installed as Pastor in an elaborate ceremony held in May.

The Church of the Puritans was a highly visible undertaking, and included, besides John Wiley, some especially prominent men. There were: Seth B. and Jonathan Hunt, who later published the Congregational weekly *The Independent*; William Evarts, a distinguished lawyer; Henry

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[18] There were overflow crowds to hear Cheever's preaching. See "News from New York" in the *Boston Recorder*, 2 April 1846.

[19] The report of this meeting was published in the *Evangelist* on 16 April 1846, the issue that followed the review of *Typee*. Cheever was still the editor of the Presbyterian religious weekly at this time.

[20] In the Congregational Church, the Prudential Committee is tasked with responsibility for the business matters of the church, such as finances, real estate matters, legal questions, building issues, etc. New York *Evangelist* 16 April 1846; *Church of the Puritans*, New York Historical Society.

Hurlbut, a leading American hat manufacturer; George Phelps, a railroad magnate; and several Morgans, to mention only a few (York 123). The church's first goal was to erect their own building, and one of the city's foremost architects, James Renwick, the designer of St. Patrick's Cathedral on Fifth Avenue, was commissioned to design the landmark edifice that would seat over 1300 people (York 123-24). The high-profile character of founding the Church of the Puritans cannot be overstated.

As a member of the Prudential Committee of The Church of the Puritans, John Wiley would have been heavily involved in the business affairs of the church during the late winter, spring and summer of 1846--during the period of *Typee's* appearance and the controversy surrounding it. John Wiley sent his wife and children on holiday and stayed in the city that summer to assist Jonathan Hunt with church matters and in the business of approving plans, materials estimates and construction bids from contractors and architects.[21]

The Church of the Puritans was not only a highly visible project, it was also a risky and controversial undertaking. In breaching the "Plan of Union," the

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[21] In his letter to George B. Cheever, Hunt specifically mentions that "Mr Wiley has sent his wife and children to Mamaroneck for a short time." Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society. See Box 9, Folder 2.

Construction on the church began almost immediately, judging by Henry Cheever's letter to his mother of 10 November 1846 stating that "the walls of the church are nearly done." Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

Congregational venture raised the ire of many of the Presbyterian churches, especially in the greater New York City area, and many forecast doom for The Church of the Puritans.[22] Raising the standard of Congregationalism in New York City was a mission fraught with the peril of failure, and was regarded by Wiley, Cheever, and their associates as nothing less than a sacred trust, a holy calling, not to mention a major economic commitment. There was deep concern over the prospects of the new church, especially among the organizers themselves and their families.[23] Given the prominent position John Wiley held in the formation and the ongoing operations of the Church of the Puritans, the highly visible, controversial undertaking that it was, and the uncompromising moral pronouncements of the renowned Reverend Cheever in both literary and religious matters, it is not difficult to imagine the embarrassment Wiley's publishing Melville's *Typee* upon Putnam's recommendation at this particular moment in time must have caused himself, his religious peers, and especially Cheever,

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[22] The criticism was harsh enough that the report of its organizational meeting, published in the *Evangelist* by George Cheever, defends at length the church's right to organize (16 April 1846). Cheever resigned as editor of the Presbyterian-owned *Evangelist* in November 1846, citing the large amount of work he had to do for the church. No doubt there was also some conflict between editing a Presbyterian paper and building up a "renegade" Congregational church.

[23] The Cheever family correspondence reflects the tension and concern over the church project in its numerous references during this period to the prayers offered in behalf of the new church. Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

his minister.[24] However, Cheever's editorship of the *Evangelist* provided him with the perfect weapon to counterattack Melville's claims and defend John Wiley. *Typee* had to be condemned and Wiley exculpated, and George B. Cheever knew the perfect man for the job.

Until now the identity of the *Evangelist* reviewer has eluded scholars. Yet this reviewer, I believe, had a great bearing on the Revised Edition of *Typee*. He was a man preeminently qualified to contradict and refute all of Melville's accusations regarding the missionaries; and he had strong personal motives for doing so. He also could authoritatively evaluate and comment on the various elements of Melville's novel. For example, the early chapters of *Typee* deal with life and matters aboard a whaling ship. The reviewer himself passed an eight-month voyage home from the South Pacific aboard the whaler *Commodore Preble* and witnessed the capture of whales. He recorded these experiences in his 1850 book *The Whale and Its Captors*, a book Melville used as a source for *Moby-Dick*, referring to its author by name in the text of the novel (Bercaw 68). As

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[24] Publishers were prone to not read the books they published. Given the pressure to meet the requirements of Putnam's contract which called for simultaneous publication with the British edition, it is a virtual certainty that John Wiley did not read all of *Typee* before publishing it, and Putnam himself may have read only the first 107 pages of the manuscript. Some slight expurgations were made in the first few chapters of Wiley's first American edition, indicating that someone at least read that much of the novel.

The matter is complicated further by remembering that Wiley sold out the first edition even after he knew what was in the novel. The second, Revised Edition, was prepared to follow the first edition, not replace it, which clearly demonstrates some tension between Wiley's business ethics or circumstances and his religious principles.

previously mentioned, in *Typee* Melville celebrated native ways and portrayed the islanders as enlightened people. The reviewer spent sixteen months among the missionaries in the Sandwich Islands, and became familiar with the customs and characteristics of the native population and, if not persuaded to such an idea before, adopted the view of them as backward and uncivilized. His time in the islands made him well acquainted with the status of religious and political affairs there, although from the missionary perspective. His own seminary preparation and ties to Protestant evangelicalism would eventually lead him to the ministry in 1847 and caused him to be acutely aware of the danger Melville's novel posed to the objectives of the Benevolent Empire. More particularly, he knew of the personal embarrassment the novel caused for John Wiley and George B. Cheever. Finally, he was familiar with Wiley's business operations.

Jay Leyda tentatively suggested the possibility that the reviewer was George B. Cheever himself (*Log* 210). However, although the review was unsigned, it was initialed by one "H.C." Indeed, the reviewer was George's brother, Henry Theodore Cheever.[25] Henry Cheever's opportunity to

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[26] Although this may now seem an obvious identification in the context of this study, there are a number of reasons why it may have been missed by scholars for so long. First, although Henry Theodore Cheever served a lengthy tenure as a Corresponding Editor for the *Evangelist*, and as its actual editor from 1849 to 1852 (Johnson 50), his full name did not appear on the masthead or in the paper. Only his initials, variously inscribed as "C.," "H.C." or "H.T.C.," identified his work. Second, any investigator identifying Henry Cheever as the

review *Typee* because of his brother's editorship of the *Evangelist* is obvious once his presence in the United States is established. And it is a certainty Henry Cheever read *Typee*. In the same 9 April 1846 issue of the *Evangelist* in which the *Typee* review appears, another column appears on the front page of the paper entitled "Letters from Oahu, S.I. No. II." The column is initialed "H.T.C.," and is clearly the work of Henry Theodore Cheever. Significantly, Henry Cheever cites *Typee* in the footnote, quoting *Typee* out of context to make the point that the Europeans and not the American missionaries are responsible for the corruption of the natives.[26] Cheever obviously knew the novel and

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potential reviewer from the initials would likely have been misled by the dates of Cheever's contributions to the *Evangelist*. Thirty columns entitled "Letters from the Sandwich Islands" appeared in various issues of the *Evangelist* from 19 December 1844 through 8 January 1846. Cheever returned from the Sandwich Islands, arriving at Lynn, Massachusetts on 20 May 1845. However, if a scholar had believed that Henry Theodore Cheever wrote his columns "from" Hawaii as advertised, and had published the last one in January 1846, he would have concluded, as I at first did, that it would have been physically impossible because of geographical distance for Henry Cheever to have authored the 9 April *Evangelist* review of *Typee*. In fact, Cheever's mostly stateside authorship of his Hawaiian letters was an intentionally kept secret to make the columns more commercially valuable.

For documentation about the date of Cheever's return to the United States and the use of his initials in his published pieces see letters of Henry Theodore Cheever dated 21 May 1845 and 25 October 1845 in the Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society. Regarding the "secret" of his presence in the United States see the letter of George B. Cheever to Henry dated at Saratoga Springs, 18 July 1845, in the Cheever-Wheeler Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

[26] The seed of the article is Cheever being mistaken for a sailor while traveling in the back country on one of the islands and the natives' indecent behavior out of sight of the missionaries. The article is a discussion of religious hypocrisy and defense of the missionaries.

The footnote reads: "The author of the audacious Polynesian romance entitled "Typee," very properly remarks, that 'the enormities perpetrated in the South Seas upon some of the inoffensive islanders well-nigh pass belief. These things are seldom proclaimed at home; they happen at the very ends of the earth; they are done in a corner, and there are none to reveal them. But there is, nevertheless, many a petty

remembered it. Understanding his impeccable qualifications as the reviewer of the novel is a more complex matter and is important in fathoming his possible influence upon the Revised Edition of *Typee*.

In poor health, Henry Theodore Cheever embarked on a sailing voyage that he hoped would restore his physical vitality. On 13 October 1842, he shipped under the command of a personal friend named Landon aboard the *Wales*; the ship was making a scientific cruise that would circumnavigate the globe.[27] After making stops at Valparaiso, Chile, and Callao, Peru--ports visited by Melville during his outward and homeward bound cruises--the *Wales* arrived at Honolulu, Oahu, Sandwich Islands on 9 May 1843.[28] Melville himself had arrived aboard the whaler *Charles and Henry* and had been discharged at Lahaina, Maui, Sandwich Islands only a week

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trader that has navigated the Pacific, whose course from island to island might be traced by a series of cold-blooded robberies, kidnappings and murders, the iniquity of which might be considered almost sufficient to sink her guilty timbers to the bottom of the sea. It may be asserted without fear of contradiction, that in all the cases of outrages committed by Polynesians, Europeans have been at some time or other the aggressors, and that the cruel and blood-thirsty disposition of some of the islanders is mainly to be ascribed to the influence of such examples" (*Evangelist* 9 April 1846).

[27] Letter of Henry Theodore Cheever to his brother Nathaniel, Friday 13 October 1843: "Perhaps you will recognize it is just a year ago today since I bade you & dear George good bye in N.Y. & launched out into the Atlantic with the expectation of circumnavigating the globe." Regarding Landon and the *Wales* see Henry's letter to Nathaniel written at Hallowell, 21 September 1842. Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

[28] Henry to George Cheever, Honolulu Woahoo[Oahu] 12 May 1843: "Our good ship *Wales* arrived off this port & sent a boat ashore on the 9th inst." Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

earlier on 2 May 1843 (Parker 235). Melville stayed in the islands for almost four months, finally enlisting in the Navy and departing the Sandwich Islands aboard the warship *United States* on 20 August 1843 (Parker 262). Cheever, believing the tropical climate would be healthful, left the *Wales* and took up residence in the islands, remaining there sixteen months and domiciling himself among the missionaries until late September 1844. No record has yet been found of Melville and Cheever meeting in the islands but such a meeting was quite possible. Melville left Lahaina and went to Honolulu on 18 May and there spent the remainder of his time in the islands. Significantly, Parker records that Melville saw more of one missionary than any other: Samuel C. Damon, who ran the Seaman's Chapel on Honolulu. The Chapel had a reading room, frequented by Melville until August, that held newspapers from all parts of the world (Parker 248, 254). At Honolulu on Sabbath Day, 4 June 1843, Henry Cheever wrote his brother George: "I arrived here in the *Wales* on the 9th of May. . . . I am pleasantly domesticated at the home of Mr. Damon, the Seaman's Chaplain--have been on a horseback tour thirty miles to the mission stations on the other side of this island."[29] Cheever's time in Oahu coincides with Melville's time there. With Damon as a mutual point of contact and their shared nationality, it seems plausible that the two men were at

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[29] Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

least aware of each other's presence on the island.

What is more significant, however, about their overlapping time in the Islands is the personal encounter both men experienced, albeit from widely divergent perspectives, of the British seizure of the Sandwich Islands under Lord Paulet, a situation Melville would champion in the Appendix of the first edition of *Typee* because he believed the British were justified in their actions against the Hawaiians and their missionary masters.

When Melville returned to the United States he was shocked to read in the papers the disparaging American view of the British Admiral Lord Paulet's political/military activities in the Sandwich Islands.[30] What Melville believed had been missed and not reported in the United States was that British subjects living in the islands had been subject to abuses of power by the puppet "imbecile king" of Hawaii for some time. The converted King Kamehameha III had virtually turned over his government to the Protestant missionaries; he was counseled by "one Dr. Judd, a sanctimonious apothecary-adventurer, who with other kindred and influential spirits, was animated by an inveterate dislike to England" (*Typee* 255).

The conflict between the American ministers of the gospel and the British administrators grew out of British

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[30] For a good summary of the political and historical background of this incident and conditions during its duration, see Parker's biography 238-40, 243ff, 255-60.

willingness to defend the interests of Catholic citizens arriving in the islands. For years the Protestant missionaries had manipulated the native political leadership to keep Catholic priests out of the islands. The antipathy the American missionaries held for the English began with an 1837 diplomatic incident. The British Consul opposed the government's order to deport two Catholic priests who had arrived at the Sandwich Islands aboard a British vessel.

> Protestant missionaries in the Pacific knew that to tolerate Catholics was to risk loss of human souls and loss of political control. Practical zealots, they realized that their de facto control of the islands would be ended if either France or England seized the islands, so, manipulating King Kamehameha III to their wishes, the missionaries, led by the back-country New York Presbyterian Dr. Gerrit Parmele Judd . . . , began to seek protection from the United States for their anti-European and, tacitly, their anti-Catholic stances. (Parker 238)

Judd edited the Honolulu *Polynesian*, the official government newspaper, and with other missionary elders controlled the government and the flow of official information. The British Consul escaped the islands secretly in September 1842 to report the abuses to his government. After his departure his property was seized and his successor not recognized. Lord Paulet and his naval squadron were dispatched to meet with the king and resolve matters. Upon his arrival, Lord Paulet's embassy to King Kamehameha III was twice referred to Dr. Judd, the king informing Paulet that the missionary had full authority to deal with the Admiral. Paulet, offended by these diplomatic insults,

posted his grievances and demanded redress or promised war. Upon the advice of the missionary "counselors," the king, rather than compromising his authority by yielding to Paulet's threats, or causing war for his people by opposing him, temporarily ceded the islands to Paulet. Given their control of the press, the missionaries adroitly played up the "injustice" of Paulet's actions to their constituencies in the United States, and anti-British sentiment, already agitated by matters in the Oregon Territory, caused Paulet's vilification in the American press. Melville was disturbed enough to want to set the record straight about the Sandwich Islands. He wrote the Appendix to *Typee* to justify Paulet's actions and to defend this "gallant officer." The Appendix discussing these events was deleted in the Revised Edition of *Typee*, but, unsurprisingly, it was retained by John Murray in subsequent British editions.[31]

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[31] Henry Theodore Cheever recorded his version of events in a letter to his brother George one week after arriving in the Sandwich Islands. His account is strongly influenced by and clearly in keeping with the views of the missionaries.

> Honolulu Woahoo [sic] Sand. Isles May 15, 1843
>
> Long before this letter reaches you the news will have been received of these islands being brought under British domination. It proves most disastrous to the morals of the natives and sailors, the Commission having annulled the law that punished licentiousness. The grounds on wh[ich] the islands have been taken into possession are the most unjust & frivolous imaginable. But the real reason is probably the fear that the French would have soon hoisted their flag here, British rule would be better than French. But the nation would do far better with a guarantee of their liberties. The indignation of the Americans against the British is very great, & the missionaries say that thr[oughout] the nation there is a deep murmur of discontent. We are not without hope that the conduct of Lord George Paulet will be disapproved by the British

If Melville defended the actions of Paulet, he did not hesitate to condemn those of the missionaries. Melville spent more time in the Sandwich Islands than he did in the Typee valley, and on Papeete and Eimeo (the island settings of his second novel, *Omoo*) combined, and when he refers to missionary matters it is invariably the Sandwich Islands mission he refers to. Significantly, among the forces of the Protestant missionary movement, the Sandwich Islands mission was the crown jewel of the foreign missions, the model of success. Melville was unsparingly attacking a sacred Protestant icon. To understand what was at stake here, a brief examination of the content and tone of a typical passage about the missionaries from *Typee* is warranted.

Some chapters, as well as a number of passages in *Typee*, were devoted to a vigorous critique of Western imperialism, but the activities of the American Protestant evangelical missionaries--the far-flung forces of the Benevolent Empire--were Melville's particular target. Melville calculated his adverse portraits of the

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government. "I have hope (says the king) that the life of the land will be restored when my conduct is justified. (Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society)

Cheever's reference to increasing French colonization in the islands is consistent with Melville's account in *Typee*. Chapters Two and Three discuss the French takeover of the Marquesas Islands which was in progress at the time of Melville's arrival there. The missionary bias for British over French rule reflects the fundamental difference between Britain as a primarily Protestant nation and France as a chiefly Catholic one.

missionaries' influence on native culture to unsettle well-established ideas about their activities. For example, he writes:

> Not until I visited Honolulu was I aware of the fact that the small remnant of the natives had been civilized into draught horses, and evangelised into beasts of burden. . . . They have been literally broken into the traces, and are harnessed to the vehicles of their spiritual instructors like so many dumb brutes! (*Typee* 196)

According to Melville, such servitude was common; one could observe the little wagons lined up outside the chapels to draw their masters home at the conclusion of services (197). Melville further personifies this condition of abject native servitude with the written portrait of a missionary's rotund wife who refuses to alight from her cart when two natives are struggling to draw her cart which is stuck in the soft soil of an uphill road. At first, she verbally exhorts her charges and then, with the "heavy handle of her huge fan," strikes them to prod them on. Melville ascribes such behavior to pride. In her former humble state back home in New England, she had thought nothing of driving the cows to pasture, but now she enjoyed a new, more elevated estate in life and lorded it over "lower" creatures (196-97). Parker states that one of these scenes Melville painted of the carts with natives waiting in the traces was outside Reverend Damon's Seaman's Chapel at Honolulu, a scene with which Henry Cheever would have been very familiar.

Melville also passionately editorializes about the

missionaries and their effects on the natives: "let heathenism be destroyed, but not by destroying the heathen. The Anglo-Saxon hive have extirpated Paganism from the greater part of the North American continent; but with it they have likewise extirpated the greater portion of the Red race" (195). Such passages were, of course, inflammatory to those dedicated to the cause of evangelical Christianity. However, no one seems to have noticed Melville's eloquently articulated defense of his rationale and caveats for his criticisms, which are recorded immediately following his descriptions of the natives in "the traces."

> Lest the slightest misconception should arise from anything thrown out in this chapter [an ironic turn of phrase since half the chapter was deleted in the Revised Edition], or indeed in any other part of the volume, let me here observe, that against the cause of missions in the abstract no Christian can possibly be opposed: it is in truth a just and holy cause. But if the great end proposed by it be spiritual, the agency employed to accomplish that end is purely earthly; and, although the object in view be the achievement of much good, that agency may nevertheless be productive of evil. In short, missionary undertaking, however it may be blessed of Heaven, is in itself but human; and subject, like everything else, to errors and abuses. (197)

That mankind was less impeccable than the principles it embraced was a theme Melville found early. And nothing was exempt from his criticism--including the church.

Melville reminds the reader that the church is naturally always the last to question the "sanctity of its apostles" because "we are naturally disposed to regard everything like an exposure of ecclesiastical misconduct as

the offspring of malevolence or irreligious feeling" (198), but even the potential of being so accused can not keep Melville from saying what he believes, leading the author to probe a particularly sensitive nerve.

> There is something decidedly wrong in the practical operations of the Sandwich Islands Mission. Those who from pure religious motives contribute to the support of this enterprise, should take care to ascertain that their donations, flowing through many devious channels, at last effect their legitimate object, the conversion of the Hawaiians. I urge this not because I doubt the moral probity of those who disburse these funds, but because I know they are not rightly applied. (198)

This bald assertion of financial mismanagement was a particularly dangerous one for the Benevolent Empire, which relied so heavily upon widespread good will and public donations.[32]

It was this misuse of funds that Margaret Fuller so pointedly referred to in her laudatory review of *Typee* appearing in the 4 April 1846 edition of the New York *Tribune*.

> Many of the observations and narratives we suppose to be strictly correct. Is the account given of the result of the missionary enterprises in the

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[32] Melville's criticisms imply more impropriety than he actually observed. Funds "not rightly applied" suggests a host of financial crimes, from theft and embezzlement to misappropriation of funds and malfeasance. This ambiguity was probably calculated to heighten a reader's distrust of the missionaries. However, what Melville strictly meant was that the claims of missionary results and their corresponding effectiveness were exaggerated and, as a consequence, the public held the wrong opinion about what was occurring in the islands. Melville's interpretation describes missionary claims as misrepresenting the facts regarding the benefits of the missionary enterprise. Of course, the missionaries' believed Melville was misrepresenting their efforts in *Typee*.

> Sandwich Islands of this number? We suppose so from what we have heard in other ways. With a view to ascertaining the truth, it would be well if the sewing societies, now engaged in providing funds for such enterprises, would read the particulars, they will find in this book . . . and make inquiries in consequence, before going on with their efforts. (Higgins 38)

Melville sought justification for such claims against the missionaries in his authority as an eyewitness:

> [W]hen these philanthropists send us such glowing accounts of one half of their labors, why does their modesty restrain them from publishing the other half of the good they have wrought? . . . To read pathetic accounts of missionary hardships, and glowing descriptions of conversions, and baptisms taking place beneath palm-trees, is one thing; and to go to the Sandwich Islands and see the missionaries dwelling in picturesque and prettily-furnished coral-rock villas, whilst the miserable natives are committing all sorts of immoralities around them, is quite another. (196, 198)

Melville, to further a tone of objectivity and just equanimity, qualifies his criticism of the missionaries by pointing out that others of a "dissolute foreign population," along with the wide variety of shipping traffic, have also contributed to the problem. "In a word, here, as in every case where Civilization has in any way been introduced among those whom we call savages, she has scattered her vices, and withheld her blessings" (198).

Melville was not so naive as to believe that these criticisms of the foreign and domestic missionary programs of the Benevolent Empire would be enthusiastically received, although it seems he underestimated--perhaps even grossly

underestimated--the intensity of the reaction he would provoke. Recognizing at least some danger, he ends this particular chapter in a defensive posture, attempting to justify his book's overall treatment of the subject. More significantly, the final two sentences of the passage comprise a disclaimer that, like Ishmael clinging to Quequeeg's coffin, Melville hoped he could safely ride, in the event he was orphaned on the high seas of cultural disapprobation.

> As wise a man as Shakespeare has said, that the bearer of evil tidings hath but a losing office; and so I suppose will it prove with me, in communicating to the trusting friends of the Hawaiian Mission what has been disclosed in various portions of this narrative. I am persuaded, however, that as these disclosures will by their very nature attract attention, so they will lead to something which will not be without ultimate benefit to the cause of Christianity in the Sandwich Islands.
>
> I have but one more thing to add in connection with this subject--those things which I have stated as facts will remain facts, in spite of whatever the bigoted or incredulous may say or write against them. My reflections on those facts may not be free from error. If such be the case, I claim no further indulgence than should be conceded to every man whose object is to do good. (198-99)

Of course, Melville's comments and intentions in *Typee* were interpreted as the very antithesis of doing good. To no one was this more clear than to George Cheever, firmly at the helm of the pro-missionary *Evangelist*, and his brother Henry.

George Barrell Cheever and Henry Theodore Cheever both had strong motives for attacking *Typee*. For both brothers,

such a stance was in keeping with their principles to defend Protestant Evangelical Christianity and its mission. For George, it also was defending his prominent parishioner, John Wiley, and implicitly, his own pulpit. Of course, Henry Cheever had his brother's interests at heart, as well as another compelling personal motive--defending the missionaries who had shown him such hospitality in the islands. Henry Cheever had met and stayed with every missionary in the Sandwich Islands,[33] and even did some preaching at various services. His missionary hosts found him a kindred spirit, welcomed him like a brother and did not permit him to pay for his room or board. A letter to his brother George, written from the seminary at Lahainaluna on 22 September 1844, just before his departure, describes the difficulty Henry Cheever had leaving such good and faithful associates behind.

> The families here have fitted me out for the voyage much as friends at home do missionaries; and they seem to rejoice to have the privilege. The kindness and hospitality I have experienced have been very great, and it is not without considerable reluctance that I bid goodbye to friends so endeared.[34]

When Henry Cheever wrote the hostile review of *Typee* for the *Evangelist*, he was defending both a holy cause and his

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[33] On 8 July 1844, ten weeks before he left the Sandwich Islands in September, Henry Cheever wrote to his brother George from the missionary home of Reverend Conde on Maui: "I have one Island more yet to visit, and I visited with all of the 18 stations of the group, a thing which a traveller never yet has done." Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

[34] Cheever Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society.

friends.

It is entirely possible that Henry Theodore Cheever's defense of his missionary friends in the Sandwich Islands went beyond reviewing *Typee* for the *Evangelist*. Previous Melville scholars have believed that John Wiley, on religious and business grounds, dictated either the criteria for or the actual changes in the novel and Melville complied by making the expurgations to his book. Such a view proceeds from a modern perception of an author's agency over his text, but such agency would likely not have been the norm in the mid-nineteenth century between a new author and an indignant publisher needing either to avoid trouble or to extricate himself from it. Publishers could be high-handed, as demonstrated previously in the case involving Wiley and Margaret Fuller. To say simply John Wiley ordered the expurgations for religious and business reasons ignores the dynamic process of cultural mediation that engulfed Melville's novel, and closes the door on exploring the provocative possibilities of the actual mechanics of the revision itself.

Although it is possible that by himself John Wiley decided upon and dictated what the expurgations to *Typee* would be, a provocative and likely possibility is that he commissioned Henry Theodore Cheever to do it, just as John Murray had hired Henry Milton to rework parts of the *Typee* manuscript before publishing the first British edition

(Howard 282).[35] Cheever had read and reviewed *Typee*; he made his living during the period *Typee* was revised by writing extensively as a correspondent to the *Evangelist* and at least one other paper;[36] he had resided in the Sandwich Islands and knew the natives, the missionaries and the politics of the islands; he had whaled; he knew John Wiley, shared the publisher's evangelical values and, with his brother George in the pulpit, shared the same concern for the success of the Church of the Puritans. Henry Cheever emerges as a possible resource on whom a busy and harassed John Wiley can rely to expurgate *Typee*.[37]

John Wiley was well acquainted with Henry Cheever and his personal knowledge of the "facts" in the matters *Typee* described, and recognized him as a man better qualified than himself to judge the content of *Typee*. Extremely religious in the most conservative Puritan tradition, having seminary training, performing substitute preaching (sometimes for his brother George in the Church of the Puritans itself) and

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[35] Hershel Parker revises Howard's estimate of Milton's involvement with the text of *Typee* in the biography (388).

[36] Henry Cheever was the New York correspondent for the Congregational *Boston Recorder*. See the "News from New York" columns of 19 March and 2 April 1846, both which contain information about the Church of the Puritans. The columns are signed "C."

[37] As noted above, Wiley had already turned once before to Henry's brother, George Cheever, to mediate the impact of a controversial book. In 1845 Wiley had published *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* by the Englishman, Robert Chambers. The book was a pre-Darwinian treatment of organic evolution. George B. Cheever wrote an essay rebutting Chambers' evolutionary theories, and John Wiley used Cheever's essay, binding it into the second edition of the book as the Introduction.

still a bachelor, Henry Cheever possessed a surplus of the "excessive delicacy" required to make such changes to the content and style of the novel as those that have perplexed scholars.

Melville scholars have puzzled for years over the motivation for some of the changes occurring in the Revised Edition. For example, why were passages about the Sandwich Islands removed from the novel when the context offered no critical reference to the missionaries? What accounts for the "numerous excisions or modifications of references to sex[,] [s]ome [of which] appear to be the result of excessive delicacy" (Howard 290)? Furthermore, Melville's pro-British political opinions, expressed in his defense of Paulet, were deleted when the entire Appendix was excised. Scholarly opinion has been that anti-British sentiments over the Oregon issue made such opinions unviable and hurt sales of the book (Howard 290). Such a conclusion about Melville's political opinions is certainly reasonable, but all three puzzles are explained when the possibility is considered that Henry Theodore Cheever--a soon-to-be ordained Protestant Evangelical minister and a professional journalist who had lived in the Sandwich Islands for sixteen months and loved the missionaries there--revised the novel.[38]

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[38] Although Henry T. Cheever was formally ordained a Congregational minister in June 1847, he had preached prior to this time as a seminary graduate in the Sandwich Islands, on board the whale ship *Commodore*

The financial arrangements for the novel themselves suggest Melville's distance from the project. Leon Howard makes the point that the joint account that determined Melville's half-profits was not charged any of the expenses incurred in creating the Revised Edition. Acting in a manner very contrary to his customary business practice, John Wiley assumed the entire cost of producing the Revised Edition. Howard says Melville made a good bargain in getting Wiley to foot the bill, and it certainly allowed Melville to preserve some of his authorial dignity (286). However, Wiley was likely to have been just as inclined to go along with this arrangement in this case because his financial commitment assured his control over a problematic text. How hard could Melville truly press his displeasure with any changes to *Typee* if the revisions of the book were not costing him anything tangible? This arrangement would have allowed John Wiley the complete freedom to have the novel expurgated by his own sources and to his own standards.

There is another important reason Melville may not have expurgated his own novel. His personal life was in turmoil throughout June and early July 1846 over the death of his brother Gansevoort. On 29 May 1846,[39] Herman

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Preble during his voyage home, in his home town of Hallowell, Maine, and in the pulpit of the Church of the Puritans as a substitute for his brother George.

[39] Melville mistakenly dated the letter 29 June 1846.

Melville wrote his brother Gansevoort in London, not knowing that Gansevoort had died two weeks earlier. A postscript to the letter states: "Typee is coming on bravely--a second edition is nearly out" (*Correspondence*, 41). The tone and content of the letter indicate Herman is still uninformed of Wiley's decision to create the expurgated edition--so none of the wholesale changes the Revised Edition would incorporate had yet been done.

On 12 May 1846 Gansevoort Melville died in London of an undiagnosed disease. His money had been exhausted by physicians and medicines. The family in Lansingburgh received word of Gansevoort's death in the early days of June, and had so little money themselves that on 6 June Herman began a letter campaign to government officials asking them to allow one quarter's salary, which was granted, to get the body home and pay for funeral expenses. On 17 June Melville left for New York to meet the packet ship *Prince Albert*, which was transporting Gansevoort's body. Before the ship's arrival on 26 June, Melville and Duyckinck met and discussed the fact that *Typee* would be expurgated, and Melville learned of the plan to change the novel for the first time. Hershel Parker believes Duyckinck's mediation was necessary on this occasion, given the high emotional state of both men--Melville because of his grief and Wiley because of his embarrassed outrage, stemming from the disturbance Melville had created among

Wiley's religious associates (433). However, at the meeting in June specific changes were evidently not discussed. "[T]he business could wait: even in his outrage, Wiley was willing to let the young author bury his brother before making him butcher his book" (Parker 434). Gansevoort was buried 28 June 1846, and it is not difficult to imagine the deep mourning of the Melville family. It is hardly likely that Herman Melville did any writing between 29 June and 2 July 1846.

On the 2 July, the gloom broke for Melville when he received word that Toby's letter had been published the day before in the Buffalo newspaper. Sensing personal and artistic vindication from the barbs of his critics, Melville immediately wrote Toby and Duyckinck. To the latter he proposed writing an account of what befell Toby after he left Melville in the Typee valley (*Correspondence*, 50). By 4 July Melville had satisfied himself that Toby was genuine and made arrangements to visit him and get his detailed version of events. Wiley wanted Toby's story as well because of the boost it would lend to sales of the Revised Edition. Melville wrote the sequel, which appeared in the Revised Edition as "The Story of Toby."

Scholars agree that the expurgations of the novel most likely occurred in July. A letter from Melville to Duyckinck dated 15 July indicates that the expurgations of the novel were completed by then and approved by Melville

and John Wiley, but the letter is indeterminate on the source of the expurgations: "Typee has come out measurably unschathed [sic] from the fiery ordeal of Mr Wiley's criticisms. I trust as it now stands the book will retain all those essential features which most commended it to the public favor" (*Correspondence*, 53). One reading of this letter is that Melville is seeing the revised novel for the first time and is expressing his opinion of the "final" product. "Criticisms" here can be reliably read as synonymous with "changes," but were the changes the product of Wiley's personal editing, or done by someone else he hired to do the job? Since there were no charges posted to his account for editing services, Melville may not have known who edited and expurgated the novel. Wiley & Putnam's records show that the first printing of the Revised Edition was 31 July 1846.

Although Melville was informed by John Wiley that *Typee* was to be censored and republished in a revised edition, importantly, there is no reliable evidence recorded anywhere in contemporary documents or in later family oral histories of Herman Melville actually engaged in the work of expurgating *Typee* and preparing the text for the Revised Edition. It is true that in correspondence with his London publisher, John Murray, Melville discussed the changes of the Revised Edition and there claimed authority for them. However, there is good reason to doubt the voice and content

of the letter.

Melville's 15 July 1846 letter to Murray is a thorough justification and defense of the Revised Edition.

> The revision will only extend to the exclusion of those parts not naturally connected to the narrative and some slight purifications of style. I am pursuaded [sic] that the interest of the book almost wholly consists in the *intrinsick merit of the narrative alone*--& that other portions, however interesting they may be in themselves, only serve to impede the story. The book is certainly calculated for popular reading, or for none at all. . . . Proceeding on this principle then, I have rejected every thing, in revising the book, which refers to the missionaries. . . . Certain "sea-freedoms" also have been modifyed in the expression--but nothing has been done to effect the general character & style of the book--the narrative parts are untouched--In short--in revising the work, I have merely removed passages which leave no gap, & the removal of which imparts a unity to the book which it wanted before. (*Correspondence*, 56).

The claims about no changes in the style of the novel are untrue, unless they had been done without Melville's knowledge and he did not know about them--a distinct possibility. Many readers noticed dramatic changes in the style of the novel in the Revised Edition after it was published. Melville's hearty endorsement, taken at face value, *seems* to indicate that Melville revised the book. However, the letter is more than it seems. Melville is striking a careful pose here with Murray, consciously presenting himself in the persona of the artist in control of his work, as the following passage clearly illustrates.

> As for the matter of the revised edition--if you publish one from the copy I shall send to you, I leave it to yourself to decide, whether I should

> be considered as entitled to anything on account of it.--But however that part of the matter may appear to you--I earnestly trust that you will issue a Revised Edition. Depend upon it Sir, that it will be policy so to do. Nor have I decided upon this revision without much reflection and seeking the advice of persons every way qualified to give it, & who have done so in a spirit of candor. (*Correspondence*, 57)

Melville misrepresents the facts here for two important reasons. First, he is preserving his professionalism and authorial identity with his English publisher. Melville, I think correctly, perceives the importance of appearing to have matters in hand. It is the first time he has written Murray directly, an arrangement now necessary, of course, because of Gansevoort's death. He does not want inadvertently to invite Murray to deal with him as Wiley has done. This is especially important because later in this same letter he mentions sending Murray his next manuscript. Second, he is suggesting the idea that the Revised Edition is a *new* work and is perhaps worth additional compensation, and must therefore present the revisions as his own idea.[40] However, Melville's disingenuousness is embedded most clearly in the last sentence of this passage. Melville here is claiming complete authority and control for the expurgated Revised Edition from inception to completion.

Melville was less enthusiastic about the Revised Edition in a letter to Evert Duyckinck written on 28 July

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[40] Murray did pay Melville £50 pounds for the Revised Edition, but he never published it. He printed and sold "The Story of Toby" in pamphlet form.

1846, two weeks after the letter to Murray. "The *Revised* (Expurgated?--Odious word!) Edition of Typee ought to be duly announced--& as the matter (in one respect) is a little delicate, I am happy that the literary tact of Mr Duyckinck will be exerted on the occasion" (*Correspondence*, 60). On which occasion is Melville expressing his true feelings? Both responses can be understood if read within the context of a young writer trying to be taken seriously as an artist with agency over his work. At best, Melville himself felt ambivalent about the Revised Edition of *Typee*. He disliked the expurgations, although in his old age he expressed regret over only one deletion he was forced to make.[41] On the other hand, the Revised Edition contained "The Story of

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[41] Such a detached opinion of the changes to *Typee* in Melville's later life in no way reflects his attitude about the changes to the novel at the time they occurred. Melville very quickly grew to resent his early books *Typee* and *Omoo* because his audience typecast him as an artist on their merit alone. Reviews of later Melville works are full of suggestions that he go back and write in the manner of his first novels. In his later work, Melville did his best to forbid his publishers from using references to *Typee* as a way of selling his books, and for most of his life he detested his publicly imposed alter ego as "the man who had lived among the cannibals."

The passage Melville wanted retained is found at the end of Chapter 24, and follows a description of a native's disrespect of one of the island's idols. The double-entendre of the passage and its application to the American clergy are readily apparent. The passage captures and epitomizes Melville's whole critique of the missionaries.

> This anecdote speaks for itself. When one of the inferior order of natives could show such contempt for a venerable and decrepit God of the Groves, what the state of religion must be among the people in general is easily to be imagined. In truth, I regard the Typees as a back-slidden generation. They are sunk in religious sloth, and require a spiritual revival. A long prosperity of bread-fruit and cocoa-nuts has rendered them remiss in the performance of their higher obligations. The wood rot malady is spreading among the idols--the fruit upon their altars is becoming offensive--the temples themselves need re-thatching--the tattooed clergy are altogether too light-hearted and lazy--and their flocks are going astray. (179)

Toby," which Melville saw as his deliverance from the attacks on his veracity by the critics of the novel. Given his preferences, Melville would surely have published the second edition of *Typee* with only the minor changes indicated in the letter of 7 May 1846 to John Wiley and included "The Story of Toby" as a sequel. This scenario would have provided the ultimate artistic satisfaction and vindication.

The revising of *Typee* was the dramatic product of a specific cultural moment and a particular cast of characters on the stage of John Wiley's personal life. Wiley's involvement in the founding of Congregationalism in New York City just at the time *Typee* was published created a setting where Wiley would be most sensitive to criticism on religious grounds. The cast of characters in addition to John Wiley could not have been more antithetical to a book like *Typee*. Cheever would not have been backward about expressing his displeasure to John Wiley about the "black eye" *Typee* gave to the religious community in general and his pulpit in particular. Nor is it difficult to imagine John Wiley's intense discomfort in the presence of his fiery Puritan minister. Wiley may in turn have conveyed this same blazing indignation to Melville when he dictated the changes that would be made to the novel.

Something of this scene between publisher and author, as well as Wiley's own embarrassment and intense anger over

Typee becomes clear, when Melville writes Duyckinck about the Revised Edition. Quoted earlier, the letter is worth reciting with this focus in mind. Melville, trying to put the best face on a situation he had been forced to accept, half-heartedly wrote: "*Typee* has come out measurably unschathed from the fiery ordeal of Mr Wiley's criticisms" (*Correspondence*, 53).

The changes Wiley dictated for Melville's book were permanent. In the United States, *Typee* appeared throughout Melville's life in the expurgated Revised Edition. The frugal Mr. Wiley could have chosen more economical options than expurgating the novel and changing the plates. The reality of the moment, however, was quite different, and Wiley's professional options were constrained by his need to conform to priorities in his personal life and to the expectations of prominent, devout individuals from his personal social circle like the Rev. George B. Cheever and his brother Henry Theodore Cheever. Given these social constraints acting on John Wiley in 1846, the expurgated Revised Edition of *Typee* was the inevitable outcome for Melville's first novel.

Less certain is the origination of the specific changes made to the novel. It is certainly inconsistent with John Wiley's motives for requiring the revised version of the novel to have trusted Melville to expurgate his own book. After all, as Henry Cheever observed in the *Evangelist*

review that signalled *Typee's* revision, it was more what *Typee* insinuated than what it forthrightly declared that made it a dangerous book. Melville was antagonistic to Wiley's evangelical religious values, and was therefore by nature and disposition unqualified to expurgate the offensive subtleties of the novel to John Wiley's satisfaction.[42] Wiley may have done it himself, but the relationship of Henry Theodore Cheever to all the major points of concern fomented by *Typee* and his personal association with John Wiley in 1846 through the Church of the Puritans and his brother George Barrell Cheever raises the strong and provocative possibility that Henry Theodore Cheever edited the novel for John Wiley to create the Revised Edition. The symmetry of such a possibility is appealing, and perhaps suggestive in itself. According to this scenario, Henry Cheever first savaged *Typee* with the hostile review published in the *Evangelist*, and later salvaged the book, making it fit for public notice by marking up a copy of the novel and formulating the changes that became the Revised Edition.

Even if Henry Cheever did not actually carry out the excisions and revisions of Melville's novel, he still could have consulted closely with either his brother George or John Wiley to guide their revisions because of his intimate

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[42] Even as it was, some passages slipped through, the scene of Kory-Kory's fire-building in Chapter 14 being the most notorious example.

knowledge of the world Melville was writing about. However it may have played out between John Wiley, George and Henry Cheever, when the Revised Edition of *Typee* was published by Wiley & Putnam on 6 August 1846, it salved the consciences of all three men.

CHAPTER FOUR

MELVILLE'S EARNEST DESIRE FOR TRUTH

Truth is the silliest thing under the sun. Try and get a living by the Truth--and go to the Soup Societies.

--Herman Melville to Nathaniel Hawthorne, [1 June?] 1851

Concerning the book on the stocks[, *Omoo*,] . . . I will forward you enough of it to enable you to judge thereof. . . . However, you must not Dear Sir expect another Typee--The fates must send me adrift again ere I write another adventure like that exactly.

--Herman Melville to John Murray, 2 September 1846

Typee was a book of profound implications for Herman Melville as a writer. Psychologically, John Wiley's demands for the expurgations planted the seed of resignation in Melville's mind that grew and flourished in subsequent dealings with his publishers and audience. Moreover, Melville could never develop beyond the public reputation generated by his first novel in the mind of his audience or his publishers. Along with *Omoo*, his second novel, *Typee* "stereotyped" Melville as an author in style, content and genre. The two novels became the benchmark by which the critics and the readers measured all of his later work. Reviews of the later, "thoughtful" works of Melville are full of suggestions by the critics that he go back and write in the manner of his first two novels. The reviewers praised the first half of *Mardi*, and all of *Redburn* and

White-Jacket because they found elements in those novels like *Typee* and *Omoo*. His audience wanted the adventurous and romantic Melville, not the Melville who swam and dove in the depths of the soul in books like *Mardi*, *Moby-Dick*, *Pierre*, or *The Confidence Man*.

Melville's publishers always tried to use the popularity of the two early books to sell his later works. Melville did his best to forbid his publishers from using references to *Typee* as a way of selling them because he wanted to distance his earlier volumes from the later books so they could be read on their own merits. Thus, for most of his life he detested and despaired of shedding his publicly imposed alter-ego as "the man who had lived among the cannibals." He wrote on the subject to Hawthorne in [June?] 1851:

> Think of it! To go down in posterity is bad enough, any way; but to go down as a "man who lived among the cannibals"! When I speak of posterity, in reference to myself, I only mean the babies who will probably be born in the moment immediately ensuing upon my giving up the ghost. . . . "Typee" will be given to them, perhaps, with their gingerbread. (*Correspondence*, 193)

A memorandum Melville hastily dictated on 22 May 1860 for his brother Allan about the arrangements for the publication of his book of "Poems" was even more pointed on this matter. Of the twelve concerns mentioned, Number Five read: "For God's sake don't have *By the author of* 'Typee' *'Piddledee'*

etc on the title page."[1] Yet Melville was right; so common was this characterization of his authorship, it is described in his obituary notice published in the New York *Daily Tribune* 29 September 1891. "[Melville] won considerable fame as an author by the publication of a book in 1847 [sic] entitled 'Typee' . . . This was his best work, although he has since written a number of other stories, which were published more for private than public circulation" (Leyda 837). Private circulation of any of his works was the farthest thing from Melville's mind.

Clearly the *Typee* phenomenon explains Barrett Wendell's assessment of Melville's career in his *A Literary History of America* published in 1900. Commenting on why he ignored certain writers such as Caroline Kirkland and Herman Melville, Wendell observes:

> There are certain names which we might have mentioned. . . . Hermann [sic] Melville, with his books about the South Seas, which Robert Louis Stevenson is said to have declared the best ever written, and with his novels of maritime adventure, began a career of literary promise, which never came to fruition. (229)

It is clear that Melville tried to shed the *Typee* image, as well as the artistic constraints that accompanied the travel-adventure narrative genre. Like demolishing an older, existing structure before erecting a new building, Melville labored to create a new space in the public mind

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[1] Duyckinck Family Papers, New York Public Library. Emphasis in original.

for his later and bolder aesthetic experiments like *Mardi* and *Moby-Dick* by leaving *Typee* behind. He had written in his 1850 review "Hawthorne and His Mosses" that "You must have plenty of sea-room to tell the Truth in; especially, when it seems to have an aspect of newness" (246). Publisher and reader expectations formed by *Typee* frustrated Melville because his temperament required that he continually challenge himself as a creative artist.

Melville's desire to develop beyond *Typee* created a tension between himself, his publishers--who wanted to make money from popular books--and his audience that followed Melville throughout his career, as the commentary presented throughout this chapter will demonstrate. Yet, when the issue of Melville and *Typee* are positioned in their proper cultural frame, such tension emerges as the obvious consequence of the situation.

What Melville was trying to escape from in *Typee* was actually inescapable: an embedded cultural preference for history that he had actually exploited in his travel narratives *Typee* and *Omoo*. William Charvat has analyzed the impact of history upon professional authorship.

> History per se (and I include here the allied forms of biography, and of travel, which is a kind of contemporary history) was the first genre to be successfully established on a profitable professional basis. It had tremendous social prestige because it was useful and educational, and because its methods were in accord with the reigning Scottish common-sense philosophy, which celebrated actuality and denigrated possibility. . . . Melville's books were acclaimed and bought

> when they were solidly based on his travels, and abused and neglected when he moved into the world of possibility. (Charvat, *Literary Pub.* 74-75)

Charvat is right about the cultural bias for history, especially in the mid-1840s with the temper of Manifest Destiny defining the role of the United States as the literal fulfillment of history as we described in Chapter One. Scottish common-sense philosophy, which brooked no fantasies, energized the evangelical movement as well. Melville attempted to capture and reflect his own counter-sense of history in *Typee* with his critique of political and religious imperialism. However, with the Revised Edition, John Wiley, George Barrell Cheever and Henry Theodore Cheever formed a type of pre-Orwellian "Ministry of Truth," requiring Melville to conform with their dominant and privileged notion of history, "rewriting" the book to satisfy their own millennial teleology. Nor did it curb Wiley's meddling that he believed such a revision would also increase sales and profits.

However, although John Wiley and the Cheevers changed Melville's book, they did not change his mind. He maintained a stubborn faith in his own observations and strove to assert his independence in the creation of his art, ignoring pressures from the marketplace until driven by economic necessity to compromise. "Dollars damn me," he wrote Hawthorne in 1851,

> and the malicious Devil is forever grinning in upon me, holding the door ajar. My dear Sir, a

> presentiment is on me,--I shall at last be worn out and perish, like an old nutmeg-grater. . . . What I feel most moved to write, that is banned, --it will not pay. Yet, altogether, write the *other* way I cannot. So the product is a final hash, and all my books are botches. (*Correspondence*, 191)

The letter, written as Melville was completing *Moby-Dick*, implies the questions (as framed by Donald Yanella): "How far does one go in responding to the taste of the [mass-market] reading audience . . . without severely or utterly compromising one's integrity and that of his or her writing? . . . Does the author write for himself or for his reader?" (64). To write "the *other* way," for the mass market, is to write in the manner that pays and provides all the comforts that such compensation affords. But Melville resisted such impulses, as his purse allowed him, especially after *Mardi* gave him a glimpse of his real powers. A passage from *Moby-Dick* reflects the same theme of rugged allegiance to artistic integrity if we read the passage as a self-reflexive comment on Melville's art. The passage is from the famous Chapter 23 of *Moby-Dick*, "The Lee Shore."[2] A sailor named Bulkington has immediately returned to sea aboard the *Pequod* after just completing a four-year cruise aboard another vessel, spurning the comforts of port and home. This compulsion to put to sea is first compared with that of a ship that seeks to make its way along the lee

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[2] The "lee shore" lies off a ship's "leeward" or downwind side and constitutes a severe threat in a storm.

shore during a fierce storm, second to the mind of the earnest thinker, and finally to the artist who would insist, against his own commercial self-interest, on writing his or her own way.

> The port would fain give succor; the port is pitiful; in the port is safety, comfort, hearthstone, supper, warm blankets, friends, all that's kind to our mortalities. But in that gale, the port, the land, is that ship's direst jeopardy; she must fly all hospitality; one touch of land, though it but graze the keel, would make her shudder through and through. With all her might she crowds all sail off shore; in so doing fights 'gainst the very winds that fain would blow her homeward; seeks all the lashed sea's landlessness again; for refuge's sake forlornly rushing into peril; her only friend her bitterest foe! Know ye, now, Bulkington? Glimpses do ye seem to see of that mortally intolerable truth; that all deep, earnest thinking is but the intrepid effort of the soul to keep the open independence of her sea; while the wildest winds of heaven and earth conspire to cast her on the treacherous, slavish shore? (106-07)

The port, of course, is financial security, and the "slavish shore" in one sense represents all the forces of cultural conformity that would break an artist's integrity like the timbers of a ship. The wild winds are the exigencies that arise in an author's personal life that drive him toward the haven of port. However, the only way the port can be reached is to negotiate the dangerous passage with the lee shore of conformity, risking integrity and truth. To be safe, one must accept and confront the peril of the open sea.

For Melville independence of mind and art meant seeking the "highest truth" in the landless, "howling infinite" of

the turbulent, epistemological ocean (*Moby-Dick*, 107). It meant denying himself any false sense of well-being from any illusory source like purely commercial fiction. Melville returned to this theme of seeking truth time and time again. For example, he founded his admiration of Shakespeare and Emerson on their being men of deep thought.

> I love all men who *dive*. Any fish can swim near the surface, but it takes a great whale to go down stairs five miles or more; & if he dont [sic] attain the bottom, why, all the lead in Galena can't fashion the plummet that will. I'm not talking of Mr. Emerson now--but of the whole corps of thought-divers, that have been diving & coming up again with blood-shot eyes since the world began." (*Correspondence*, 121)

In large measure he was referring to this concept of diving for truth when he wrote Hawthorne, as we have noted in an earlier chapter, that his twenty-fifth year marked the beginning of his development, his continual unfolding within himself. He had earlier used another metaphor to more graphically describe the same theme of the importance of seeking the truth. In a 5 April 1849 letter to Evert Duyckinck, Melville wrote:

> Would that a man could do something & then say--It is finished.--not [sic] that one thing only, but all others--that he has reached his uttermost, & can never exceed it. But live & push--tho' we put one leg forward ten miles--its no reason the other must lag behind--no, *that* must again distance the other--& so we go till we get the cramp and die. (*Correspondence*, 128)

There is an incessant, obsessive course of development set forth in such an image. Sophia Hawthorne referred to this compulsion in Melville when she wrote her sister in the late

spring of 1851 as *Moby-Dick* was nearing completion. She remarked that Melville opened up his inmost-self to Hawthorne and talked constantly in an attempt to "get at the truth." She also believed, she added, that he was as a "boy in opinion," having no settled conclusions on the matter.[3]

Yet the truth Melville was seeking was no easy matter to settle and conclude. In 1856, Evert Duyckinck described Melville, after an evening of conversation, full of "his sailor metaphysics and jargon of things unknowable" (Branch, "Historical Note" 311). Yet Hawthorne articulated the phenomenon best in a famous journal entry written just after Melville had visited him for three days in Liverpool in November 1856. (Shortly before his departure for Europe the previous month, Melville had completed *The Confidence Man*, the last new prose work published during his lifetime.) Melville and Hawthorne took a walk along the beach, stopping to smoke a cigar in a hollow among the sand hills.

> Melville, as he always does, began to reason of Providence and futurity, and of everything that lies beyond the human ken, and informed me that he had "pretty much made up his mind to be annihilated"; but he still does not seem to rest in that anticipation; and, I think, will never rest until he gets hold of a definite belief. It is strange how he persists--and has persisted ever since I knew him, and probably long before--in wandering to and fro over these deserts, as dismal and monotonous as the sand hills amid which we were sitting. He can neither believe, nor be comfortable in his unbelief; and he is too honest and courageous not to try and do one or the other. (Hawthorne 432-33)

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[3] See Hershel Parker, "Historical Note" to *Moby-Dick*, 616.

In a word Melville was motivated to write books that expounded the "Truth." What was "Truth" for Melville? He provides his own partial definition in an April 1851 letter to Hawthorne.

> By visible truth, we mean the apprehension of the absolute condition of present things as they strike the eye of the man who fears them not, though they do their worst to him,--the man who, like Russia or the British Empire, declares himself a sovereign nature (in himself) amid the powers of heaven, hell, and earth. He may perish; but so long as he exists he insists upon treating with all Powers upon an equal basis. (*Correspondence*, 186)

This definition is consistent with another view Melville expressed on the subject a year earlier in "Hawthorne and His Mosses." Describing Shakespeare, he wrote: "But it is those deep far-away things in him; those occasional flashings-forth of the intuitive Truth in him; those short, quick probings at the very axis of reality;--these are the things that make Shakespeare, Shakespeare" (244). Melville's terms "absolute condition" and "axis of reality" are synonymous and identify the ability to discern and apprehend out of the turmoil of present conditions the fundamental and timeless standing of mankind.

Melville was often forced to change his art to make it saleable or to get his writing into print, and he saw these changes as compromises with Truth. He regretted what he viewed as a lack of integrity in his writing. For example, after the commercial failure of *Mardi* in 1849, Melville needed money desperately. He began the 390-page *Redburn* in

late April or early May of 1849 and finished it ten weeks later. He then immediately started work on the 465-page *White-Jacket* and by mid-September 1849 it too was finished (Thorpe, "Historical Note" 403).[4] Shortly after, he wrote his father-in-law, Lemuel Shaw, that he anticipated no gain to his reputation from either of the two books. "They are two *jobs*, which I have done for money--being forced to it, as other men are forced to sawing wood." He complained that these two books had kept him from creating the kind of books he had wanted to write, "those sort of books which are said to 'fail'" (*Correspondence*, 138-39). The descent from the metaphysical heights scaled in *Mardi* to the coarse, vulgar, material reality of *Redburn* and *White-Jacket* (as he viewed his own work) was a difficult transition for Melville to make.

This tension to make his art aesthetically and philosophically true or commercially viable dogged Melville constantly in one fashion or another until he gave up and took work in the New York Customs House in late 1866. Although Melville had put the authority of sea captains behind him with his youth, he had to contend throughout his adult life and artistic career with the authority of

> publishers, editors, readers, and the family members he had to support by producing salable

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[4] The page totals are those of the printed American first editions.

> fiction.[5] Nowhere did he more dramatically act out his deep inner conflict between complying with and resisting their demands on him than in alternately yielding to and defying the outraged evangelicals and worldly-wise publishers who pressured him into issuing a revised . . . edition of *Typee* in 1846. (Karcher 7)

John Wiley, George Barrell Cheever and Henry Theodore Cheever's manipulations with the *Typee* text had marked Melville permanently.

Melville *knew* he had told the truth in *Typee* about the missionaries and their activities. Catherine Melville Hoadley's daughter, Charlotte (1859-1946), remembered hearing her mother and her aunts often speak about her uncle Herman being "very cut up that in all later editions [of *Typee*]--all mention of the Missionary's [sic] was omitted. He saw how much evil they were doing and thought it should be known" (Parker 440).

Truth, then, for Melville was the great casualty of the Revised Edition of *Typee*. Also lost was the belief Melville must have held that he could influence and shape public opinion in a straightforward manner on the sole basis of his eyewitness testimony. Frustrated by the repeated challenges to his veracity, and requests for proof of his adventures, when Toby came forward, he felt the immense relief of vindication. In a letter to Duyckinck his exuberance over

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[6] The number of members from his family depending upon him for their livelihood was significant. Following Herman Melville's marriage in 1847, his household consisted of his wife, his mother, and his three sisters, as well as his married brother Allan and his wife who also lived under Herman's roof.

this vindication erupts: "Give ear then, oh ye of little faith--especially thou man of the *Evangelist*--and hear what Toby has to say for himself" (*Correspondence*, 50, emphasis added). Writing Duyckinck that Toby's added testimony settled all questions regarding *Typee's* genuineness, he felt his sense of himself as a credible author, a truth-teller, restored. This perception of a re-forged, credible link to his audience shaped the fashion of his next novel, *Omoo*.

Typee and *Omoo* were viewed as "the Siamese twins of the literary world" for most of the nineteenth century (Roper 319). Melville described *Omoo* as a work independent of *Typee*, forming a loose sequel only in the sense that it took up where *Typee* left off, but otherwise having no further connection to the previous work. *Omoo* did have one link to *Typee* that Melville intentionally avoided mentioning in the second book; in it he renewed his attack on the missionaries.

Melville's desire to make the truth known motivated the exposé of the missionaries in *Typee* in the first place. There was an implicit activism in his writing--he wanted people to perceive the truth and change, but, of course, as *Typee* taught him, a problem remains: how can they know they have been told the truth? Melville focused on solving this problem in *Omoo*. What is interesting to observe in *Omoo* and compare in *Typee* is the construction of narrative authority. *Omoo* incorporates and develops a different strategy that is

a direct result of the problems created by Melville's gainsayers in *Typee*.

In *Typee* and *Omoo*, Melville is writing in a genre, the travel narrative, which privileges its first person, eyewitness narrators. The accepted convention of the genre is the traveller-author's candid report on matters and conditions from whatever places visited. Melville, for all practical appearances, followed this narrative pattern in *Typee*. He carefully fashioned himself before his reader as the authority on all the matters he described. This is especially evident in the seamless and invisible use of the outside sources he consulted to augment his knowledge. In *Omoo*, however, Melville employed a different strategy (fully discussed below) in consciously citing external authorities to support his opinion. With *Typee*, he was no doubt overconfident that he would be taken at his word. Had it not been for the "political" ramifications of the content of *Typee* for the evangelicals, he most likely would have been believed.

Melville was also probably either naive or cocky about the disputable character of his interpretation of events.[6]

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[6] The Preface to *Typee* indicates as much. After acknowledging that several passages of the book "may be thought to bear rather hard upon a reverend order of men," he adds:

> Such passages will be found, however, to be based upon facts admitting of no contradiction, and which have come immediately under the writer's cognizance. The conclusions deduced from these facts are unavoidable, and in stating them the author has been influenced by no feeling of animosity. . . . (xiv)

Melville's Brutus was one of the inner circle. Almost certainly he did not know of Wiley's evangelical sympathies or his religious activities. Remember, Gansevoort had dealt with the more liberal Putnam in London in arranging the American publication of *Typee*. Consequently, with his publisher forming part of the opposition against him, Melville never had a chance to receive a prolonged hearing by the public on his evidence against the missionaries. Melville was helpless to counter the control exercised by John Wiley, fighting as he was for a literary career and needing money immediately.

The Appendix of the British and first American editions provides evidence that Melville at least initially held a naive belief that he could influence public opinion on the basis of his personal testimony. He thought the reason Americans believed Paulet a villain was because they had not received any reports from other than missionary sources, and he believed those reports were unreliable. His personal observations candidly expressed in the pages of *Typee* provided that perspective, and he expected to be received by the public as a reliable correspondent. Melville hardened after being disabused of the notion of *de facto* reliability as a travel narrator by the controversial reception and subsequent compulsive expurgation of *Typee*. He retained a stubborn and implicit faith in his own experience and a firm resolve regarding his opinions about what that experience

meant. He may have felt like Galileo when, after being forced by the Pope to recant publically his model of the solar system which, contrary to church doctrine, held that the earth revolved around the sun, with his next breath uttered quietly, "Still it moves." The expurgation of *Typee* was a forced public recantation in print of Melville's critique of the missionaries. Yet, for Melville, intellectual integrity meant everything; in his mind at least he would flee the "lee shore" of capitulation and resignation. *Omoo* would be his next "artistic breath" where he would say of the missionaries, "Still they do harm."

Nothing that John Wiley or the offended evangelicals did to Melville's novel changed what he believed were the facts, as he stated in *Typee* itself: "those things which I have stated as facts will remain facts, in spite of whatever the bigoted or incredulous may say or write against them" (199). Of course, the defense of a claim is superfluous when the claim itself is disposed of, and the passage was indeed one that was expurgated. But if Melville lost the battle with John Wiley about what *Typee* could say, in some measure he won, with Toby's help, the battle for the public mind about the authenticity of his narrative and his reliability as a correspondent.

Melville's perception of the restoration of his credibility and authorial identity in the public mind set the course for a continued critique in *Omoo*. However, his

previous experience with *Typee's* publisher and a hostile, influential audience affected how he went about it--how he established his narrative authority in *Omoo*.

On 8 December 1846, four months after the publication of the Revised Edition of *Typee*, Melville wrote Evert Duyckinck about his second novel based upon his adventures in Tahiti.

> As I hinted to you some time ago I have a new book in M.S.--Relying much upon your literary judgment I am very desirous of getting your opinion of it & . . . to receive your hints.--I address you now not as being in any way connected with Mess[.] W[iley] & P[utnam] but presume to do so confidentially & as a friend. (*Correspondence*, 68)

Plainly, Melville was careful not to commit or even suggest he was offering his manuscript to Wiley & Putnam in exchange for Duyckinck's help. Two days later, on 10 December, Melville again wrote Duyckinck, forwarding additional manuscript pages and including reading instructions, seeking his advice and "particular attention" on eight chapters, "all refer[ring] more or less to the missions & the condition of the natives" (*Correspondence*, 69).

With *Typee's* Revised Edition sequel "The Story of Toby" providing a cocoon of artistic security, Melville renewed his cultural critique, salvaging the truth-telling agenda that had been lost in *Typee*. As Duyckinck put it in a 15 December 1846 letter to his brother George: "[Melville] owes a sailor's grudge to the Missionaries & pays it off at Tahiti" (Roper 328-29). The "Preface" of the novel clearly

signals Melville's intention to revisit these "old" matters.

Melville's "Preface" sets out his intention to convey some sense of the frequent novelties that occur in the environs of the whale-fishery by sharing the history of his own adventures. He then mentions a second purpose:

> Another object proposed, is to give a *familiar* account of the present condition of the converted Polynesians, as affected by their promiscuous intercourse with foreigners, and the teachings of the missionaries, combined.
>
> As a roving sailor, the author spent about three months in various parts of the islands of Tahiti and Imeeo, and under circumstances most favorable for correct observations on the social condition of the natives.
>
> In every statement connected with missionary operations, a strict adherence to fact has, of course, been scrupulously observed; and in some instances, it has even been deemed advisable to quote previous voyagers, in corroboration of what is offered as the fruit of the author's own observations. Nothing but an earnest desire for truth and good has led him to touch upon the subject at all. (xiii-xiv)

After mentioning several other items,[7] Melville closes the "Preface" by adopting an "everyman" pose: "In a familiar way, [the author] has merely described what he has seen; and if reflections are occasionally indulged in, they are spontaneous, and such as would, very probably, suggest themselves to the most casual observer" (xv). In other

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[7] Melville devotes a short paragraph each to the following topics. He comments that his humor implies no disrespect to the natives; that *Omoo* is not a sequel but independent of *Typee*; and, that he kept no journal and therefore can offer no dates (addressing his anxiety with *Typee* over the potential challenge to the liberties he took with the expanded time of the novel). He explains that he uses the phonetic spelling of native terms; he mentions his use of outside sources to document the history and ancient customs of Tahiti; and, he defines the word "Omoo" as "a rover."

words, if anyone else had been there, they would have seen the same things and come to the same conclusions. Melville also took other precautions in *Omoo*.

Melville was careful about how he wrote his critiques into his second novel, too. In *Typee*, Melville had naively relied upon his own testimony as an eyewitness of the events he recounted and the critiques he levelled at the missionaries and quickly found himself in trouble. Toby's fortunate reappearance taught him the importance of the principle of verification, a second witness who could give testimony and corroborate the truth. So, Melville appealed to witnesses who were already on record with published accounts about the islands. One of the big differences a reader encounters between *Typee* and *Omoo* is the way outside sources are cited with documentary footnotes.

Seven footnotes are scattered throughout the text of *Typee*, most dealing with the interpretation of native terms Melville used and ethnographic facts about the islands. One footnote is itself an attack based on Melville's observations of the kinds of changes the missionaries' influence had wrought among the natives (*Typee* 188-89).[8]

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[8] In the body of the chapter, Melville explains the missionaries' use of the Honolulu paper to report even the most trivial activities of the king and other royalty of the Sandwich Islands. The footnote states that these accounts are occasionally copied into other British and American papers, "lead[ing] the reader to infer that the arts and customs of civilized life are rapidly refining the natives of the Sandwich Islands. But let no one be deceived by these accounts," Melville reports. The lace and broadcloth the chiefs wear is purchased with the labor and sufferings of the poor and reveals a stark contrast to the deficiencies of the common islanders for the "necessaries and

Although, as noted in a previous chapter, Melville used outside sources extensively in the composition of *Typee*, he did not document them, but usually rather blended them into his narrative as his own observations, a practice fairly typical of the time.[9] In only one note does Melville quote an objective authority in *Typee*.[10] The other six footnotes are simply explanations or clarifications citing Melville's personal experiences and observations.

In respect to documentation, *Omoo* reveals a marked departure from Melville's composition practices in *Typee* and other works regarding his outside sources. Although *Omoo* continues Melville's practice of borrowing from outside sources and blending them invisibly into his narrative, *Omoo* also contains thirty-five footnotes, scattered, for the most part, throughout the novel. In twenty-two of the notes

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decencies of life." Both classes are being destroyed; the former with "sensual indulgences," and the latter by disease and hunger. "[T]he measure of gew-gaw refinement attained by the chiefs is only an index to the actual state of degradation in which the greater portion of the population lie grovelling" (*Typee*, 188-89).

[9] Charles R. Anderson was the first to document this practice throughout Melville's writing in his book *Melville in the South Seas*. 1939. Rpt. New York: Dover, 1966. Harrison Hayford provides a succinct summary of Anderson's findings in his Introduction to the Hendricks House edition of *Omoo*.

> Anderson revealed that Melville had compounded autobiography with fictional techniques. He had altered facts and dates, elaborated events, assimilated foreign materials, invented episodes, and dramatized the printed experiences of others as his own. He had not plagiarized, merely, for he had always rewritten and nearly always improved the passages he appropriated. Yet he had composed his books in a way he had not really acknowledged, and in a way that even his most suspicious contemporary critics had never dreamed. (xx-xxi)

[10] In Chapter 25, Melville quotes a book entitled "Circumnavigation of the Globe" on the natural beauty of the Marquesan islanders (183).

Melville again refers to his own firsthand knowledge to clarify simple matters such as native vocabulary or maritime history. However, in *Omoo*, a large number of the notes are dedicated to documenting outside sources cited in the main body of the novel. This technique invests *Omoo's* criticisms with a more objective tone and the appearance of greater historical authenticity, and, consequently, results, as Melville intended, in more narrative authority for himself as the writer.

The deliberate nature of this decision and its relationship to *Typee* is evident in the organization of the novel. The greatest use of *cited* outside sources and the highest concentration of footnotes, twelve, appear in the chapters that contain the polemic on the missionary-native relationship and its effects and implications for native culture. In these passages in *Omoo*, Melville criticizes the missionaries by using other traveler's observations as either primary testimony or as corroboration of his own perspective. Either way, while on this narrative ground, he almost always provides an external source to support his conclusions.

Melville begins with the issue of hypocrisy and lack of sincere conversion among the natives as illustrated by anecdotal evidence. He reports his conversation with three native girls who confess to being Christians with their words while admitting the rest of their bodies are far less

evangelised. Melville's treatment of their duplicity is reinforced by quoting and documenting Pope's "Epistle to a Lady": "A sad good Christian at the heart-- / A very heathen in the carnal part" (*Omoo*, 178).

Melville blames missionary practices for this native hypocrisy. He describes how the lower-class natives, when not voluntarily appearing for church, are whipped and driven to worship. More importantly, in terms of the narrative authority Melville establishes with his audience, he corroborates the whipping of the natives with the writings of a minister. Melville cites the *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labors of the Late Daniel Wheeler*. Wheeler was a Quaker who had himself observed the same scene in Tahiti when he visited the missionary settlements throughout the islands several years before Melville's visit. Melville implies that there is little opportunity for native agency to exist. However, the aggressive and overt aspect of Melville's strategy with the missionaries unquestionably unfolds when we realize that he quotes Wheeler out of context and deliberately reinterprets the Quaker's remarks to conform with his own views of the situation and to persuade his audience of the veracity of his perspective. The flagrant nature of this narrative manipulation on Melville's part emerges most clearly in a later passage when he actually quotes Wheeler in the text of *Omoo*.

In Chapters 48 and 49, respectively titled "Tahiti as It Is," and "Same Subject Continued," Melville levels his most serious charges against the missionaries. He characterizes Wheeler as "an honest-hearted Quaker, prompted only by motives of purest philanthropy," who knew the missionaries and had preached to the natives while visiting the islands (*Omoo*, 187). Melville then frames Wheeler's remarks and recontextualizes them with comments of his own.

> After bewailing [the Tahitian's] social condition, [Wheeler] frankly says of their religious state, "Certainly, appearances are unpromising; and however unwilling to adopt such a conclusion, there is reason to apprehend, that Christian principle is a great rarity."
>
> Such, then, is the testimony of good and unbiased men, who have been upon the spot; but how comes it to differ so widely from impressions of others at home? (*Omoo*, 187)[11]

What happens to that testimony "of good and unbiased men" when it comes from the pen of a biased author will be examined in a moment.

Another indictment of the evangelical corps of the South Seas that Melville invoked Wheeler to corroborate concerned the idleness of the natives. Melville no doubt relished idleness as a theme because of its direct contradiction to the purpose of the missions, especially given the Protestant abhorrence of idleness. If the

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[11] Melville answers his own question by suggesting that missionary effectiveness has been exaggerated to the public by counting the largest mass of natives who have in *any* measure, however temporary, been "induced to abandon idolatry and conform to certain outward practices," rather than more justly measuring their progress by numbering those "heathens who have been actually made to understand and practice . . . the precepts of Christianity" (*Omoo*, 187).

missionaries were truly effective, Melville argued, then this vice should have been at least partially remedied. Instead, the missionaries have exacerbated the problem. Melville sums up, embedding an echo of the Protestant catechism in his remarks, by writing: "In Tahiti, the people have nothing to do; and idleness, everywhere, is the parent of vice." He then invokes Wheeler as his second witness. "'There is scarcely any thing,' says the good old Quaker Wheeler, 'so striking, or pitiable as [the Tahitians] aimless, nerveless mode of spending life'" (*Omoo*, 190).

To compare Wheeler in the original context as opposed to Melville's context clearly reveals to what lengths Melville was willing to go to justify in his audiences' mind his personal view of the missionary endeavor and present his views in documentary rather than purely polemical fashion, as he had done in *Typee*. Daniel Wheeler's son, Charles, writing in his father's *Memoir*, is the actual writer of the passages in question. Melville grossly misrepresents Wheeler's general meaning by omitting the context of his remarks, for in the passage under scrutiny, Charles Wheeler bewailed the social condition of the natives, not generally as Melville described, but specifically in respect to their greed, their desire for "getting gain." Wheeler blamed this native preoccupation with greed on "unprincipled foreigners" and *not* the missionaries. Here is Wheeler's passage with the portion Melville used in italics.

> It is nearly impossible for a visitor, who cannot even speak the language to pronounce with much certainty on a subject of such moment, as the religious state of the community. *Certainly appearances are unpromising; and however unwilling to adopt such a conclusion, there is reason to apprehend that Christian principle is a great rarity.* Far, however, be it from me to depreciate the labours of those who have been instruments of the change produced in this island. So far from considering the beneficent results of their efforts as unimportant and insignificant, I regard them as of the highest moment, and as fully equal to what could in reason have been anticipated.[12]

Melville's use of the other citation from Wheeler on idleness is just as flagrant in violating that author's intent. Again the Melville portion is emphasized. "*There is scarcely any thing so striking, or pitiable, as their aimless, nerveless mode of spending life.* Their outward circumstances, there can be no doubt, have derived material benefit from the introduction of Christianity" (Hayford and Blair 395-96).[13] Anderson argues that Wheeler was Melville's strongest witness, and that he judiciously used him last. He also believed that Melville was justified in quoting Wheeler the way he did because Wheeler's impressions overall on the state of matters at Tahiti was negative

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[12] [Wheeler, Daniel]. *Memoirs of the Life and Gospel Labors of the Late Daniel Wheeler.* Philadelphia: [1842]. Also see Anderson, 268-69. Hayford and Blair point out that Wheeler went on to include a list of the positive benefits the missionaries had provided the islanders, which, of course, Melville chose to ignore (394).

[13] Melville took some liberty in his transcription of Wheeler. For accurate comparison to the text of *Omoo*, I have quoted it here as Melville altered it. What Wheeler actually wrote was: "There is nothing, perhaps, in the Tahitian habits more striking or pitiable than their aimless, nerveless mode of spending life" (Hayford and Blair 395-96.)

(268). However, Melville knew there would be readers in his contemporary audience who would have protested his liberties with his sources, which suggests Melville felt reasonably secure that his footnotes would allay controversy rather than create it. Indeed, only one critic caught him at his "shenanigans," but he only referred to Melville's general tendency to misquote without actually exposing the misrepresentations.[14]

Harrison Hayford, from a study of the composition and context of these chapters, has shown that many of these footnotes were added to the text quite late.

> [P]robably in a last-minute nervous ballasting of the whole group of [anti-missionary] chapters, just before he showed the manuscript to . . . Evert Duyckinck in December 1846, he "deemed it advisable to quote previous voyages in corroboration of what is offered as the fruit of the author's own observations." These were the volumes of Kotzebue and Beechey to which Russell's footnotes and quotations had directed his attention; those of Daniel Wheeler and W. S.

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[14] William O. Bourne in his review of 2 October 1847, published in the New York *Tribune*, says: "Mr. Melville is inexcusably regardless of the first duty of a historian--correctness. He does very well as a romancer, but commits a sad mistake when he apes the historian." He demonstrates Melville's carelessness by showing how he has misquoted the language, then adds: "As Mr. Melville seems to be acquainted with Ellis's Researches, Beechy, Wheeler, Kotzebue and Russell, why not pay some attention to authorities and facts?" Bourne then accuses Melville, accurately, of using Russell's book

> for a *hand-book*, from which he has picked out just those passages which have suited his prejudices or his hostility. . . . From a consideration of the whole subject, I pronounce Mr. Melville's book, so far as its pretended facts are concerned, a tissue of uninformed misrepresentations, of prejudiced ignorance, and of hostility characteristic of one who loves South Sea adventure for South Sea abandonment and "independence." (Higgins 156-57)

Mr. Bourne's criticism came too late to help the evangelical cause much. By the time his review was published, *Omoo* was widely successful and already in a fourth printing.

> Ruschenberger (or a source quoting his book); and probably those of "the oldest voyagers," Captains Cook and Vancouver, and the *Duff* missionaries. From each of these voyagers Melville quoted in a way that can only be described as unscrupulous. (Hayford and Blair xxviii)

Melville's sophistry is clear, but so is his rhetorical purpose: to call into question the presumption of "holiness" automatically associated with evangelical endeavors. By using these external sources, Melville sharpened his critique and wrote into the book its own (apparent) internal system of verification, using the writings of clergymen and explorers to obviate the kind of criticism *Typee* received. Overall, the documentation scheme worked quite well. It reduced criticisms from the reading audience and minimized potential problems for his publishers as well.[15]

According to tradition and sketchy evidence, Melville offered the *Omoo* manuscript to both John Wiley and Harper Brothers. Harper Brothers snatched it up immediately. This tradition is based on a letter from Evert A. Duyckinck and a reminiscent account by a Harper Brothers' reader-editor named Frederick Saunders. A letter from Evert Duyckinck written 15 December 1846 to his brother George says: "Melville is in town with new MSS agitating the conscience of John Wiley and tempting the pockets at Harpers" (Roper 328). What does Duyckinck mean about "agitating the

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[15] The four Harper brothers were all devout Methodists, a denomination that was also heavily committed to missionary work, but no expurgations or changes were ever made to the novel.

conscience of John Wiley?" The letter has been typically interpreted to suggest that John Wiley was agonizing about whether or not to publish *Omoo*. Yet, if Saunders is right, Wiley did not have to agonize long. Years later, Saunders recorded that Melville brought the manuscript in to him to see if the firm would want it. Saunders immediately rushed out into the street to catch Fletcher Harper just as he was on his way to the docks to embark on a European tour. Saunders told Fletcher Harper that Melville was offering the firm his next manuscript. Harper told Saunders to purchase the manuscript immediately (Roper 329). As Roper points out, Saunders' story hardly tallies with Duyckinck's account (329), unless Melville had some other reason for showing the manuscript to John Wiley, and John Wiley's agitation was a symptom of some other cause.

How seriously Melville considered John Wiley as a viable publisher of his second book is difficult to determine from currently available documents. It seems likely from the evidence presented earlier in this study that Melville would have considered Wiley a "publisher of last resort," based on what he had done in requiring the expurgations and Revised Edition of *Typee*, and given Melville's similar theme in *Omoo*.[16] However, it may be

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[16] It is possible that, in offering the *Omoo* manuscript to Wiley & Putnam, Melville was honoring some previous understanding between himself and John Wiley and/or George Putnam for first rights of refusal on works following *Typee*. Of course, Wiley would have carefully read *Omoo* and likely would have accepted it for publication only on the

well that Melville took the manuscript of *Omoo* to John Wiley less to seek him as a publisher than to inform Wiley that Herman Melville was going to "have his say," and the truth about the missionaries would be told after all. Melville very well may have been taunting John Wiley with *Omoo*, and, through him, the Cheevers. John Wiley's "agitated conscience" may have had less to do with deciding whether or not to publish *Omoo* than with dreading a reopening of the controversy *Typee* had initially sparked; a controversy that he believed had been disposed of with the Revised Edition of *Typee*, and that was on its way to being forgotten. *Omoo* kept it alive.

Omoo was an extremely popular book, undergoing five printings by the end of its inaugural year, 1847, and it was the most widely reviewed book Melville ever wrote (Roper 334). Notwithstanding, it appears unlikely that either of the Cheevers reviewed it.[17] George B. Cheever had left the *Evangelist* in late October 1846 to devote his whole effort to the Church of the Puritans.[18] Henry T. Cheever, ordained a Congregational minister 4 June 1847, was beginning his career in the pulpit of his own congregation

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condition he could have expurgated it like *Typee*. With the Harpers' offer in his pocket to publish *Omoo* "as is," Melville could have legitimately refused Wiley. Such an arrangement would have provided Melville the perfect opportunity to trouble Wiley, as described below.

[17] It is hard to know if either Cheever bothered to review it for another periodical or paper since many of the reviews are unsigned and uninitialed.

[18] See the New York *Evangelist*, 29 October 1846, p. 174.

outside of New York and, undoubtedly, would have been extremely preoccupied (Johnson 50). Moreover, because the novel was published by Harper Brothers in the spring of 1847, and not by John Wiley, there was no personal exposure for John Wiley or George B. Cheever as there had been with *Typee*. Finally, it should be observed that the Cheever brothers probably felt that they had already "harpooned" Herman Melville and his books the first time around with their review of *Typee* in the *Evangelist*, and they may have felt that any more time and effort spent on refuting *Omoo* would have been wasted.

Omoo's success made Harper Brothers eager to publish Melville's third novel, *Mardi*. John Murray declined the British rights to the novel after reviewing it because of its clearly romantic content and longer format.[19] It was published in London by Richard Bentley, who had earlier solicited Melville's work out of his admiration for it.

Mardi marked a departure for Melville. He wrote Murray in March 1848, before the publisher had seen the manuscript,

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[19] Although Murray had received objections from his readers about having published *Typee* and *Omoo* which may have influenced his decision. Sir Walter Farquhar had written one Lord Ashley asking him to speak to Murray about *Typee* and *Omoo*. He cites Murray's Prospectus for the Home and Colonial Library where Murray had pledged that the books would be "useful and entertaining" and that great care would be exercised in their selection, *"so that they shall contain nothing offensive to morals or good taste."* Stating his belief that overall Murray had redeemed his pledge, *Typee* and *Omoo* were noteworthy exceptions. More "editorial pruning" might have made them less objectionable, but "under any circumstances their tone is, I think, reprehensible throughout." Without assurance from Murray that no such further volumes would appear in the series, Farquhar said he would "be reluctantly compelled to cease subscribing to the series" (Paston 54, emphasis in original).

trying to explain himself: "The truth is, Sir, that the reiterated imputation of being a romancer in disguise has at last pricked me into a resolution to show those who may take any interest in the matter, that a *real* romance of mine is no Typee or Omoo, & is made of different stuff altogether" (*Correspondence*, 106). Melville had lost patience with the constraint placed upon him of having to integrate facts into his storytelling to meet his publishers' or his audience's expectations. He told Murray, "As for the policy of putting forth an acknowledged *romance* upon the heel of two books of travel which in some quarters have been received with no small incredulity--that, Sir, is a question for which I care little, really" (*Correspondence*, 106). Yet the issue of truth was still a large part of Melville's impetus in *Mardi*. He was seeking the freedom to explore the truth by other means, to, as Elizabeth Foster puts it, "hobnob with the great writers and thinkers of the ages, to match wits with them and learn to speak their language" (657).[20] He further justified to John Murray his romantic project in *Mardi* by expressing the firm belief that "to write such a romance . . . shall afford the strongest presumptive evidence of the truth of Typee & Omoo by the sheer force of contrast" (*Correspondence*, 106-07). Indeed, the contrast

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[20] Most critics have read *Mardi* as a quest for truth. See Foster 677-79.

was so great that *Mardi* was a commercial failure on both continents.

The failure of *Mardi* was, as mentioned previously, the impetus for *Redburn* and *White-Jacket*. But even here, allegedly writing books just for money, Melville still looked at the "absolute condition of present things" as they struck his eye. In *Redburn* there is his portrayal of the Old Church in Liverpool with its run-down cemetery and Dead House--a morgue for the drowned--in the basement, with old hags getting gain by searching about the docks for drowned bodies and claiming rewards for their discovery (177-79). Another chapter contains the gritty scene of the starving mother and children in the cellar of Launcelott's-Hey and the portrait of callous humanity surrounding them. In spite of Redburn's appeals for help, no one, including the police, lifts a hand to help them, and they die. Complete denial and apathy reign until their corpses have begun to smell and the bodies are removed. Melville's protagonist editorializes:

> Ah! what are our creeds, and how do we hope to be saved? Tell me, oh Bible, that story of Lazarus again, that I may find comfort in my heart for the poor and forlorn. Surrounded as we are by the wants and woes of our fellow-men, and yet given to follow our own pleasures, regardless of their pains, are we not like people sitting up with a corpse, and making merry in the house of the dead? (*Redburn*, 184)

As a sometime harbinger of future realistic writers, Melville fearlessly portrays the grinding poverty and misery in the back streets of Liverpool.

Melville also takes up the cause of emigrants who are crowded onto the ships and starved and ravaged by disease because of their close quarters. Following a plea for the emigrants to be treated as human beings, Melville adds an admonition that might well have inspired Flannery O'Connor's story "Revelation":

> We talk of the Turks, and abhor the cannibals; but may not some of *them*, go to heaven, before some of *us?* We may have civilized bodies and yet barbarous souls. We are blind to the real sights of this world; deaf to its voice; and dead to its death. And not till we know, that one grief outweighs ten thousand joys, will we become what Christianity is striving to make us. (*Redburn*, 293)

As Hershel Parker notes, Melville had written a far better book than he knew (*Redburn*, "Historical Note" 315).

Melville continued his confrontation with the truth of present things in *White-Jacket*, exposing the evils of flogging and actually spurring reforms in naval discipline because of his graphic depictions of the brutality of the practice. Both books, *Redburn* and *White-Jacket*, received high acclaim on both sides of the Atlantic, but *Redburn* did not sell well in England because Bentley issued it in an expensive edition of 750 copies, selling only 335 copies in over two years. Harpers issued the book at a more economical price and sold 3,314 copies. The book would have

done better, but within a short time it had to compete with *White-Jacket*, also popular in both the United States and England, "a book in tune with the times" (Thorp 435), which means Melville had again tapped the sentiments and tastes of his readership.

Yet much of Melville's dislike for the autobiographical *Redburn* and *White-Jacket* must have stemmed from his anticipation (later proven correct) that his audience and publishers would see them as a return to the "stuff" of *Typee* and *Omoo* when he clearly had other things in mind. He wrote Duyckinck from London after completing *Redburn* and *White-Jacket*,

> I hope I shall never write such a book [as *Redburn*] again--Tho' when a poor devel [sic] writes with duns all round him . . . what can you expect of that poor devel?--What but a beggarly "Redburn!" And when he attempts anything higher--God help him & save him! for it is not with a hollow purse as with a hollow balloon--for a hollow purse makes the poet *sink*--witness "Mardi[.]" But we that write & print have all our books predestinated--& for me, I shall write such things as the Great Publisher of Mankind ordained ages before he published "The World"--this planet. . . . What a madness and anguish it is, that an author can never--under no conceivable circumstances--be at all frank with his readers. (*Correspondence*, 149)

We can only imagine the frustration, "the madness and anguish," it caused Melville to be driven by a compelling, earnest desire to tell the truth in his writing and yet to recognize at the same time the great resistance to truth and frankness that existed in the reading public's mind. *Mardi* had awakened powerful desires and forces in Melville, and

his reconceptualization of himself as an artist created the resentment he felt about writing the pedestrian (as he saw them) *Redburn* and *White-Jacket*. However, all three books made necessary contributions to the work that would become his magnum opus. The artistic expansion of *Mardi* coupled with the income from *Redburn* and *White-Jacket* together made *Moby-Dick* possible. With some money in his pocket from the two novels he had written for money, Melville did what he told Hawthorne he wanted to do--write what he felt "most moved to write," to tell the truth his way (*Correspondence*, 191).

In his 1850 review "Hawthorne and His Mosses," Melville discussed how as a writer one had to go about the business of truth-telling:

> For in this world of lies, Truth is forced to fly like a scared white doe in the woodlands; and only by cunning glimpses will she reveal herself, as in Shakespeare and other masters of the great Art of Telling the Truth,--even though it be covertly and by snatches. (244)

Wai-chee Dimock has pointed out that "Truth here assumes its characteristic Melvillean pose as the persecuted object" (7). How does one exhibit the truth "covertly" and "by snatches?" Melville described the formula in a letter to Richard Henry Dana, Jr., written while composing *Moby-Dick*:

> It will be a strange sort of book . . . I fear; blubber is blubber you know; tho' you may get oil out of it, the poetry runs as hard as sap from a frozen maple tree;--& to cook the thing up, one must needs throw in a little fancy. . . . Yet I mean to give the truth of the thing, spite of this. (*Correspondence*, 162)

Tossed and seasoned with fiction, the truth is theoretically rendered palatable for an audience.

In *Moby-Dick*, Melville continued to grapple with and present the truth of some large and difficult issues that had both personal and national implications and that, in some cases, had emerged before in his fiction. It is sufficient for our purposes to mention only a few themes as examples: the virtue of non-white, non-Christian races as particularly demonstrated through Quequeeg and the multi-racial crew of the *Pequod*; the religious hypocrisy of the pious Bildad; the technical and oft-time mean-spiritedness of the law as articulated in his discourse on Fast-Fish and Loose-Fish; the national obsession with conquest as portrayed in Ahab; and the lack of will to confront ambition gone mad and the forebodings of doom, represented by Starbuck and other members of the crew. His inclusion of factual data like the "Cetology" chapter, and the detailed, authentic explication of a whaleman's life and work in the sperm whale fishery show how he was using factual truths to buoy up the metaphysical truths he was incorporatiing into the novel. Melville was engaging his culture both in his themes and his literary strategies, as David S. Reynolds has conclusively shown.[21]

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[21] Reynolds observes that Melville chose to incorporate elements from the fiction of popular culture such as Romantic Adventure fiction, subversive humor, dark reform literature and radical-democrat fiction. Such a mixture was an earnest engagement with the culture of his time. For Reynolds, although the "truth" of the book

As important as *Moby-Dick* is to an understanding of Melville's artistic achievement, and in spite of the preeminent position the novel holds in Melville's *ouerve*, in the context of Melville's relationship with his publishers *Moby-Dick* is less important than *Pierre*. After the success of *Redburn* and *White-Jacket*, Harper Brothers and Richard Bentley were both eager to publish *Moby-Dick*. Suffice it to say that *Moby-Dick* was another commercial failure for Melville. Strong cultural forces were again at work, reining in Herman Melville.[22] However, what happened with *Moby-Dick* was nothing compared to the disaster created by his publishers with his next novel, *Pierre*.

With the commercial prospects of *Moby-Dick* dashed, Melville again needed to write a book that would make money. As Leon Howard and Hershel Parker observed in the "Historical Note" of *Pierre*,

> it was written under pressure by a man who had just invested an entire year in raising *Moby-Dick* from the level of a whaling narrative to that of an intensely dramatic and philosophical book, who had come to doubt his wisdom in doing so, and who knew that he had overdrawn his account with his publishers and needed a new book that would sell well enough to carry him over the next winter.

> remains tantalizingly elusive[,] . . . [w]hat distinguishes this novel from its many popular prototypes is that it absorbs numerous American images and treats them not frivolously or haphazardly . . . but instead takes them seriously, salvages them from the anarchically directionless and gives them new intensity and mythic reference. ("Its wood" 524, 543)

[22] See Parker's "Historical Note" to *Moby-Dick*, 691-92, and Post-Lauria's *Correspondent Colorings*, Chapters Five and Six.

> Melville's circumstances were similar to those which followed the completion of *Mardi* and impelled him to write *Redburn* and *White-Jacket* as commercial jobs that would compensate him for a year's indulgence in writing the sort of book he wanted to write. (365)

The affluent, cultivated reader who formed Melville's typical audience had rejected *Moby-Dick*, so he consciously envisioned a different audience and wrote in a different genre. The largest reading audience of his time was the feminine audience, and Melville consciously began *Pierre* as a romance. As Howard and Parker mention, the intent of the novel as a romance with an appeal to a feminine audience is borne out in the first eight Books of the published novel ("Historical Note" 368).[23] Melville also attempted to exploit a popular genre. In *Pierre*, Melville adopted a highly controversial and very popular genre among many readers of mid-nineteenth century fiction: French sensational fiction. The form was antithetical to the literary forms and tastes of "cultivated" readers; "forms which validated rather than directly challenged, hegemonic perspectives" (Post-Lauria 128). Sensational fiction was popular among working-class and middle-class readers. This is hardly surprising, since sensational fiction depicted the social elite in "less exalted" fashion than their typical

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[23] Parker believes that Melville seriously altered the course and purpose of the novel after he had it largely written, inserting the "Pierre as author" sections of the novel out of his anger for the way the critics, many of them his friends, had responded and doomed the commercial prospects of *Moby-Dick*. See Parker's rationale in his Editorial Introduction to the Kraken Edition of *Pierre*, New York: Harper Collins, 1995. xi-xlvi.

cultural preferments dictated in life and in non-subversive fiction. The sensational genre also built up the essential humanity of the lower social orders (Post-Luria 128).[24]

Melville initially crafted *Pierre* with this other audience in mind. He believed he could reach a broader audience and write about issues that were "truthful" and important to him, and create a novel that would sell well. The novel also provided something of the artistic challenge Melville sought: the experiment of writing in a new genre. His letter to his London publisher, Richard Bentley, rejecting the publisher's terms of half-profits with no advance on *Pierre* confirms Melville's intentions:

> I [am] impelled to decline . . . upon the ground that my new book possessing unquestionable novelty, as regards my former ones,--treating of utterly new scenes & characters;--and, as I believe [sic], very much more calculated for popularity than anything you have yet published of mine--being a regular romance, with a mysterious plot to it, & stirring passions at work, and withall, representing a new & elevated aspect of American life--all these considerations warrant me strongly in not closing with terms greatly inferior to those upon which our previous negotiations have proceeded. (*Correspondence*, 226)

Melville's emphasis on the "calculated popularity" of his new romance shows that at least since *Mardi*, the first novel published by Bentley, he had not so consciously crafted a work for the popular audience. In fact, he closes this letter to Bentley with an important post-script: "I have

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[24] See also David S. Reynold's. *Beneath the American Renaissance: The Subversive Imagination in the Age of Emerson and Melville.* Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1988. 275-308.

thought that, on several accounts, (one of which is, the rapid succession in which my works have lately been published) it might not prove unadvisable to publish this present book anonymously, or under an assumed name. . . . I beg you to consider the propriety of this suggestion" (*Correspondence*, 227-28).[25] Anonymous authorship in cheap editions was the common practice for writers of sensational fiction, and Melville's request fits the pattern. Melville's self-consciousness about the rapid publication of his other works would have also provided him tremendous impetus to do something different in writing *Pierre*, intending the result for a different audience. Melville was consciously seeking a new market, and his request for anonymous authorship reflects that he sensed something of the peril attendent upon such a new venture.

Although Bentley had published several sentimental works in cheap editions, he also knew that Melville's name was recognized among cultivated readers who had more money to spend on books. He therefore wanted the novel for this aristocratic audience, in spite of Melville's attempt to reach a different one. Bentley recognized the disparity between the two audiences and wanted the novel edited and revised before he would publish it. He offered Melville some "friendly" advice: Melville should have revised *Mardi*

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[25] Melville was serious enough about the proposal to publish under other auspices than his own name that he suggested two pen names for Bentley to consider: "By a Vermonter" and "By Guy Winthrop" (228).

and *Moby-Dick*, and if he had "restrained [his] imagination somewhat" and written in a more traditional style, and not offended the feelings of so many sensitive readers, he would have been successful in England. Bentley then offered to have some of the same kinds of changes made in *Pierre* by a "judicious literary friend" that would make the novel "appreciated here" by (the implication is clear) cultivated readers. If Melville would consent to this revision and expurgation of his manuscript, Bentley would agree to publish *Pierre* on half-profits, but, citing losses on Melville's previous books, there could be no advance (*Correspondence*, 620). Melville refused Bentley's offer, either on principle or as a manifestation of his residual resentment of John Wiley, or both. Clearly, now he was unwilling to make the concessions he had with *Typee* to get the novel published. Consequently, *Pierre* was never published by an English publisher.[26] Like Bentley, Harper Brothers considered Melville's recent failure with *Moby-Dick* and his erratic sales record overall and exercised extreme caution in its agreement to publish *Pierre* as well.

Herman's lawyer brother, Allan Melville, executed the contract with Harper Brothers on the writer's behalf on 20

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[26] The novel did have a very limited circulation in England, however. Sampson Low, the London agent for Harper Brothers, bound some copies from American sheets. He distributed a few review copies of the book, but *Pierre* was essentially ignored in England. Only one review, the London *Athenaeum* of 20 November 1852, has been discovered in British newspapers (Higgins 451).

February 1852. Harpers gave Melville a $500 advance, but the contract exempted an unusually high number of books, 1190, from remuneration under copyright so the advance could be recovered more quickly. Melville would earn a twenty-five cent royalty on each copy sold after the initial 1190 had been purchased. Hershel Parker believes that Melville was so upset by this contract that he expanded the novel, adding the chapters wherein Pierre takes up professional writing and is brutalized by his publishers.[27]

Pierre was published in late July 1852, with a printing of 2,310 copies. Although Harper Brothers sold books in cheap editions, they also marketed *Pierre* to Melville's traditional, cultivated audience. Priced at a $1.50, the novel was "affordable only to the very people Melville was attacking in the book" (Robertson-Lorant 318). The results were disappointing. Almost a year later, by mid-March 1853, only 1,423 copies of the novel had been sold.[28] Melville's royalties amounted to $58.25. Adding together his royalties and credits to his account from sales of his other novels and subtracting them from the $500.00 advance, Melville's March 1853 statement showed him still owing Harper Brothers $298.71. However, that deficit was not the worst of it.

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[27] For details of Parker's theory of late insertions in the novel, see his Introduction to the Kraken Edition of *Pierre*, which he edited. The edition leaves out the Pierre-as-author chapters. Essentially, Parker argues that the unity of the novel is improved and the story is more coherent overall with those chapters removed.

[28] This number includes the unknown number of sheet copies sent to Sampson Low in England.

The results were not only financially disappointing, they were also devastating for his career.

Pierre did Melville's reputation irreparable harm, essentially destroying his career. Before the novel was even published, "lurid rumors" circulated about the novel amid the coteries of the publishing industry (Howard, "Historical Note" 380). After publication, the reviews were united in their opinion that the novel held no redeeming value. The Boston *Post* of 4 August 1852 declared the novel "perhaps the craziest fiction extant," and although the novel reveals the great intellect behind it,

> the amount of utter trash in the volume is almost infinite--trash of conception, execution, dialog and sentiment. . . . We say it with grief--it is too bad for Mr. Melville to abuse his really fine talents as he does. . . . A thousand times better, had he dropped authorship with "Typee." (Higgins 419-20)

The New York *Herald* of 29 July 1852 concluded its brief review by declaring, "It is conceded that Mr. Melville has written himself out" (Higgins 419). The Springfield, Massachusetts *Republican* on 16 August said:

> Melville has changed his style entirely, and is to be judged of as a new author.--We regret the change . . . and . . . entertain the hope that the author, seeing his exceeding sinfulness, will return to the simple and beautiful path of authorship so graced by his early footsteps. (Higgins 426)

On 21 August, the Duyckincks declared the novel a "literary mare's nest. . . . It is alone intelligible as an unintelligibility" (Higgins 431). The reviewer for the New

York *Albion* of 21 August accurately perceived that Melville was writing in the sensationalistic French mode. "Would that Mr. Melville had hit upon a less Frenchified mode of [resolving the novel's conflicts]. What fatality could have tempted him to call upon the spirit of Eugène Sue, to help him in such an emergency!" The reviewer closes with the assertion that Melville should write "a fresh romance of the Ocean, . . . Thereon is he at home; thereon he earned his literary laurels; thereon may he regain his literary standing, which he must have perilled by this crazy rigmarole" (Higgins 428-29).

Under the title, "Herman Melville Crazy," the New York *Day Book* of 7 September reported the opinion of a "critical friend" that the book "appeared to be composed of the ravings and reveries of a madman." This was followed by mention of the fact that some of Melville's friends considered him truly "deranged" and were seeking treatment for him. "We hope," the reviewer wrote, "one of the earliest precautions will be to keep him stringently secluded from pen and ink" (Higgins 436). Informing its readers that it would "borrow Mr. Melville's style," the New York *Herald* of 18 September called *Pierre*

> One long brain-muddling, soul-bewildering ambiguity . . . like Melchisedek, without beginning or end--a labyrinth without a clue--an Irish bog without so much as a Jack-o'th'-lantern to guide the wanderers footsteps--the dream of a distempered stomach, disordered by a hasty supper on half-cooked pork chops. (Higgins 437)

The reviewer then described *Pierre*, adopting the metaphor of gestation and childbirth, as a deformed "monstrosity," a miscarried "foetus" (Higgins 437).

The most thorough[29] and most negative review of *Pierre* has been attributed to George Washington Peck. Writing for the *American Whig Review* of 20 November 1852, Peck argued that Melville's *whole* career had been a sham, and critics had been blind to his worthlessness in his previous books, including *Typee*. Now *Pierre* finally revealed the true state of Melville's talent. "A BAD book!" are the first three words that greet the reader of the review. Melville's style in *Pierre* "is probably the most extraordinary thing that an American press ever beheld" (Higgins 447).[30] Peck warned future authors about imitating Melville and recommended they avoid him "and his book, as they would some loathsome and infectious distemper" (Higgins 441, 448) Although other reviewers hint at their astonishment at Melville's insinuation of incest in the novel, Peck directly engaged the implied incest in *Pierre*.

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[29] The review fills nearly ten pages of text in Higgins' and Parkers's book. The typical long review usually occupies about three pages.

[30] Defects in style were taken seriously because they were perceived to weaken the national character. It is no exaggeration to say that the rules of style were accorded import and viewed as one of the central pillars propping up a well-ordered society. For example, George B. Cheever published his resignation as editor of the New York *Evangelist* and included in the column a passionate and reasoned defense against accusations that he had violated conventions of style and weakened the status of the language during his tenure (29 October 1846). For an examination of the political ramifications of literary style, see Perry Miller's *The Raven and the Whale*, 110.

> But when he dares to outrage every principle of virtue; when he strikes with an impious, though, happily, weak hand, at the very foundations of society, we feel it our duty to tear off the veil with which he has thought to soften the hideous features of the idea, and warn the public against the reception of such atrocious doctrines. (Higgins 445)

Yet even Peck is very careful here in how he handles such an explosive subject. Leon Howard and Hershel Parker believe that the reviewers, fearing to create a controversy that would stimulate sales, were careful to convert Melville and his book into a public laughing-stock ("Historical Note" 381). *Graham's Magazine* lodged its protest that even "the most friendly reader is obliged at the end to protest against such a provoking perversion of talent and waste of power" (Higgins 440-41).

In *Pierre*, Melville's writing for a lower-class audience and his satire of the gentry prevented his reaffirmation of middle-class Christian values and the tenets of civilized virtue, pointing to many of the hypocrisies that existed under their combined guise. As the Duyckincks noted in their review in *Literary World*, "The most immoral *moral* of the story, if it has any moral at all, seems to be the impracticability of virtue" (Higgins 430).

A more accurate statement of theme, if viewed in the light of Melville's whole career, is not the impracticability of virtue, but rather the *naive assumption* that people are acting virtuously just because their intentions are good. It is the old missionary song in new

guise. Negative effects flow from poor causes, no matter how well intended their initial impulses might be. It was the same theme or thread of truth that informs his fiction throughout his literary career.

Pierre destroyed Melville's reputation with the "elite critical establishment and alienated cultivated readers" (Robertson-Lorant 318). The situation was serious enough that in the following year, 1853, no publisher was willing to accept his next manuscript, *The Isle of the Cross*, and the manuscript was subsequently lost or destroyed.[31] However, a large measure of the blame must be levied against Melville's publishers, who, like the critics and his cultivated audience, wanted him to write only one type of book, and classified him as an artist and constrained him in the "packaging" or presentation of his art. The publishers often sought to control content, and always controlled bookmaking, marketing and distribution, requiring Melville to conform to their paradigm. Melville kept the pledge he had made to John Murray that he would not write another book like *Typee* exactly. However, starting with John Wiley and the expurgation of *Typee*, Melville's publishers collectively never viewed him by any other light than that gleaming upon

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[31] The short novel was based on the story of Agatha Hatch, the daughter of a Falmouth lighthouse keeper, who saved a sailor from a shipwreck and then married him. After marrying, the couple moved to Nantucket, and the husband was absent for long periods of time. Agatha eventually learns, when her husband returns for their daughter's wedding, that he is a bigamist. The story was told to Melville by a friend named John Clifford, and "Melville could not get it out of his mind" (Robertson-Lorant 322-26).

tropical isles, as "the man who had lived among the cannibals," the author of *Typee* and *Omoo*.

AFTERWORD

A LITERARY CAREER IN ECLIPSE

> Melville has lost his prestige.
>
> --George William Curtis, editor of *Putnam's Magazine*

After the debacle of *Pierre* and his failure to secure a publisher for *Isle of the Cross*, Melville made another sea-change in his literary career. He began writing serialized fiction and sketches for the rising magazine market. Although the serialized pieces did little to rescue his reputation with the contemporary critics, they revived his financial fortunes for a time, providing acceptable compensation, a regular market, and an editorial policy preferring anonymity--clearly an advantage to Melville at this point in his career (Bezanson 180). Now many of these short pieces are considered literary masterpieces.

His serialized fiction was also marked by a return to borrowed or autobiographical materials--the formula that had worked before. In *Israel Potter* Melville rewrote an obscure, published narrative of the rise and fall of a Revolutionary War hero who became a peddler in London. "The Encantadas," his narrative sketches set in the Galapagos Islands, were, like *Typee* and *Omoo*, again based upon his

experiences visiting those islands during his whaling days. In "Benito Cereno," Melville drew on legal transcripts, depositions, and Captain Amasa Delano's published narrative to tell the story of a slave revolt. "Bartleby the Scrivener" is set in New York amid locales and commercial activities with which Melville was familiar.

Despite his return to a more conservative, tried-and-tested mode of composition, Melville was nevertheless a marked man. In his submission letter for *Israel Potter* to George William Curtis, a friend and an editor at *Putnam's Magazine*, Melville set out his expectations regarding publication and payment. Impassively it seems, he then added:

> On my side, I guarantee to provide you with matter for at least ten printed pages in ample time for each issue. I engage that the story shall contain nothing of any sort to shock the fastidious. There will be very little reflective writing in it; nothing weighty. It is adventure. As for its interest, I shall try to sustain that as well as I can[.] (Bezanson 182)

Strong after-shocks from *Pierre* were still capable of crumbling publisher confidence, and Melville was treading warily, if wearily.

So warily, in fact, that regarding Melville's earnest desire to confront the truth William Charvat observes that Melville, in learning the craft of magazine writing, "took protection in what might be called [a] strategy of omission" in his "moderately admired" short fiction. Charvat illustrates this strategy of omission in "The Encantadas,"

and "Benito Cereno." In the Hunilla section of "The Encantadas," Charvat argues that Melville refused to include two episodes of the widow's story of her grief and sufferings. "In nature as in law, it may be libelous to speak some truths," Melville wrote. The implication is that she has been subjected to abuses by whalemen visiting the island where she was marooned that are too horrible to tell. Charvat asserts that "This guess is supported by the last sentence of the story: as Hunilla, bearing her destroying grief, rides away 'upon a small gray ass . . . before her on the ass's shoulders, she eyed the jointed workings of the beast's armorial cross.'" For Charvat, the "cross" is Melville's allusion to the futile consolation the church could offer any victim of such unspeakable horrors. Charvat also reminds the reader of the form this same critique takes in the final lines of "Benito Cereno." Here is found the scene of the executed slave Babo's decapitated head thrust upon a pike and planted in public view, his dead eyes meeting "unabashed, the gaze of the whites; and across the plaza looking towards St. Bartholomew's church." Charvat points out that these characterizations are consistent with Melville's repeated theme of "white, Christian corruption" with its attendant ills for native populations. Such thematic consistency also recalls the persistent public criticism Melville received when he tried in earlier works to expose the ills caused by "Western civilizers." Charvat

concludes, "[Melville's] attack continues in these late stories, but the libelous truth is almost inaudible" ("Melville" 260).

The "inaudible truth" of the magazine fiction is the direct legacy of John Wiley and the Revised Edition of *Typee*. *Typee* set a pattern, and Wiley's treatment of Melville's first novel created the precedent that was reinforced by other publishers throughout his career in the treatment of much of his art. Wiley's actions lodged a set of expectations in Melville's mind regarding the power and control wielded by publishers--a power Melville would have to defer to time and again if he was to find his way into print.

Herman Melville would try one more time in his lifetime to have it his way. *The Confidence Man* was completely unintelligible to his audience even as he addressed his readers directly in three chapters about the relationship between verisimilitude and fiction, and the quest for higher truths. Published in 1857, Melville was still trying to teach his audience how to read him: "in books of fiction, [readers] look not only for more entertainment, but, at bottom, even for more reality, than real life itself can show" (183).

Melville's bad luck continued. Published on April Fool's Day 1857, the "joke" was on Melville. The American publisher, Dix and Edwards, went bankrupt only a few weeks

after the novel appeared; and of the twenty or so American reviews, only three are more than two or three lines long. Apparently, virtually none of the critics even bothered to read the novel (Branch 316, 318). One who did wrote:

> It is not right--it is trespassing too much upon the forbearance of the public, when a writer possessing Herman Melville's talent, publishes such puerilities as the Confidence Man. The book will sell, of course, because Melville wrote it; but this exceedingly talented author must beware or he will tire out the patience of his readers. (Branch 323)

The critic was wrong on both counts: the novel did not sell, and Melville's readers had no patience left. In England, only 386 copies of *The Confidence Man* eventually sold, and over 500 copies in sheets were sold as scrap paper. Due to the bankruptcy, there are no surviving records from the American publisher.

After *The Confidence Man*, Melville washed his hands of prose and turned to poetry, but he still struggled financially. Finally, in 1866, after publishing *Battle-Pieces*, he took full-time employment in the New York Custom House. After retirement he continued writing and publishing poetry and began another prose work, *Billy Budd*, which remained unfinished when he died on 28 September 1891.

From Melville's 1887 account statement, we can infer that only three of the books he had written had remained in print throughout his lifetime: probably *Mardi*, *Pierre*, and *Battle-Pieces,* his collection of civil war poetry (Howard, "Historical Note" 380). *Pierre*, for example, was in print

and available on publisher's shelves because it had never sold out the original printing.[1] After Melville's death, his wife, Lizzie, was urged to publish *Billy Budd*. She declined, saying, "Herman has been criticized enough."[2]

Persistent criticism was the unavoidable harvest of an author who, from the beginning, could never escape the obligation he felt to speak the truth about the structures of power in his culture that troubled him. The magnitude of the criticism heaped upon him was amplified by publishers and an audience who had, from the beginnning, too, misunderstood who Melville was and what he was about. This misinterpretation is also, in part, John Wiley's legacy. Made toothless by Wiley's expurgation of Melville's critique, the salvaged Revised Edition of *Typee* could have only served to confirm and reinforce an audience's conception of Melville as a "romancer." Yet Melville himself never lost sight of who and what he was. In the mix of personalities, forces and complicities of the literary marketplace, Melville alternately compromised and asserted his artistic independence as circumstances permitted. He

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[1] When the Harper Brothers' 1853 warehouse fire destroyed existing inventories of Melville's books, small printings of around 250 copies were ordered to replenish stock. These copies are the ones that lingered on shelves. Strictly speaking in a bibliographical sense, these are not "original" or "first" printings. However, in a commercial sense they are the same because their commercial fate represents accurately what would have happened to those earlier editions if they had survived the fire.

[2] Interview. Dottie Rowe. Berkshire County Historical Society at Arrowhead. 18 June 1997.

persistently fought in his writing to free himself from the misconceptions that had both created and misshaped him. Although it was an artistic declaration no one in his lifetime wanted to affirm, his present high reputation rests on those same works that the critics and the public rejected.

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VITA

Carl Randall Cluff was born in Phoenix, Arizona, on 24 September 1951. He graduated from Snowflake Union High School in June 1969. He attended Mesa Community College in Mesa, Arizona from 1969-1971. He then interrupted his studies for travel in Europe, followed by two years' residence in Peru, South America where he served a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In October 1973 he entered Brigham Young University, but left the university one semester before graduation in the summer of 1975 to work full time as a firefighter paramedic for the Orem City Fire Department in Orem, Utah. He planned to finish his degree as a part-time student, but the fire department required his full attention. He left the fire service in 1978 and worked as a real estate and insurance salesman. He married Melody Allred in 1979, and they moved to San Diego, California in 1980. In 1981 he and several partners founded a medical equipment supply business in the San Diego area. In 1985, while still operating the business, he returned to school to finish his Bachelor's degree. He did his last semester of undergraduate work at San Diego State University, transferred the credits and received his Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in English

and minor in Spanish from Brigham Young University in April 1986. He immediately began graduate study at San Diego State University and was also selected as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Freshman Composition program. He received his Master of Arts degree in English from San Diego State University in May 1991. His Master's Thesis was a study of Emersonian influences in Hawthorne's short fiction.

In 1992 he sold his medical business and moved his family to Knoxville, Tennessee, where, in August 1992, he entered the University of Tennessee to pursue the Doctor of Philosophy in English. As a Graduate Teaching Associate at the University of Tennessee he taught Freshman Composition and American Literature courses. He is currently an Assistant Professor of English at Southern Virginia College in Buena Vista, Virginia.