College upon a Hill:
The Rise of the American Epic in the Age of the Connecticut Wits

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INTRODUCTION

The Heritage of Fraternity in Revolutionary America

To thee, my early friend! To thee, dear *Dwight*!,
Fond recollection turns, while thus I write;
While I reflect, no change of time or place,
Th' impressions of our friendship can efface—
("An Epistle to Dr. Dwight: On Board the Courier de l'Europe, July 30, 1784";
italics original)

Hence too, where Trumbull lead the ardent throng,
Ascending bards begin th' immortal song:
Let glowing friendship wake the cheerful lyre,
Blest to commend, and pleas'd to catch the fire.
("Epistle from Dr. Dwight to Col. Humphreys, Greenfield, 1785")

To read the works of the Connecticut Wits is to consider the fraternal organization of this group. Each poet—Timothy Dwight, John Trumbull, David Humphreys, Lemuel Hopkins, and Joel Barlow—is intimately connected in the psychological, physical, and textual senses. They first encountered one another at Yale College; sometimes, they attended the same class, sometimes, they joined the same fraternity club, and sometimes, they challenged together the current college system. Frequently, they mentioned their friends' names in their works, recalling their shared sense of fraternity.

For example, on his way to Europe, Humphreys wrote an epistolary poem to Dwight. This poem captures not only Humphreys' hope for eternal friendship with Dwight but also his rhetorical usage of the concept of fraternity. Humphreys wrote this work not only as a personal letter but also as a poem appropriate for publishing. In response, Dwight mentioned another member of the Connecticut Wits, John Trumbull, naming him as the leader of "the ardent throng," which highly implies themselves. Then, Dwight deliberately transformed a simple sense of friendship into the poetics of fraternity by saying, "Let glowing friendship wake the cheerful lyre." Friendship not only connects friends who are far from each other, such as Humphreys on his way to Europe and Dwight in Greenfield, Connecticut, but also functions as a necessary foundation to "wake the cheerful lyre" and to "catch the fire."

Such a deliberate usage of the sense of solidarity, however, cannot help but betray a certain anxiety about fissure simultaneously. Sometimes, the latter precedes and, of course, vice versa. Taking into account such undecidedness, this dissertation will argue that the Connecticut Wits' poetics of fraternity closely involve a tormented awareness of treachery, demonstrating that such a negative but keen sense of anxiety paradoxically impels them to create the American epic as well.

1. "Yalensia . . . Within Thy Walls, Beneath Thy Pleasing Shade"

In the title of this dissertation, "College upon a Hill," two main themes are encapsulated: a sense of mission and a sense of fraternity. If John Winthrop's vision of a city upon a hill in "A Model of Christian Charity" embodies the Puritans' sense of mission, such heritage was carried over into the age of the Connecticut Wits. In terms of their background, almost all of them were descendants of the Puritans in the seventeenth century. Significantly, when observing "the chief significance" of the Connecticut Wits, Vernon Louis Parrington points out their heritage of "the crust of Puritan provincialism" and their role of "the literary old guard of eighteenth century Toryism" (*The Connecticut Wits* xxv).

The sense of mission as transplanted since the colonial period was intertwined with the nationalist sentiment during the revolutionary period. This is seen in a vision that Emory Elliott calls "a cultural city upon a hill":

> During the Revolution, American writers and orators fused the old Puritan image of America with Berkeley's projection of America as a cultural "city upon a hill" to create a new type: the "Genius of America."

(30)

During the revolutionary period, the vision of "a city upon a hill" transformed into "a cultural city upon a hill." What matters here is George Berkeley's contribution as Elliott suggests. According to Kenneth Silverman, George Berkeley's "Verses on the Prospect of Planting Art and Learning in America" (1726, 1752) was reprinted in its entirety during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. "Berkeley's metaphors of Translation—a growing plant, a genial rising sun, the final act of a drama—," Silverman explains, "seeped into colonial speech, so that diaries, orations, poems, and conversation everywhere in the period register a prophetic awareness of growth" (Silverman, *A Cultural History of the American Revolution* 10). Edwin S. Gaustad explains that after giving up a plan to build a college in Bermuda, Berkeley turned his attention to America, arrived in this place, and left a special heritage to Yale (19–51, 81–104). What drove Berkeley to go all the way to America can be found in his "Verses": "Westward the course of empire takes its way; / The first four acts already past, / A fifth shall close the drama with the day; / Time's noblest offspring is the last" (Berkeley 21–24). Here is the vision of America as the place where the last empire would thrive and where the greatest epic would be written in terms of *translatio imperii*

et studii.

The Connecticut Wits already prepared for writing the epic by spending their time reading and studying at the Yale College library. Lord Kames' work gave them the theory of the epic, and John Milton's *Paradise Lost,* John Dryden's translation of the *Æeneid*, and Alexander Pope's translation of the *Iliad* were the models for them. If these books served as the necessary theories and models for practice, Berkeley's "Verses" represented the birth of a sense of mission. Prevailing throughout the New England states, "Verses" produced several promising young students who absorbed such a mentality. Among them was John Trumbull. His poem was added to his own commencement speech in 1770 at Yale entitled "Prospect of the Future Glory of America," which grasped the Berkelean spirit, the current patriotism, and his attachment to Yale:

> O, born to glory when these times prevail,
>
> Great nurse of leaning, fair Yalensia, hail!
>
> Within thy walls, beneath thy pleasing shade,
>
> We woo'd each Art, and won the Muse to aid. . . .
>
> Till Nature hear the great Archangel's call,

> Till the last flames involve the singing ball;
>
> Then may thy sons ascend th' ethereal plains,
>
> And join seraphic songs, where bliss eternal reigns. (Trumbull, "Prospect of the Future Glory of America" 161)

Invoking "fair Yalensia, hail!," Trumbull not only foregrounds his sense of duty as a representative of a Yale student or as a promising young American man of letters but also highlights the gravity of Yale College itself.

This story, from Berkeley's inspiration to Trumbull's commencement poem, has often been told. However, the specific context of Yale in the 1760s deserves special attention in order to grasp the second theme—a sense of fraternity in the age of the Connecticut Wits. Parrington seems to suggest the geographical exceptionality of Connecticut and Yale when mentioning Philadelphia and New Jersey to emphasize the Connecticut Wits' "chief significance" (xxiv), but the significance of this specific, geographical space would be much more than he thought. Looking at Trumbull's poem again, one should carefully observe not only his admiration for Yalensia but also his attachment to Yale as a closed, intimate space: he recalls their college days at Yale as if they were "Within thy walls, beneath thy pleasing shade," where they "woo'd each Art,

and won the Muse to aid." Such a sense of an enclosed, walled paradise could not help but signal their intimate college days. In those times, they voluntarily gathered in extracurricular activities and organized fraternity clubs by themselves with a high sense of mission, that is, the Linonian Society and the Society of Brothers in Unity.

The Linonian Society and the Society of Brothers in Unity were considered the second and third oldest literary societies at Yale, respectively. The former was founded in 1753 and the latter in 1768. According to the *Yale Alumni Magazine*, "Nothing is known of the first literary society, Crotonia, which was defunct before Thomas Clap's presidency ended in 1766" ("An Irrepressible Urge to Join, March 2001—Special Tercentennial Edition"). Dwight belonged to the former, whereas Humphreys, Barlow, and Webster participated in the latter.

The significant points of these societies reside in literature, fraternity, and patriotism. According to the preface to *A Catalogue of the Linonian Society*, published in 1841, "The objects of the Society are, for the most part, literary" and "it was founded for the 'promotion of Friendship and Social Intercourse'" (iii). Also, the preface to the 1853 version of *A Catalogue of the Graduated Members of the Linonian Society of Yale College* writes that the objectives are "to provide the means of improvement in Rhetoric

and Oratory, to give frequent opportunities for the exercise of these arts, and, finally, to remove the distinctions of classes, and promote among all the members of College harmonious and friendly feelings (iii). In addition, the Linonian Library has played an important role for this society and even the history of Yale; this preface recorded the foundation: “The Linonian Library was commenced in 1769, by a gift of books from TIMOTHY DWIGHT, afterwards President of Yale College” (iv).

Timothy Dwight was an active and pivotal member of the Linonian Society, whereas David Humphreys played the same role for the Society of Brothers in Unity. As seen in Figure 1, the preface to *A Catalogue of the Society of Brothers in Unity*, published in 1841, claims that “When arranged in alphabetical order, the name of DAVID HUMPHREYS, LL. D., stands in the centre, the keystone of the arch of ‘Friendship and Truth,’ which they raised. His is a name which every American will delight to honor” (1). According to this preface, the reason for the foundation lies in that “in ancient times the members of the lower classes were compelled to be servants to those of the upper classes,” and before the organization of the Society of Brothers in Unity, “no Freshman was received into any Society in College” (2). Under these circumstances, Humphreys as a freshman “engaged with so much ardor in the struggle

for equal rights," and "with thirteen of his classmates, fought for and established their own respectability" (2).

Thus, through these extracurricular experiences in the 1760s and 1770s at Yale, the members of the Connecticut Wits cultivated a sense of fraternity and responsibility, the rhetorical skill of speech, discussion, and argument, and intellectual networks appropriate for the future. Contingently, the Revolutionary War broke out and its accompanying nationalistic mentality prevailed. Their state of mind already prepared for such situation. As a result, one would glimpse a scene in which the American epic was rising from the college upon a hill.

2. The Connecticut Wits Reconsidered

Recent scholarship on early America has focused on intellectual networks that attempted to influence the current state policy.[1] Among them, the relationship between the literary and intellectual culture in post-revolutionary America has been investigated in Catherine O'Donnell Kaplan's *Men of Letters in the Early Republic: Cultivating Forums of Citizenship* (2008) and in Bryan Waterman's *Republic of Intellect: The*

[1] See Brooke 273–359, Koschnik 615–66, Lawrimore, "Conflict Management: Jeremy Belknap's Committed Literature" 359–84, and White 25–39.

Friendly Club of New York City and the Making of American Literature (2007). Drawing on Michael Warner's theory of "republican print ideology," these studies argue that intellectuals' network—Elihu Hubbard Smith in New York, Joseph Dennie in New Hampshire and Philadelphia, and Joseph Stevens Buckminster, William Smith Shaw, and Arthur Maynard Walter in Boston—constituted the early American literature, and their literary activities shaped the early Republic. Significantly, Waterman writes that "My story begins with Smith's deathbed scene" (4).[2] This dissertation corresponds with a prehistory of Smith. He was younger than the members of the Connecticut Wits by about one generation, but he was familiar with them. In fact, Smith interacted with them, and his biographies of the Connecticut Wits constituted a significant portion of materials subsequent scholars referred to. Without Smith, the scholarship on the Connecticut Wits might not develop; in the meanwhile, it can be said that without the Connecticut Wits, Smith's literary career might be otherwise. If the New York Friendly Club's intellectual network helped the US literature shape the early Republic, the

[2] Drawing on the translation of Jürgen Habermas's *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989), scholars began theorizing a public sphere that distinguishes from state from civil society, and serves to control and critique them. Among them, Michael Warner's *Letters of the Republic* (1990) presents a theory of "republican print ideology," in which Warner argues that the literature in the revolutionary period played a significant role in shaping a republic of letters. Since then, Warner's theory has been refined by several studies, including Davidson's *Revolution and the Word*, Burgett's *Sentimental Bodie*, Fliegelman's *Declaring Independence*, Looby's *Voicing America*, Shields's *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America*, and Ziff's *Writing in the New Nation*.

intellectual activities at the Hartford Friendly Club should not be underestimated.

Indeed, nineteenth-century literary anthologists, including Smith, highly appreciated the Connecticut Wits and added their works in their anthologies,[3] but twentieth-century anthologists and scholars gradually came to underestimate their works.[4] The reason for this lies in that the Connecticut Wits' conservatism. John Carlos Rowe offers a perspective of the present American Studies: "American Studies is a field in crisis, divided between its original nationalist focus on the United States and new interests in the interrelations of the different nations and cultures of the western hemispheres" (1). The Connecticut Wits' works have drawn little attention of both sides, because of their indebtedness to the British culture and of their privileged status as white male intellectuals. Nevertheless, it does not mean that the manners in which they reacted to the turbulent times—driven by current controversies over partisan politics, the role of women as daughters, wives, or mothers, and racial issues involving

[3] See Smith's *American Poems* (1793), Carey's *The Columbian Muse: A Selection of American Poetry from Various Authors of Established Reputation* (1794), Kettell's *Specimens of American Poetry with Critical and Biographical Notices. 3 vols.* (1829), Griswold's *The Poets and Poetry of America* (1842), and Duyckinck's *Cyclopædia of American Literature; Embracing Personal and Critical Notices of Authors, and Selections from their Writings, From the Earliest Period to the Present Day; with Portraits, Autographs, and Other Illustrations. 2 vols.* (1856).

[4] See Baym's *The Norton Anthology of American Literature, 8th ed*. (2011), Lehman's *The Oxford Book of American Poetry* (2006), Parini's *The Columbian Anthology of American Poetry* (1995), and Sollors's *A New Literary History of America* (2012).

indigenous people and African Americans—cannot be ignored. New approaches bring new insight even into these forgotten conservative poets.

Of course, this dissertation is indebted to previous studies on the Connecticut Wits. Vernon Louis Parrington's anthology has been notable in that it highlighted this group's presence in American literary history, and his framework is a necessary starting point for this dissertation. Leon Howard's book has also been useful in understanding the group's background in literary and social terms. Emory Elliott taught about the significant cultural contexts of the Revolutionary period, and William Dowling disclosed the Augustan heritage in this group's works. Lawrence Buell grasps the link between the Connecticut Wits as satirists and writers of American Renaissance, Christopher Grasso reveals the crucial connection between the eighteenth-century print culture and several members of the Connecticut Wits, and Paul Giles has shed new light on their works from a transnational perspective. Furthermore, quite a few studies focus on each poet; for example, such scholars in charge of "Twayne's United States Authors Series" as Kenneth Silverman (Dwight), Victor E. Gimmestad (Trumbull), Edward M. Cifelli (Humphreys), Arthur L. Ford (Barlow), and Richard J. Moss (Webster) provide a concise but comprehensive literary biography.

However, few studies have focused on the Connecticut Wits as a literary movement, as well as on its fraternal organization. One of the key figures is Humphreys. It can be argued that without Humphreys, the Connecticut Wits could not gather together nor even engage with the publication of the American epic so ardently. Humphreys' belief in the potential of fraternity and his enthusiastic practice of its rhetoric at Yale, especially in the Society of Brothers in Unity in the 1760s and 1770s, makes the enlightenment intellectual tradition not only as something that is cultivated in the old world and transplanted into the new world but also as connectedness with one another, strengthening the sense of fraternity and contributing to the development of a sense of responsibility that is appropriate for a fledgling country in the turbulent times.

Another key figure is Joel Barlow. While Dwight, Trumbull, and Humphreys were the descendants of privileged families in the New England states in those days, Barlow, Hopkins, and Webster were born to farmer fathers in the countryside of Connecticut. Of course, these three men of letters ultimately established an intellectual status, but Barlow and Webster suffered uncertainty in unemployment after graduation from Yale. Moreover, Barlow came to question the Connecticut Wits. After leaving

Hartford for France in 1788, he finally converted himself into a Jeffersonian Republican in the 1790s. For the Connecticut Wits, who are Federalist intellectuals, such a conversion was nothing but betrayal. Barlow turned out to be a traitor of the group. One can say that after he converted to being a Republican, he did not deserve being called a member of the Connecticut Wits any longer. However, Barlow did not underestimate his erstwhile friends and his connection with them even after the separation, whereas the other members and their works significantly kept registering their memory of him. Barlow's betrayal does not represent the end of his commitment to the group. Rather, in a sense, it became a turning point in which the Connecticut Wits *per se* was forced to change itself.

Let take an example briefly from the relationship between Barlow and Hopkins. Although the contrast between Dwight and Barlow is often told, this inquiry offers this hitherto unnoticed contrast. Certainly, Dwight deserves being called "the last great Federalist / Congregationalist" (Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims* 314), so that Barlow as a converted Republican becomes a good foil. Parrington presents a stark contrast between them: "He [Barlow] was in too deep to go back, and so while Timothy Dwight was gathering laurels from every bush in Connecticut, this apostle of

humanitarianism [Barlow], this apostate from Calvinistic Federalism, was content to remain a byword and a shaking of the head in the villages of his native commonwealth. For all which perhaps, the Washington salon and the intimate association with Jefferson may have served as recompense. Better society could not be found even in Hartford" (*The Connecticut Wits* lxii; italics original). Dwight's conservatism and Barlow's detachment from Hartford are foregrounded. This stark contrast already became a typical profile of the Connecticut Wits.

However, this study would present another aspect to accurately demarcate the American epic of the revolutionary period. Lemuel Hopkins deserves special attention. Hopkins is indeed a blind spot in the scholarship on the Connecticut Wits. He is an almost forgotten poet now. Parrington, Howard, Elliott, Dowling, Grasso, and Giles have paid little attention to him, and Twayne Series has not picked him up. It is understandable because he was a professional physician, could not spend as much time as the other members can, and did not leave a long narrative poem. However, he merits attention because even after Barlow turned out to be a traitor, Hopkins, despite keeping his stance as a Federalist, never lost a sense of intimacy with him and even concealed such an attachment under the surface of his text. This geographical and mental distance

enabled him to create a unique mock-epic, titled "Guillotina," which is quite different from the work of the other members, such as Dwight's *The Conquest of Canäan* or Barlow's *The Vision of Columbus* (later *The Columbiad*). The Connecticut Wits' multifaceted aspect that has been overlooked thus far has become visible by shedding light on Hopkins and his almost forgotten epic poem. To this end, the ongoing manipulation of the discourse of fraternity—and treachery—is a necessary perspective.

3. Who is A Traitor?

Although the eighteenth century is often called the age of reason, Eustace argues that "A rising tempest of emotion was sweeping through the Age of Reason" (5), citing Alexander Pope's line from *Essay on Man*, "Reason the card, but passion is the gale" (Epistle II, l. 108). The Connecticut Wits' sense of fraternity should be relocated in such a cultural and historical context.

First, the term "fraternity" is used in this dissertation in two ways, as already suggested. In the simplest sense, it refers to some state of emotional relationship. The members of the Connecticut Wits cultivated such fellow feeling during their days at Yale and at Hartford, or in the letters they exchanged. Second, it refers to "the discourse

of fraternity" of which they took advantage in their works. In this distinction, one can see a traditional conflict between essentialists and constructionists. As Eustace sums up, "Theorists who argue for the universality of emotion claim that the experience of emotion is a neurochemical process common to all human beings in every age. By contrast, those who argue from the vantage point of constructionism counter that emotions can be created only through discourse. Feelings must be filtered through language, which is highly culturally specific" (11).[5] To avoid going to both extremes, Eustace chooses a historical approach, "highlighting the interplay of change and stasis in human emotion" (11).

True, the Connecticut Wits are the children of the Age of Enlightenment, the age of sensibility, in particular. Sensibility is a certain state of feeling, whereas fraternity is a certain kind of relationship; both sensibility and fraternity became foregrounded and discussed throughout the eighteenth century.[6] Philosophers, such as John Locke,

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[5] According to Eustace's outline, the universalist school consists of Silvan S. Tomkins' *Affect, Imagery, Consciousness, 4 vols*. (1962–92), Paul Ekman's and Richard J. Davidson's *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Question* (1994), and Zoltán Kövecses' *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling* (2000), while the constructionist school contains Catherine A. Lutz's *Unnatural Emotions: Everyday Sentiments on a Micronesian Atoll and Their Challenge to Western Theory* (1988), and Lutz's and Lila Abu-Lughod's *Language and Politics of Emotions* (2000). See Eustace 495.

[6] As for scholarship on sensibility, see Janet Todd's *Sensibility: An Introduction* (1986); G.J. Barker-Benfield's *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (1992). Influential studies of sympathy and sentimentality in eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries US literature include Elizabeth Barnes's *States of Sympathy: Seduction and Democracy in the American Novel* (1997); Kristin Boudreau's *Sympathy in American*

Francis Hutcheson, the earl of Shaftsbury, David Hume, and Adam Smith; fictionists, such as Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne, and Samuel Richardson; and satirists and dramatists, such as Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, and Jonathan Swift, are particularly mentioned often as contributors to its development.

The Connecticut Wits indeed learned about the concept of fraternity and fellow feeling though their education at Yale. According to Elliott, Scottish moral philosophers' works were introduced to colleges in Philadelphia, New Jersey, and New Haven in the late eighteenth century; at Yale, Presidents Thomas Clapp and Ezra Stiles taught Lord Kames' *Elements of Criticism* (1762), James Beattie's *Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth* (1771), and Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783) (30–35). Through these works, students at Yale presumably accessed the theory of sympathy. Furthermore, Howard's study claims their indebtedness to eighteenth-century English literature through the Yale library. At Yale, when Dwight and Trumbull were assigned to tutors in 1770–1771, they attempted to change the curriculum, making

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Literature: American Sentiments from Jefferson to the Jameses (2002), Jay Fliegelman's *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority, 1750–1800* (1982), Julia Stern's *The Plight of Feeling: Sympathy and Dissent in the Early American Novel* (1997), Jane Tompkins's *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790–1860* (1985), and *The Culture of Sentiment: Race, Gender, and Sentimentality in 19th Century America* edited by Shirley Samuels (1992). Also, as for friendship or intimacy, see Derrida, Schweitzer, Coviello, Crain, Lysaker and Rossi.

it focus more on modern literature. To read and discuss these fictions or sentimental fictions more freely, Dwight participated in the Linonian Society, whereas Humphreys, Barlow, and Webster joined the Society of Brothers in Unity. In terms of education, inspiration, and activities, the Connecticut Wits were the children not only of the age of reason but also of the age of passion, sensibility, and a language of fraternity.

Of particular importance is that Humphreys presumably encouraged and performed the discourse of fraternity in a convincing but naïve way, whereas Dwight and Barlow utilized it in a more nuanced manner. Compared with Humphreys, these two men were more ambitious and had a stronger sense of being chosen. Thus, it is hardly surprising that for them, the discourse of fraternity seemed to be an appropriate means to conceal their ambition and self-consciousness. Moreover, as we shall see, the topic of betrayal was an impending issue for Dwight and Barlow; they keenly recognize that the language of fraternity is intimately entangled with the concept of an enemy because it serves to distinguish friends from foes, by which a traitor appears as alterity in between. Conversely, they utilized this discourse to make visible invisibility, insecurity, and the definite alterity of a traitor.

As the etymology of the word “fraternity” is “brother” (the *OED*), when it is used

as discourse, it can be said to function to make strangers connected with one another through fictional familial ties. Because of its unnaturalness, one can suppose that such a fiction must have had specific purposes: the establishment of the clubs at Yale in the 1760s, the composition of the American epic from the 1770s through the 1790s, and the commemoration of the revolutionary period in the 1800s. It is easy to imagine that the language of fraternity was quite convenient to reinforce the strength of solidarity. However, when the strength of solidarity is required, rupture is feared. Rupture is brought about by a traitor, and betrayal is a theme that haunted the revolutionary period, that is, the age of the Connecticut Wits. Specifically, at stake was the loyalists as opposed to the patriots during the Revolutionary War, as well as one of the Connecticut Wits, Joel Barlow. This dissertation argues that the Connecticut Wits' discourse of fraternity involves a tormented awareness of treachery, demonstrating that such a negative but keen sense of anxiety paradoxically impels their composition of the American epic just like how the positive nationalistic spirit, as represented in Berkeley's "Verses," drives them.

The point is that the Connecticut Wits did not necessarily seek for the "American originality" in their epic; the American epic during their time was delivered largely by

chance. Of course, it should not be ignored that they keenly recognize the necessity to distinguish the Americans themselves from the English in the context of the Revolutionary War and the accompanying nationalistic sentiment in terms of politics and literature alike. Simultaneously, however, their identity and epic still draw on the English culture, which is what Parrington captures as "the crust of Puritan provincialism": they could not help but sympathize with the conservative loyalists; indebted to English literary precursors, they persistently confined themselves to Popean heroic couplets in their works.

Certainly, scholars on the American epic have been inclined to argue with the American originality, exceptionality, or unique continuity. Thereby, their narrative of it tends to become pessimistic or to feature strong poets, such as Whitman, Dickinson, and Pound; otherwise, they narrate that the epic as a genre—a long narrative poem narrating a national hero and history in heroic couplets—is gradually replaced with the novel (Georg Lukács's *The Theory of the Novel* and Mikhail M. Bakhtin's "Epic to Novel"). Roy Harvey Pearce finds the American epic in Barlow, Whitman, Pound, Crain, and Williams. Putting Whitman as a pivotal and influential poet, Miller observes a personal factor that resonates the continuity of the American epic. In light of a genre,

John McWilliams argues that the American epic goes beyond the boundary between prose and verse; especially the mock-epic is appreciated by him. More recently, Christopher N. Phillips' framework is more flexible and ambitious; he contends that the American epic did not decline in the nineteenth century; instead, seeing "the elegiac turn in the American epic," Phillips reframes it as a more inclusive genre. Drawing on these recent scholarship, this dissertation deals with an elegy and a mock-epic as a hybrid form of the epic. And yet, this study pays attention to the poets' darker, violent, and gothic imagination to write the epic rather than the generic form itself. Basically, to challenge the epic is no less than an ambitious mission. Such a high self-consciousness is the effect of the Puritan tradition, the Berkelean intervention, and the outbreak of the Revolutionary War.

To capture these intertwining phenomenon, one epic poem is selected from one poet, and six epics in total are offered in a chronological order. The study is divided into three parts: the times of the Revolutionary War (the 1770s–1780s), the Federalist Age (the 1780s–1790s), and the period after the death of George Washington (the 1800s). By mapping their epics chronologically, this inquiry will demonstrate how their epics reflected or deflected not only on the spirit and situation of the times but also on

the other members' epic poems, capturing their transformation as one of the literary movements.

From this perspective, this dissertation traces a twin discourse of fraternity and betrayal in chronological order. Dealing with Timothy Dwight's *The Conquest of Canäan* (1785) and John Trumbull's *M'Fingal* (1776, 1782), Part I argues that their works problematize a traitor, the loyalists during the Revolutionary period, reinterpreting these poems as a trauma epic. In the post-revolutionary period, or the Federalist age, with a strong sense of mission and anxiety about recurrence of the tragic anarchy in "the civil war," the Connecticut Wits as the Federalist intellectuals succeeded in developing their sense of friendship and the language of fraternity alike. Pat II first shows that such a development is observed in *The Anarchiad* (1786–87), cowritten by the members, except Dwight. Although the Federalist Age thrived in the 1780s, it was quite brief; over years, the Connecticut Wits was also forced to transform their organization. This part then demonstrates that Lemuel Hopkins' "Guillotina" (1796–99) challenges the Connecticut Wits itself, because it entails ambivalence about his friend Barlow, a traitor.

Picking up David Humphreys' *A Poem on the Death of General Washington*

(1800, 1804) and Joel Barlow's *The Columbiad* (1807), Part III considers the destination of their poetics of fraternity. Humphreys, the most skilled in the language of fraternity, definitely distinguishes friends from foes to mythologize his intimate friend George Washington as the embodiment of the American Revolution. In contrast, Barlow's *The Columbiad* registers the undecidedness of friends and foes, reflecting recognition that he was none other than a traitor for the friends in Connecticut.

The concluding chapter draws attention to Noah Webster and his epic work *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, published in 1828. Because he participated in the Hartford Friendly Club in the 1780s, Webster shared the belief in the close ties between fraternity and poesy. He enthusiastically admired Dwight's *The Conquest of Canäan*, so he undoubtedly grasped the theme of a traitor in this work. Significantly, he collected the example quotations from the Connecticut Wits' works for *An American Dictionary of the English Language*. This dissertation concludes by locating Webster as an epicist, the last remembrancer in the age of the Connecticut Wits, illustrating one of the effects of the Connecticut Wits' writing of the American epic.

Finally, a brief word about this study's own choosiness will be inserted. This dissertation writes very little about contemporary poets other than the Federalist

Connecticut Wits, despite dozens of texts available from the period covered in this study. For instance, there are such poets as Philip Freneau (1752–1832), St. George Tucker (1752–1827), George Ogilvie (c. 1753–1801), Royall Tyler (1757–1826), and Lemuel Haynes (1753–1833). Moreover, when asking what a brother is, we should also ask what a sister is. In fact, there are several contemporary female poets, such as Judith Sargent Murray (1751–1820), Ann Eliza Bleecker (1752–83), Sarah Wentworth Apthorp Morton (1759–1846), and Phillis Wheatley (c. 1753–84). Using a fixed verse form, they problematize being a female poet and sisterhood. Thus, by juxtaposing these poets with the Connecticut Wits' works, we create a vision of the American epic in the age of the Connecticut Wits that is more nuanced. However, the treatment with these poets is beyond the scope of this dissertation; instead, the fraternal organization of the Connecticut Wits will be the main focus, and a story of the blooming and fading of a sense of fraternity as cultivated in the college upon a hill, Yalensia's walls, will be narrated.

Figure

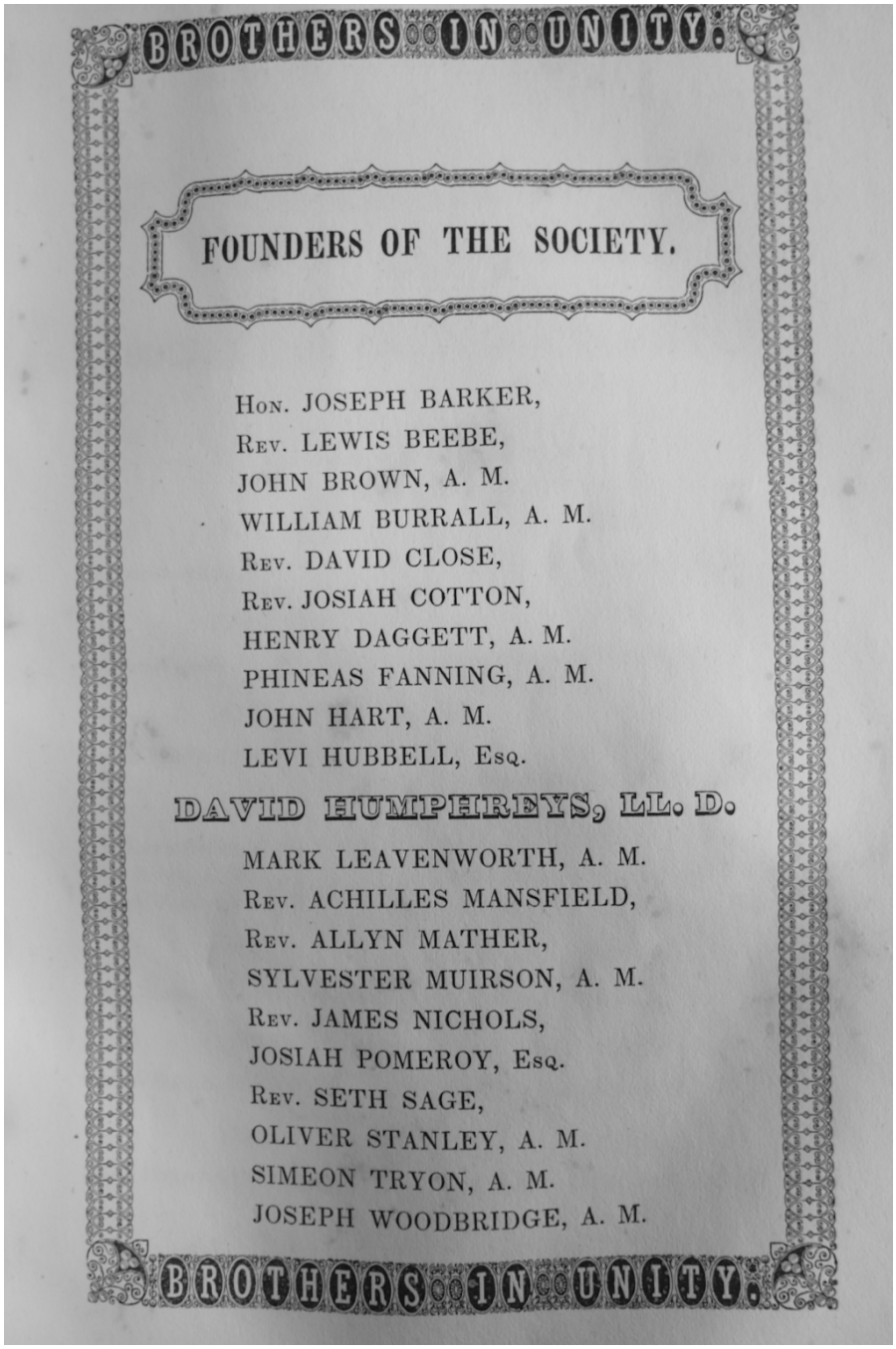

Fig. 1: *A Catalogue of the Society of Brothers in Unity, Yale College, Founded 1768*, 1841, Sterling Memorial Library, New Haven, Manuscripts and Archives.

CHAPTER ONE

Behind Joshua, Under the Shadow of Cain: Timothy Dwight's *The Conquest of Canäan* (1785)

Timothy Dwight's *The Conquest of Canäan* deserves being called the starting point of the American epic of the age of the Connecticut Wits. This chapter illuminates how *The Conquest* registers anxiety about treachery in the context of the Revolutionary War, especially when the shadow of the loyalists is glimpsed. Tracing the vestige of treachery leads to the observation that for Dwight, writing *The Conquest* was a means to survive his own personal crisis. *The Conquest* thus emerge as a trauma epic; Dwight suffered from the memory of his father, a loyalist persecuted by the patriots and forced into exile in the south, where he soon died.

The grandson of Jonathan Edwards and the great-grandson of Solomon Stoddard, Timothy Dwight was born in Northampton in 1752. He first read the Bible at age four, began studying Latin at six, and entered Yale College at thirteen as the youngest member of the class of 1769. Overwork and an ascetic diet limited to twelve mouthfuls of foods at each meal (as he thought he feared overeating would makes him sluggish)

critically impaired Dwight's physical condition. However, at age nineteen, his zealous learning enabled him to start composing *The Conquest*, drawing on his studies on John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Alexander Pope's translation of the *Iliad*, and the Bible as literature at Yale.[1]

"I have read the Conquest of Canaan and the Vision of Columbus," John Adams wrote in the letter to his son, "two Poems which would do honour to any Country and any Age. Read them, and you will be of my mind. Excepting Paradise Lost, I know of nothing Superiour in any modern Language" ("Letter to John Quincy Adams" 96). Dwight's *The Conquest* draws from chapters seven through eleven of the Book of Joshua and concludes with the Israelite conquest of the land of Canaan led by Joshua, the protégé of Moses. Dedicated to George Washington[2] and issued in 1785, just after the end of the Revolutionary War, *The Conquest* seems to reflect the time period's

[1] As for the biography of Dwight, Cuningham's *Timothy Dwight, 1752-1817* (1942) is classic and inclusive; Silverman's *Timothy Dwight* (1969) is a concise and excellent literary biography; and Fitzmier's *New England's Moral Legislator* (1998) is the most recent, objective, and comprehensive, amending the legendary aspect of Dwight in Cuningham's biography and shedding light on Dwight's relationship with father, his indebt to grandfather Edwards, and his suspicious conservative aspects.

Chapter-length but influential literary and biographical studies are Tyler's "A Great College President and What He Wrote" in *Three Men of Letters* (1895), Howard's "Timothy Dwight" and "President Timothy Dwight" in *The Connecticut Wits* (1943), Elliott's "Timothy Dwight: Pastor, Poet, and Politics" in *Revolutionary Writers* (1986), and Grasso's "Reawakening the Public Mind: Timothy Dwight and the Rhetoric of New England" in *A Speaking Aristocracy* (1999).

[2] Dwight wrote in a letter to Washington for asking permission to dedicate *The Conquest* to him. Washington accepted Dwight's request. See Dwight's "Letter to George Washington" 81–82 and Washington's "Letter to Timothy Dwight" 105–06.

nationalistic sentiment.

The Conquest begins with the narrator's lament over the death of numerous Israelites in a battle with the Canaanites, which provokes a dispute over the Israelites' direction between Joshua and Hanniel, who insists that they should return to Egypt (Book I). Important plot points involve Irad and Mina. Irad, called the capitalized "Youth," falls in love with a woman named Selima, exposes Hanniel's conspiracy to Joshua, and suffers a psychological crisis at his father's death but afterward becomes acknowledged as a protégé by Joshua (Books III and V–VII). Stranded in wilderness and rescued by the Gibeonites, Joshua's daughter Mina stays in their camp, acts as a missionary to convert them, and marries Elam, the prince of Gibeon (Books II and IV). When both Irad and Mina die, the Israelites deeply mourn the losses, and Joshua comes to doubt their mission in the land of Canaan, but, at this moment, he has a vision that confirms the Israelites' future (Books VIII–IX). *The Conquest* thus ends with the scene of a battle accomplishing the conquest of Ai (Books X–XI). A main theme of the story is Joshua's completion of the national mission despite obstacles such as Hanniel's conspiracy and the numerous Israelite deaths including Irad and Mina.

Scholars have noted several background influences on *The Conquest*—millennial

thought, theory of the epic, philosophy of history, and Augustan neoclassicism.[3] In a negative assessment, Leon Howard asserts that "Dwight's poem [*The Conquest*] was full of eighteenth-century Americans with Hebrew names who talked like Milton's angels and fought like prehistoric Greeks" (93).[4] Sacvan Bercovitch sees the mentality of "America's mission" in this work (130), and from the standpoint of postcolonial studies, Bill Templer criticizes its imperialist nature as a "narrative construction for the 'New Israel' in New England of a 'New Canaanite alterity' by which to capture and render heathen the first peoples of the Americas, the more righteously to exterminate them in God's name and the colonizers' interest" (360). Certainly, Joshua uses providential terms to justify the war, and the typological relationships between the Israelites and the colonists and between the Canaanites and the indigenous people could well lead to Templer's conclusion.

However, it is also necessary to consider the counter-figure of Hanniel, who resists Joshua's direction and demands a return to Egypt. Moreover, Hanniel suggests

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[3] For millennial thought, see Tuveson 106–08, Lowance 203–06, and Elliott 59–61. For the eighteenth-century theory of the epic, especially Lord Kames' *Elements of Criticism*, see Howard 87–100. For the philosophy of history, see Gamble 13–35. For Augustan neoclassicism and Country ideology (known as Opposition thought), see Dowling 14–15, 66–75.

[4] For the influence of Milton, see Sensabaugh 166–76, Silverman 25–26, and McWilliams 45–46.

the loyalists during the Revolutionary War and even the political status of Dwight's father. Dwight's awareness of the enemy within the community, therefore, prevents the readers from reducing *The Conquest* to an epic that merely commemorates the triumph of independence. Rather, it reveals that it is a narrative of triumph justifying persecution of the loyalists. It thus is fruitful to pay attention to characters beyond Joshua such as Hanniel, Irad, Selima, Mina, and the Canaanite leaders including Jabin and Japhia.[5] This chapter presents to accurately demarcate the limits of Joshua's imperialist discourse and reveal Dwight's inscribed personal struggle in this work.

To this end, the first section examines the transatlantic dispute between the *London Review* and Noah Webster over *The Conquest*, revealing the significance of loyalists in *The Conquest*. The next section draws attention to Irad, demonstrating that Dwight projects himself onto this idealized character called the capitalized "Youth." The last section considers the meaning of Irad's death based on several attitudes toward

[5] Templer mentions Jabin and Oran (376–79) to argue that "the Canaanite leaders in Dwight's poem are fiendish, Satanic" (377), but Templer ignores the refined aspect of Jabin as a leader (which this paper will discuss later) and does not pay attention to Japhia's war poetry. Of course, Japhia may seem a minor character of the several Canaanites Dwight presents, yet Oran is no more than one of them, too. Moreover, Templer mistakes Joshua's daughter, Mina, for a Gibeonite; in doing so, he posits "the element of contrapuntal romance: an Israelite couple (Irad + Selima, Books III and V) and Canaanite/Gibeonite lovers (Elim + Mina) provide 'love scenes' to give some narrative respite to the bloodshed" (377). His mistake leads to neglecting the importance that Mina was part of an interracial marriage between Gibeon and Israel. Also, Mina's spouse is Elam, not Elim.

it—Joshua's justification, Selima's silence, Jabin's insatiable animosity, and the Israelites' compassion, making visible the potentially peaceful power of the Canaanites' poetry.

1. The *London Review* VS Noah Webster

By virtue of John Adams's effort,[6] *The Conquest* was issued in England in 1788 by London publisher Joseph Johnson, a radical intellectual defending the cause of American independence. From Adams's high praise, one might presume that *The Conquest* would be appreciated as a representative American epic there. That, however, was not what happened.

The conservative magazine *European Magazine, and London Review* did not hesitate to harshly criticize *The Conquest* with a sense of superiority and paternalism. The *London Review* concludes that "his poem [*The Conquest]* evinces that he [Dwight] is a young man" (Review of *The Conquest of Canäan* by Timothy Dwight 273). Although the anonymous reviewers admit Dwight's "poetical powers," they claim he lacks "experience," "cultivation," and something "classical" (273). They state that "his

[6] Adams writes in his diary, "I walked to the Booksellers, Stockdale, Cadel, Dilly, Almon, and met Dr. Priestley for the first time. —The Conquest of Canaan, the Vision of Columbus, and the History of Revolution in S. Carolina, were the Subject. . . . Seeds were sown, this Day, which will grow" (*Diary and Autobiography of John Adams* 189).

work is a promising blossom of polite literature sprung up on the American continent" but add that "[we] sincerely hope that Mr. Dwight will improve by our strictures" (273).

The reviewers specifically focus on the following two lines from *The Conquest*:

> Thus, while fond Virtue wish'd in vain to save,
>
> Hale, bright and generous, found a hapless grave. (Book I 75–76)

The reviewers write that "[t]he verb *found* seems to want its *nominative*. We would ask Mr. Dwight, Is it *fond Virtue*, or are *Hale, bright and generous*, personifications that found 'a hapless grave'?" (176; italics original). They continue as follows:

> [W]e would advise him and his brother-poets, either to study the English language with more care, or to write their poems in the tongue of their *great* and *good* allies, those *zealous* and *disinterested* defenders of *liberties* of mankind, the *French*. (Review of *The Conquest of Canäan* by Timothy Dwight 176; italics original)

Reading *The Conquest* as an allegorical narrative of the recent war, the *London Review* not only sarcastically admonishes Dwight and American poets ("his brother-poets") to "study the English language with more care" but also insinuates a political alliance with reference to "the French." The political implication and patronizing tone were sufficient

to prompt Noah Webster to respond: "What a mixture of *ignorance* and *political spleen*!" ("To the Authors of the London Review" 564; italics original). Regarding the nominative "Hale, bright and generous," Webster states, "*Hale*, [is] a Captain in the American service, a native of Connecticut . . . . If you were ignorant of this historical fact, you ought at least to have supposed *Hale* to be the *name of a person*, especially as Dr. Dwight has informed you in a note on the passage" (565; italics original). Thus, Webster continues:

> As you "advise the American Poets to study the English language with more care," permit me, gentlemen, to advise the London Reviewers to *understand the works they review*, before they indulge so much ridicule and severity, or decide with peremptory assurance, on the merit of the writings. ("To the Authors of the London Review" 565; italics original)

What matters here are the difference in Webster's and Dwight's responses to the British criticism. While denying the allegorical aspect of *The Conquest*, Webster protests the British arrogance and paternalist, but Dwight admits his prematurity as a poet, showing humility to the British literary world. Certainly, they agree in denying the *London Review*'s insistence on an allegory between the conquest of Canaan and the

American Revolution. Webster quotes Dwight's letter in which he state, "that the poem is Allegorical, is so far from a foundation . . . it never entered into my mind" (Webster 563).[7] However, in the portion Webster did not cite, Dwight also writes, "[t]hat I should be treated with malignity is not to be wondered at; & that I should be treated with malignity in England is no more than that I should share the common lot of Americans" (qtd. in Zunder 202). Dwight's display of humility to the British literary world can be detected, so it is understandable that Webster did not quote this part.

Nonetheless, the *London Review* might reach the author's inner struggle, consciously or unconsciously. If Dwight's sense of prematurity stems from his personal, traumatic memory, he blinds himself to such personal anxiety by transforming it into a nationally shared anxiety as "the common lot of Americans." To consider this question in more depth, it is useful to examine the *London Review*'s criticism, especially their positive assessment of the character Hanniel.

The *London Review* describes Dwight as a young, premature poet in all respects but his description of Hanniel. The reviewers claim that "Mr. Dwight's defence of

[7] Also, Dwight refuses the allegorical intention on the ground that he almost finished the first draft before the Revolutionary War began and that it was nonsense to imagine "the *Conquest* of a country a proper event, under which to allegorize the *defence* of another country" (qtd. in Zunder 201; italics original). However, Silverman convincingly argues Dwight's allegorical intention, see 30–37.

characters [is] merely fictitious" and consequently, they "have a feeble sameness, and totally void" (84). However, the critics assert that "[t]he character of Hanniel is thus delineated in Mr. Dwight's very best manner, during the consternation and distress of the Israelites" (177), and "Hanniel, who opposes Joshua, and advises at every opportunity the return to Egypt, is by much the best drawn of any in our author" (272).

Let us take a look at Hanniel's description. "[T]he generous Youth" (namely, Irad), disclosed Honniel's plot to return to Egypt against Joshua's will, and consequently, Hanniel experiences tense fear and insecurity within the community:

> Mean time all-watchful. Hanniel round the plain,
>
> From crowd to crowd, inspir'd the busy train.
>
> He knew the plot, the generous Youth disclos'd,
>
> To dark suspicion saw his name expos'd;
>
> To wipe disgrace, his influence to recall,
>
> And, with light, secret snares, to gather all,
>
> From tent to tent he urg'd his active way,
>
> And blam'd with words severe, the wild affray. (Book IV 555–62)

The repeated phrases "From crowd to crowd" and "From tent to tent" emphasize

Hanniel's fear for being "expos'd" to and surrounded by "dark suspicion," which reinforces his sense of isolation within the community. To convince the Israelites that his purpose arises from loyalty to the cause of Israel, Hanniel recalls and stresses his commitment to war (Book IV 565–70). However, his confessional cry reveals his sense of anxiety, resignation, and vanity:

> Me, cried the hero [Hanniel], Israel's thousands know
>
> A fair unchanging friend, or open foe. (Book IV 63–64)

Of course, even as Hanniel claims that "Israel's thousands know" him as "A fair unchanging friend," not an "open foe," speaking the terms "open foe" inevitably acknowledges that some Israelites regard him as a traitor. What matters is not only that the poem presents Hanniel's identity crisis as an Israelite, but also that this character captures the possibility that some American loyalists experienced the same psychological crisis during the Revolutionary period.

If the character of Hannile illustrates the loyalists' inner situation, inviting the *London Review*'s exceptional praise, Dwight's ability to render a description of such a quality should be attributed to his father's existence. As Peter K. Kafer astutely argues, Hanniel represents not only contemporary American loyalists but also Dwight's father

(205). Major Timothy Dwight was a loyalist and an eminent personage in Northampton, but over time, he drew the patriots' hostility. He refused to sign affidavits supporting the patriot cause, so he was jailed, though not for long. Afterwards, realizing the difficulty of making a living in Northampton, he chose to join the Lyman venture to settle western Florida, but he died after arriving there.[8]

Certainly, the author Dwight was a patriot who participated in the Revolutionary War as a chaplain, and Joshua's vision in Book X of *The Conquest* sees America as "a new Canaan's promis'd shores" (508), seemingly referring to the cause of the American independence and its glorious future (556–57). Nonetheless, Dwight was haunted ceaselessly by the fate of his father, helplessly swallowed by the flood of the times. As Kafer and John R. Fitzmier both explain, Dwight recounts the details of the Lyman venture his father joined in the travelogue *Travels in New England and New York* (1821–22) but does not mention his father's name, though he definitely knew that his father participated in it. Fitzmier reasons that "this omission indicates Dwight's embarrassment over his father's loyalism" (36), but it could simply indicate repression of this traumatic memory. It does not necessarily mean that Dwight chose not to write

[8] For more details, see Kafer 193–96 and Fitzmier 34–36. The tragedy of Dwight's father was, of course, not unusual among the contemporary loyalists; see Janice vii.

about this matter; rather, he simply could not.

Whether intentionally or unintentionally, the *London Review*'s review touches the core of *The Conquest*. The allegorical reading and praise of Hanniel's description inevitably raise Dwight's memory of his loyalist father. Dwight's denial of the allegory expresses his desire to deny traces of his loyalist father, yet he also inscribes this personal conflicts into *The Conquest*.

2. Vestiges of A Traumatic Memory

Such conflicts are seen in the character Irad on whom Dwight projects himself.[9] Indeed, Irad's loss of his father Hezron corresponds to Dwight's own loss. From this perspective, Irad's confessional monologue about his father's death merits attention. Irad is grief-stricken, refusing to accept the death. Highlighting Hezron's pure soul, Irad begins to question heaven as to why his father's life has been discarded, but he halts before finishing his sentence:

> Why, O thou righteous Mind? but cease my tongue,
>
> Nor blame the dread decree, that cannot wrong.

[9] Silverman also detects in Irad the figure of Dwight in terms of correspondence between Dwight's marriage with Mary Woolsey and the romance of Irad and Selima, although Silverman considers this romance as "a fatal irrelevance" (24).

Mine the sole fault—and mine the single blame—

Wild with the magic of that phantom, fame. (Book VII 99–102)

Under "the dread decree, that cannot wrong," Irad comes to attribute Hezron's death to himself ("Mine the sole fault—and mine the single blame"). Of particular importance is that his father's death reveals Irad's secret desire for "the magic of that phantom, fame," which forces him into an endless compunction. Next, his sense of guilt is foregrounded:

Pale, in the visions of the guilty bed,

Thy form affrights me, and thine eye upbraid. (Book VII 115–16)

In his nightmare, Irad sees a ghastly image far from that of his generous, affable, and sanguine father: his "[g]ash'd" cheek, "lofty eye," "beard of snow," and "brow" on which "death's cold terrors hover'd" (Book VII 42–44). Irad attempts to justify Hezron's death in providential terms but cannot. Instead, he tries to resolve his guilt by engaging in the war for his nation and his lover Selima on behalf of Hezron (117–30).

Considering the correspondence between the losses of Irad and Dwight, the former's decision to dedicate himself to the national war out of a sense of guilt can be seen to recall Dwight's engagement with writing of the American epic dedicated to

Washington—the embodiment of the cause of the American Revolution—driven by a sense of guilt for his father's fate. Although Dwight states that he started writing *The Conquest* in 1771, so he could not have made it an allegory of the Revolutionary War, it is also possible that the experience of a traitor within his family transformed *The Conquest* into a more "American" work reflecting the current situation of both his nation and his family.

Of course, it seems arrogant for Dwight to project himself onto Irad, the capitalized "Youth." Irad's story at first reads like a bildungsroman, particularly a bildungsroman of young America represented by the idealized "Youth." Moreover, the cover page of *The Conquest* bears Alexander Pope's lines: "Fired, at first sight, with what the Muse imparts, / In fearless youth we tempt the height of arts."[10] Considering the importance given to the terms "fearless youth," what Irad embodies is the leitmotif in *The Conquest*. He is a pivotal figure driving the narrative of *The Conquest*. After encountering Selima, he learns love and sympathy from her, and urged by a sage, he starts to participate in the war. Although he loses his father, the psychological crisis

[10] In Pope's original lines in *Essay on Criticism*, the noun "height" is plural. McWilliams regards this change as Dwight's intention, saying that "[b]y dropping the plural from Pope's phrase 'heights of Arts,' Dwight admitted, albeit tacitly, that his particular rashness had been a matter of the literary epic" (52).

makes him a man, and he is finally acknowledged as Joshua's protégé. However, Irad dies, and while lamenting him, Joshua, Selima, and all Israelites express doubt about their direction, although Joshua ultimately has a vision that justifies Irad's death, leading to the climax of the narrative of *The Conquest*.

At stake is the significance of Irad's death. Does it signals the failure of the mission of young America? Or, taking into consideration the plot that Irad's death functions for Joshua to strengthen the Israelites' solidarity, should the reader think that the American mission requires the sacrifice of the capitalized Youth? Instead, the last section indicates that killing Irad in the text serves as a means to heal Dwight's survivor's guilt. Significantly, the name "Irad" recalls the biblical figure Cain. Charged with the murder of his brother Abel, Cain is exiled to the land of Nod, where he begets Enoch, and Enoch begets Irad (Genesis 4:18).[11] The trace of fratricide inherited by the name Irad reverberates with Dwight's sense of being the son of a traitor.[12] His self-

[11] "And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch. And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech" (Genesis 4:16–18).

[12] The association between Cain and the loyalists was likely shared in the Connecticut Wits. For instance, in *M'Fingal* (1782) John Trumbull identifies the loyalists forced to exile with Cain: "See where, reliev'd from sad embargo, / Steer off consign'd a recreant cargo, / Like old scape-goats to roam in pain, / Mark'd like their great fore-runner, Cain" (Canto IV 165).

projection onto Irad, therefore, might suggest recognition of himself as a descendant of Cain, the blood relative of a criminal.[13] The episode in which Irad exposes Hanniel's conspiracy to return to Egypt against Joshua's will thus can be interpreted as Dwight' denial of his loyalist father. Irad, the idealized Youth, represents Dwight's devotion to the cause of the Revolutionary War. Simultaneously, however, Irad registers Dwight's remaining anxiety. By killing Irad instead of himself, metaphorically terminating the blood linage of a criminal and justifying the death as indispensable in the narrative for the American epic, Dwight successfully sublimates his thanatos into inspiration for poetry. To better understand this argument, it is profitable to give special attention to the responses to Irad's dead body by Joshua, Selima, the Israelite soldiers, and the Canaanite leader Jabin.

[13] Dwight's awareness of being a grandson naturally reminds us of his grandfather Edwards. The fact that Edwards was expelled from the Northampton church would throw a shadow upon Dwight via his mother. According to Fitzmier, "Mary Edwards Dwight was the only member of the Edwards household to remain in Northampton after Edwards's removal to Stockbridge. Though she joined the Northampton church in 1771 and lived in the town until her death in 1807, she refused to sit with her neighbors in the meetinghouse during Sunday services, choosing instead a long chair set aside for her in the vestibule of the church. . . . Given her evident animosity against her neighbors and the fact that she raised her eldest son 'in the Edwards manner,' it is entirely plausible to think that the spectre of the martyred Edwards dwelt in the Dwight household" (32). Also, for the correspondence between Edwards and Dwight in their biographies, see Fitzmier 32–34.

3. Irad's Dead Body Revisited: "Deep in His Bosom Plung'd the Cruel Blade"

Joshua's troop welcomes Irad as the son of Hezron after his death: "Oh best of youths! . . . I lov'd thy fire, the good, the just, the brave . . . My son, my chosen, still prolong thy days" (Book VIII 107–12). Irad, however, is killed in this battle, and his death is dramatized with the narrator's inserted lamentation: "When—loveliest Youth! why did thy buckler's bound / Shield but thy breast? why not thy form surround? . . . He fell—a groan sad-murmur'd round the host, / Their joy, their glory, and their leader lost" (349–56).

Upon the death of Irad, Joshua first falls into grief and silence: "To speak the Leader tried, / But the choak'd accents on his palate died" (Book VIII 921–22). The impact of Irad's death is so significant that the Israelites begin to doubt their battle and direction. As the leader of the Israelites, Joshua grows increasingly uneasy: "Oh, when shall Israel's countless sorrow's cease? / And war once more resign to lasting peace? . . . Why princes, chiefs, and generous thousands fall?" (Book IX 702–08). Joshua, though, cast away his doubt after receiving vision (719–76) showing that "[w]hat though brave Irad from the world retir'd, / Tho' numerous bands around his steps expir'd . . . That virtuous Youth, and all those bands, were mine" (767–70). For Joshua, Irad's death

becomes a sacrifice for the community and it is overcome through the machination of the vision, the providential terms, the framework of the epic. Seen in light of an allegorical interpretation—even though Dwight denies this allegory—the vision's justification of Irad's death can correspond to justification of the many deaths in the Revolutionary War. Narrating the conquest of Canaan or the triumph of the Revolutionary War in the form of the epic leads the survivors to manage their grief and to advance after crisis.

For Selima, however, Irad's death remains personal, and she cannot justify it with a providential discourse as Joshua does. In front of Irad's dead body, Selima falls into "blank despair" (Book IX 16). Anxious about Selima's mental state, her mother tries to pull her out of her stupor: "Awake! oh wake! . . . My child! my darling! nature's loveliest pride! / Awake, and hear! oh hear thy mother's call! . . . Turn, turn thine eye!" (17–23). Selima responds to her mother's voice but remains depressed. Calling herself "[h]is best Selima, and his chosen fair" (98), she claims that her relationship with Irad was exceptional:

> Shall I, O sire! with common anguish weep?
>
> And o'er his grave, with dull indifference, sleep?

Dumb fields, and senseless forests would reprove

Such base oblivion of so bright a love. (Book IX 99–102)

Selima distinguishes her grief from that of others. She cannot share a "common anguish" because it seems equivalent to "dull indifference," or worse, it can bring about the "base oblivion of so bright a love." Selima's parents, however, cannot grasp her insistence on the singularity of her love. They express sympathy to console their daughter: "Like thine, our wishes the bless'd Youth approv'd; / Like thee, we chose him, and like thee, we lov'd" (111–12), they acknowledge her "boundless grief" (114), but then her father warns her: "Bid thee, submissive, to thy Maker fall . . . Bid thee to him thy patient thoughts resign, / And blame thy wanderings, with a love like mine" (119–22). To her father, Selima's grief constitutes blameful "wanderings." Her father keeps pointing out the bounds of grief and pain:

From grief's excess, thy parent would restrain,

Assert Heaven's right, and fix the bounds of pain. (Book IX 123–24)

Even so, Selima cannot agree with her father's argument and she replies in a depressed tone, "Ah sire rever'd! . . . No common loss thy hapless daughter mourns" (125–26). Consequently, she cannot help but fall quiet: "Silenc'd, but not reliev'd, her drooping

mind / Fail'd not to sigh, nor yet to Heaven resign'd" (223–24).

The significance of the contrast between Joshua's public justification and Selima's personal silence became evident in a sense as by chance Israelite warriors discover Irad's body. They react to his death differently: one sees the capitalized "Beauty," and the other "beauty":

> Ah! hapless Youth! cried one, with tender voice,
>
> The Gods' fair offspring, form'd for milder joys!
>
> A face like thine the gentlest thoughts must move,
>
> The gaze of Beauty, and the song of Love.
>
> Sleep on, fair hero! for thy corse must lie
>
> Bare to the fury of a stormy sky. (Book VIII 509–14; emphasis added)

The other warrior's response is expressed as follows:

> Thus he. His friend, by softer passions warm'd,
>
> By grief afflicted, and by beauty charm'd,
>
> Cries sadly—No; for when my steps return,
>
> This bleeding breast thy early fate shall mourn;
>
> The melting song declare thy hapless doom,

> And my own hand erect thy head a tomb. (Book VIII 515–20; emphasis added)

The former warrior sees in Irad's body "Beauty," while the latter does not. The former warrior's speech has consistently affectionate tone with the use of terms such as "tender voice" and exclamation marks ("for milder joy!" and "fair hero!"), while the latter warrior is more dismayed, speaking of "bleeding breast" and an expected "melting song." The modal auxiliary "must" in the former's response is perhaps grounded in his religious reasoning ("The Gods' fair offspring"), while the latter's use of "shall" suggests that his morning arises from his personal will, so he claims that his "own hand" will build a tomb for Irad. Joshua's justification can be seen in the former, and Selima's resistance to sharing Irad's death in the latter.

More importantly, when coming upon Irad's body, these two warriors "[s]topp'd," "[s]urvey'd his charms," and "wish'd no more the fight":

> Even there, two warriors, rushing o'er the plain,
> O'er crimson torrents, and o'er piles of slain,
> Stopp'd, when the lovely form arose to sight,
> Survey'd his charms, and wish'd no more the fight. (Book VIII 505–08)

After passing through “crimson torrents” and “piles of slain,” “the lovely form” of Irad’s dead body suddenly attracts them and draws their minds to peace. Kenneth Silverman points out that Dwight has a “personal and lifelong abhorrence of war” (38), while Christopher N. Phillips states “the true center of the work . . . is the prospect of a world without war” (49).

Needless to say, it is too naïve to claim that the poem presents Irad’s dead body as an end to war. Jabin, the Canaanite leader, is not calmed but infuriated at seeing the dead body of “beauteous Irad” and plunges “the cruel blade” into Irad’s bosom:

> Grim Jabin, frowning o’er his hapless head,
>
> Deep in his bosom plung’d the cruel blade . . .
>
> No worth, no bravery could his rage disarm,
>
> Nor smiling love could melt, nor angel-beauty charm. (VIII 375–80)

The emphasis here is not necessarily Jabin’s barbarity. Elsewhere, he is described as a refined leader: “A genius vast, with cool attention join’d, / To wisdom fashion’d his superior mind . . . The arts of peace, and arts of war, he knew” (Book VII 479–82). Moreover, his “[i]nterest” is “[u]nmov’d by passion, and unmov’d by pride” (485–86). Jabin’s reaction to Irad’s body, therefore, represents not his barbarity but the depth and

intensity of his animosity: that is, Dwight's tortured recognition of a chain of ceaseless vengeance. Thus, by writing Irad's death, or simulating the loss of the idealized Youth, Dwight deepens his thought on war and how to cut the chain of struggle and violence. Although Irad's dead body could help end the war, Jabin's reaction seems to point to a pessimistic conclusion.

However, the case of Japhia, another leader of the Canaanites, provides a glimpse of poetry's possibility Dwight writes down. No sooner does Japhia appear than he dies: "There, thron'd in state, and dress'd in burnish'd steel, / Lachish' fair prince, Japhia, hapless fell" (Book XI 679–80). He deserves special attention, though, because he is presented as a warrior poet. He loved "the realms of nature to explore" (686) and is not charmed in "martial fame" (694) but is fascinated by battle scenes: the "stormy grandeur of the troubled field," "morn, that trembles o'er the steel-bright plains," and "whirlwind car, wing'd steed, and clashing trains" (696–98). The narrator tells:

> Such scenes the warrior [Japhia] sung. The swains around
>
> Hung on th' enchantment of the wildering sound:
>
> Soft o'er the lyre the voice of music pass'd,
>
> Wild as the woodland warblings of the waste;

Each savage soften'd, as the numbers rose,

Forsook his falchion, and forgot his foes. (Book XI 699–704)

The contrast between the soft and the wild dominates the description of Japhia's war poetry. His voice passes "[s]oft o'er the lyre" but at the same time "wild." As the tone of his voice becames higher and stronger ("the numbers rose"), the listeners are "soften'd" to the extent that, significantly, they "[f]orsook his [their] falchion[s], and forgot his [their] foes." Similarly, as the readers first hear the repeated, sibilant "s" sound, this sound and enjambment show that they accord with "the wildering sound." However, via one of the sonorants, "l" ("Soft o'er the lyre"), the readers are invited to the alliteration of sonorants "w" accompanied by "l" ("Wild as the woodland warblings of the waste"). The amplified, resonant sounds of Japhia's voice soften the minds of savages. Then the alliterative concatenation of fricatives "f," "s," and "ʃ" echoes with each other, making it seems as if the readers hear falchions clashing and clanging when dropped to the earth.

Regarding poetry as "an aural teacher" (through, for instance, pronunciation, accent, meter, and couplets) and drawing attention to the soundscape of *The Conquest*, Wendy Raphael Roberts argues that the poem is "a poetic engagement in the struggle

over the ear" (125). As Vernon Louis Parrington describes Dwight "a sonorous declaimer" (*Main Currents in American Thought* 362), Roberts highlights the sounds of thunder and storm as sublime imagery and indication of divine intervention, reevaluating them as "Dwight's key pedagogical lesson" (129). However, the sound of a poet's voice also deserves attention as Dwight's poetical tutor. Here, in the middle of the battlefield, the readers glimpse the power of poetry, which is also found in Irad's dead body that can make soldiers forget their foes. Japhia is a foe belonging to the tribe of Lachish, one of the five groups allied against the Israelites; it, therefore, follows that, if one interprets these verses as a meta-poem, Dwight attributes the power of poetry to the "savage" Canaanites—a racial alterity. Readers might find it unrealistic that the Canaanites forget the foes, too simple that Dwight idealizes the figure of Japhia, and too problematic that Dwight likens Japhia to Moses ("Such songs, as Moses, uninspir'd, might sing" [683]). Dwight's hope for an end to a chain of ceaseless vengeance brought about by the virtue of poetry, though, should not be ignored.

Coda

Roy Harvey Pearce does not deal with Dwight's *The Conquest* in his chapter

entitled “The Long View: An American Epic,” but Silverman, quoting Pearce’s definition of the American epic, expresses appreciation for *The Conquest*:

> The American epic, Pearce concludes, “is not about history; it is history—the history of men pondering what it might mean to be heroic enough to make history.” But Dwight knew precisely what it meant to “make history,” and he felt that America would make it. The true hero of the poem is Dwight himself, the history-maker, his culture’s representative man. . . . *The Conquest of Canäan* is a gesture of cultural maturity. It celebrates itself. (*Timothy Dwight* 45; italics original)

And yet, Dwight knew more precisely what it is concealed to “make history.” Even though Joshua seems to be an imperialist, and his slaughter of the Canaanites is questionable from a contemporary perspective, it should not be overlooked that Dwight inscribes both Jabin’s hostility and Japhia’s poetry into *The Conquest*: Dwight ceaselessly oscillates between despair and hope but he never completely abandoned the latter. His personal crisis drove him to write the American epic *The Conquest,* enabling him to challenge Joshua’s national framework. In this sense, *The Conquest* is neither an empty dream of “the American epic” nor a castle in the air; it is grounded on

Dwight's flesh, blood, and dense agony. Behind the figure of Joshua is glimpsed the shadow of Cain, the vestige of the forgotten, dead traitor's fate.

CHAPTER TWO

The Repressed Scenes: John Trumbull's *M'Fingal* (1782)

If *The Conquest of Canäan* is the first American epic dealing with the Revolutionary War, John Trumbull's *M'Fingal* is the first mock epic featuring the same incident. Juxtaposing *The Conquest* with Trumbull's *M'Fingal*, which also problematizes the existence of a loyalist traitor, this chapter examines Trumbull's aloof attitude toward the politics in that period.

In 1750, John Trumbull was born in Waterbury, Connecticut, to the Reverend John Trumbull, the first pastor of the Congregational Church in the parish, and Sarah Whitman Trumbull, the grand-daughter of the Reverend Solomon Stoddard. He began memorizing the primer and Isaac Watts's hymns at age two, read the entire Bible by age four, and passed entrance examination at Yale at age seven; but, because of his extreme youth and ill health, he was not sent to reside at Yale until he turned thirteen in 1763. After graduation, he became a Berkeley scholar in 1767, gained master of Arts degree in 1770, began two-year tutor-ship in 1771 at Yale; from 1773, he served as a

clerk at John Adams' Boston office.[1]

"He was now placed in the center of American politics," Trumbull, recalling the days of 1773, writes about himself ("Memoir" 15). After moving to New Haven and at the request of his congregational friends, he composed the first part of *M'Fingal*, published in 1776. In 1781, he began practicing law in Hartford and enjoyed the Hartford Friendly Club with Humphreys, Barlow, and Hopkins, who encouraged him to revise the 1776 edition of *M'Fingal*. Then, it was developed into four cantos and published as *M'Fingal: A Modern Epic Poem* in 1782.

M'Fingal: A Modern Epic Poem clearly plays on James Macpherson's *Fingal, An Ancient Epic Poem* (1762). The titular hero M'Fingal belongs to "Ossian's famed Fingalian race" (4), but in saying, "Old Fingal spelt it with a MAC . . . great M'Pherson . . . We hope will add [MAC] the next edition" (4),[2] *M'Fingal* playfully challenges "ancientness" to make room for the "modern" American epic. It consists of four cantos. The first and the second cantos depict the partisan debate at the

[1] As for the biography of Trumbull written in the twentieth century, Cowie's *John Trumbull: Connecticut Wit* (1936) is classical and comprehensive, and Gimmestad's *John Trumbull* (1974) is a concise and excellent literary biography. Important chapter-length literary and biographical studies are Howard's "John Trumbull" in *The Connecticut Wits* (1943), and Grasso's "Print, Poetry, and Politics: John Trumbull and the Transformation of the Public Sphere" in *A Speaking Aristocracy* (1999).

[2] The page number references in this paper is based on the 1820 version of *M'Fingal* included in *The Poetical Works, vol. I.*

revolutionary town meeting between the Tory M'Fingal and his political opponent, the Whig Honorius. In the third canto, M'Fingal falls victim to the tar-and-feather lynching at the liberty pole, and in the final cantos, he enthusiastically narrates his captured nightmarish vision to his fellow Tories. Trumbull's mock epic criticizes not only "Old Fingal" but also the American society of the revolutionary period.

Previous studies have shown Trumbull's debt to the English satirists, such as Samuel Butler, Matthew Prior, Jonathan Swift, and Charles Churchill.[3] Drawing attention to the different tones between the 1776 and the 1782 versions, they have acknowledged Trumbull's shift from a criticism of loyalists to a more balanced critique of both parties.[4] However, such an aloof attitude toward the politics of that period that is depicted in the later edition requires a more careful investigation. With reference to Trumbull's commitment to literature, this chapter argues that this shift is derived from his disappointment with political theater, and such disappointment is intimately

[3] See Cowie 147–55; Howard 70–77; Granger 499–508; Gimmestad 88–90; Briggs 22–24; McWilliams 72–79; Dowling 23–26. Briggs negatively emphasizes Trumbull's indebtedness. In response, Giles questions Briggs' two assumptions: "that the British models, Pope and others, were proponents of 'historical and moral order'" and "that American poets in the late eighteenth century were concerned with the invention of some cultural 'coherence' or 'teleology'" (54); in doing so, he reevaluates *M'Fingal* as having "a perverse desire" (48) or tendency toward "transgression" (55) by subtilizing the transatlantic reception of Alexander Pope's mock epic *The Dunciad*.

[4] See Cowie 192–93; Howard 71–72; Granger 506; Gimmestad 97–100; Ferguson 107; McWilliams 78; Grasso 312.

connected to his friendship with Dwight.[5] If Boston was the hub of politics, New Haven and Hartford were a little off center in terms of politics but perfect as the heart of literary endeavor. A sense of distance allows him to seize what happened behind the scenes in the American Revolution and to create a unique epic in the age of the Connecticut Wits.

To this end, the first section examines the scene where M'Fingal falls victim to the tar-and-feather lynching, revealing that what Trumbull problematizes most is its ritualized aspect. The next section investigates the difference not only between the 1776 and the 1782 versions but also among the 1792, the 1795, and the 1820 versions, showing the author's active engagement in literary labor. The last section subtlizes M'Fingal's social and psychological situations, revealing that his deep disappointment with the politics of that period closely relates to his friendship with Dwight.

1. A Critique of the Ritualized Lynching

As Takayuki Tatsumi points out, the tar-and-feather lynching essentially

[5] Ferguson also deals with this dilemma, explaining the former's priority in terms of the legal education received by lawyer-writers, including Trumbull, making much of reading, thinking, and observing. From this angle, he argues that "what Trumbull criticized most in the revolutionary zealots of *M'Fingal* was their loss of respect for law" (107).

constitutes the tradition of the American black humor (312), which can be traced from Hugh Henry Brackenridge's *Modern Chivalry* (1792–1815), Nathaniel Hawthorne's "My Kinsman, Major Molineaux" (1832), Edgar Allan Poe's "The System of Dr. Tarr and Professor Fether" (1845) and "Hop-Frog" (1849), and Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884). Trumbull's *M'Fingal*, which presents the scene of the tar-and-feather lynching as well, should be added to this lineage. The tone of Trumbull's work just seems comical and less sympathetic to the victim M'Fingal, but such a black-humored scene divulges its ritualized trait in which the patriots carried out the lynching to know themselves from their foes—the loyalists—in the name of "liberty."

Take a glimpse at the procedure of the lynching. After the clerk "proclaims the dread decree" that M'Fingal should be lynched, the mob of patriots "proceed to deck / With halter'd noose M'FINGAL's neck," tying him "to the pole" (112–13). Next, they pour tar over M'Fingal.

> Then lifting high the ponderous jar,
>
> Pour'd o'er his head the smoaking tar. (Canto III, 113)

The author then describes the figure of M'Fingal over twenty-four lines; evoking the mythic landscape where mountain rivers flood down the Giant Enceladus' back (113–

14), the amount of tar is emphasized. M'Fingal's bulk is considerable, whereas minutely detailed descriptions of his wig, visage, arms, cuffs, nose, and chin continue (114). Next, the author zoomes out to capture the whole figure of M'Fingal: "He glitter'd to the western ray, / Like sleet-bound trees in wintry skies, / Or Lapland idol carved in ice" (114–15). The glittering blackness of M'Fingal is ironically superimposed on a "Lapland idol carved in ice."

The feathering process follows. Similar to the tar, the amount of the feathers is emphasized, and divine imageries, such as "Maia's son" and "Milton's six-wing'd angel" (115), are mentioned. The decoration for M'Fingal is then complete:

> Now all complete appears our 'Squire [M'Fingal],
>
> Like Gorgon or Chimæra dire;
>
> Nor more could boast on Plato's plan
>
> To rank among the race of man,
>
> Or prove his claim to human nature,
>
> As a two-legg'd, unfeather'd creature. (Canto III, 115)

Because of his appearance, M'Fingal is dealt with as one who does not belong to "the race of man" nor claims "human nature." A footnote explains that "Plato's plan" is

"[a]lluding to Plato's famous definition of Man, *Animal bipes implume*—a two-legged animal without feathers" (115; italics original). Fully feathered, he is thus excluded from Plato's definition. The readers enjoy the contrast between M'Fingal, reduced to a beast, and a celestial beings—Maia's son and Milton's six-wing'd angel. Or, through the imagery of "Gorgon or Chimaera," M'Fingal is finally transformed into a hybrid monster—a combination of a celestial being, a human, and a beast. Or the readers see a parodic figure of "a missing link," the concept of which had been basically rooted in Plato's principle of plenitude and Aristotle's idea of continuity, pervading the eighteenth-century Enlightenment intellectuals' society.[6]

Sharp contrast and conceit—a far-fetched conjunction of very dissimilar things—seem effective in entertaining the readers to the extent that they forget that this incident is a lynching. However, it should not be overlooked that this unbearable physical pain of torture must never be laughable. Historically speaking, Bertram Wyatt-Brown claims that the origin is uncertain, but its genealogy can be traced back to post-Homeric Greece (441). The *OED* writes that the "practice [of tarring and feathering] was imposed by an ordinance of Richard I in 1189 as a punishment in the navy for theft." Benjamin H.

[6] For the concept of a missing link in eighteenth-century England, see Lovejoy 183–287.

Irvin explains that this practice was imported to New England later in the 1760s, and the number of lynchings reached its peak in 1775 (200–38).[7] What matters is that in typical cases, the most painful moments occur after the tar dries: "[o]nce dry, tar clung tenaciously to the skin and could be removed only with a tremendous amount of scrubbing, possibly with the aid of turpentine or other chemical solvents that would further irritate the skin. Presumably, most victims lost a good deal of body hair" (Irvin 204).

Trumbull's depiction does not mention such pain; his focus lies on ritualized violence. As Irvin argues, the tar-and-feather lynching serves to distinguish the patriot executers from their enemies, the loyalists, in the name of "American liberties" (229). From this angle, a noteworthy scene portrays M'Fingal paraded with his buddy, called "the Constable." Similar to the tarring and feathering scenes, Trumbull caricatures the parade using metaphors, beginning with a reference to the "grand Duumvirate":

> Then on the fatal cart, in state
>
> They raised our grand Duumvirate. (Canto III, 115)

The allusion to Rome highlights the solemnity of the procession (115); importantly, the

[7] According to Irvin's appendix, the numbers of the incidents were as follows: 1766–70 = 21, 1771–73 = 6, 1774 = 10; 1775 = 32, 1776 = 5, and 1777–80 = 5 (230–38).

requirement of "lustrations" for such a solemn procession is then mentioned:

> At every shrine perform'd lustrations;
>
> And least infection might take place
>
> From such grim fowl with feather'd face,
>
> All Rome attends him through the street
>
> In triumph to his country seat . . . . (Canto III, 116)

It follows that "All Rome," who praises their Duumvirate, would protect the Duumvirate's purity from the infection caused by "such grim fowl with feather'd face," which, of course, alludes to M'Fingal, tarred and feathered. Accordingly, the scene featuring America turns out to be the reversed version of that portraying Rome; the procession is infected from within. If the Roman Duumvirate is enshrined at the top of society, *M'Fingal*'s Duumvirate is placed at the bottom of it. As such, M'Fingal is humiliated with and excluded from "the martial music," the music for the patriots, consisting of "horns and fiddles, fifes and drums, / With jingling sound of carriage belles" (116). At the end of this ritual, the political fissure becomes articulated:

> And at fit periods every throat
>
> Combined in universal shout;

And hail'd great Liberty in chorus,

Or bawl'd 'confusion to the Tories.' (Canto III, 116)

Liberty belongs to the Whig, and confusion is the fate of the Tory. To make this distinction, the lynching is carried out. Moreover, the phrase "great Liberty" shouted by the patriots reveals the author's keen verbal awareness. In the beginning of Canto III, M'Fingal appears under the "liberty" pole with the American flag inscribed with the words "*Liberty* and *thirteen stripes*" (85; italics original), ridiculing it: "What mad-brain'd revel gave commissions, / To raise this May-pole of sedition? / Like Babel, rear'd by bawling throngs, / With like confusion too of tongues" (87). For M'Fingal, the liberty pole is equivalent to the "May-pole," the symbol of sedition, and more importantly, to "Babel." If here, M'Fingal insinuates that the patriots fell into "confusion of tongues," such confusion means that not only do the patriots speak ill but also that their words belie their seemingly liberal slogan:

And when by clamours and confusions,

Your freedom's grown a public nuisance,

Cry "Liberty," with powerful yearning,

As he does "Fire!" whose house is burning . . . . (Canto III, 90)

What is revealed is the patriots' barbarity, their call for "Fire." The word "liberty" no longer means liberty. As a result of the patriots' blindness to what they say and do, M'Fingal is lynched in the name of liberty. Reconsider the last scene of the parade. At first glance, these four lines emphasize the harmony of the patriots' cry for "Liberty" in terms of their "universal shout" and "chorus." However, it is a cacophony that is revealed by two couplets: "throat/shout" and "chorus/Tories," which are imperfect and feminine. Thus, the words present harmony and concordance, whereas the rhymes cannot help but suggest discordance. Even though the tar-and-feather lynching is ritualized and violence is justified in the name of liberty, the rhyme scheme divulges the hidden contradiction. The moment when M'Fingal is laughed at in a comic manner is the very instant when the readers should question what dwells under such laughter.

Trumbull's mocking tone, as found in *M'Fingal*, corresponds to his aloof attitude toward the then ongoing political debate between Whigs and Tories. In fact, although he critiques the patriots' ritualized lynching, his description does not sympathize with the victim Tory M'Fingal, as already noted. The next section argues that such an aloof pose is derived not only from a balanced, matured perspective that he gains as time goes by but also from his active commitment to the literary endeavor. To this end, it is

profitable to trace Trumbull's trajectory from 1776 (when he published the early version of *M'Fingal*) through 1825 (when he issued the final and authorized version of *M'Fingal*).

2. The Repressed Scenes of the American Revolution

What matters first is Trumbull's elitist mentality and hatred of popular audiences. *M'Fingal* enjoyed a warm reception by revolutionary intellectuals, such as George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and other founding fathers (Gimmestad 91–92). Although this work drew significant attention and was reprinted many times from the 1780s and the 1790s,[8] Trumbull was quite annoyed with it. Noting that *M'Fingal* had "more than thirty different impressions," he retrospectively grumbled in his "Memoir" in 1820 "the poem [*M'Fingal*] remained the property of newsmongers, hawkers, pedlars, and petty chapmen" (19).

Such dissatisfaction partly came from his belief that his efforts to establish "American literature" after the Revolutionary War were in vain. What he considered necessary was not only the production of a literary work itself but also an appropriate

[8] See Cowie 192–93.

environment for writers to write, publish, and make their living through it. In 1783, Trumbull tried to protect literary works and authors' rights from publishers of pirate editions by calling for a copyright law. Indeed, the late eighteenth century witnessed a flourishing of the printing industry, comprising the *Connecticut Gazette* (1755), the *New-London Gazette* (1764), the *Connecticut Courant* (1765), the *Connecticut Journal* and *the New-Haven Post-Boy* (1767), and the *Norwich Packet* (1773). Furthermore, "[d]uring this same period, Connecticut entrepreneurs began making their own paper (1766), casting type (1769), and building presses (1775)" (Grasso 299–300). These situations benefited Trumbull but damaged him as well. He was able to cultivate his literary skill throughout the 1760s and the 1770s by engaging in writing and submitting his essays in several periodicals, but his work *M'Fingal* was swallowed in a printing maelstrom.

To gain control of his work, Trumbull presented "For the Connecticut Courant" in the January 7, 1783 issue of the *Connecticut Courant,* calling for a copyright law: "[w]hoever wished to see this new-born empire improve in literature and arts, must wish to see this property secured by law, for the necessary encouragement of literary productions" (2). Grasping literature and arts in a national framework, Trumbull

expressed the requirement of the law that secured literary property and encouraged writers to engage in literary productions. Consequently, Connecticut passed a copyright act in 1783, although "charges of pirating and monopolization continued to fly back and forth between the state's printers" (Grasso 322).

To protect his own work, Trumbull took another approach. He published the revised editions of *M'Fingal* in 1795 and 1820. In the abovementioned essay, he also expressed dissatisfaction with the readers' choice of "the meaner and therefore cheaper edition of the mercenary invader of his property," complaining that *M'Fingal* fell victim to "willful slander and malevolent misrepresentation" (2). To correct audiences' misinterpretation and lead them to the "correct" interpretation, Trumbull subsequently issued the revised editions in 1795 and 1820.

The 1795 edition is quite significant because it contains nine illustrations for the first time and its preface expresses the author's purpose. It first explains the previous edition of *M'Fingal,* published in 1792: the "London edition was published to answer the purposes of a party, and the Editor has taken the liberty to misrepresent the views of the Author, the preface and such of the notes as were inserted for that purpose" (iv). In contrast, the 1795 version drops the 1792 edition's preface and notes, stating, "This

is done at the request of the author, with whose permission, this edition is offered to the American public" (iv). The 1795 version confirms Trumbull's permission for publication, that is, its authorized text.

The preface also states, "[T]he *Plate* added to this edition are an improvement on all former ones, and cannot fail to give it a decided preference" (vi–vii; italics original). The set of plates was therefore acknowledged as an indispensable guide for leading the audience to "the American public" in a proper way. The plates in the 1795 edition are attributed to the drawer and engraver Elkanah Tisdale, serving under the printer John Buel in those days. Born in Lebanon, Connecticut, the hometown of Trumbull, Tisdale had a close connection with the Trumbull family.[9] Considering that Tisdale worked on the 1820 authorized version as well, it can be thought that this illustrator succeeded in meeting Trumbull's literary request.

The 1825 edition had another key figure involved, the printer Samuel Goodrich. In *Recollections of A Lifetime, or Men and Things I Have Seen,* he wrote about his commitment to Trumbull's literary venture: "I published an edition of Trumbull's poems, in two volumes, octavo, and paid him a thousand dollars, and a hundred copies

[9] See O'Brien 83–96.

of the work, for the copyright" (111), but unfortunately, he lost "about a thousand dollars" (112). Nonetheless, he significantly noted, "[t]his was my first serious adventure in patronizing American literature" (112), clearly showing his sympathy with the project to establish "American literature." Additionally, he described Tisdale as "a fat, facetious gentleman . . . but a man of some literary taste, and admirable humor in anecdote" (111). The 1820 edition was thus published with the help of understanding people—Tisdale and Goodrich—who could figure out Trumbull's literary taste—satire and a mock epic—and his ambitious endeavor to establish American literature.

In observing the illustrations and considering the differences between the 1795 and the 1825 editions, what should be noted first is that, as seen in the figure pairs (Figures 1 and 2 and Figures 3 and 4), all plates in the 1795 edition are replaced in the 1820 edition, but the themes and the compositions are almost identical. The important differences between them are that the plates in the 1825 edition have citations from the text in *M'Fingal* and that the 1820 edition has developed a comic touch compared with the 1795 edition. For example, Figure 5, entitled "Tory Pandemonium" in the 1795 edition, is replaced by Figure 6, accompanied by the following citation:

> Alas, against my better light,

And optics sure of second-sight,

My stubborn soul, in error strong,

Had faith in Hutchinson too long. (Canto IV, 123)

Both depict the "Tory Pandemonium" scene, where the Tories gather around M'Fingal in the underground cellar. In addition to the development of the comic touch and the stark chiaroscuro, Figure 6 has a significant relationship with the text in *M'Fingal*. M'Fingal's "better light," which corresponds to his "second sight" in the cited lines, is contrasted to the description of his gouged eyes—blindness—presented in Figure 6. In the same figure, M'Fingal is also deliberately marginalized in the corner of the cellar, in contrast to the artificial light blazing in the center of the composition.

In short, the 1820 edition is the effect of Trumbull's commitment to literature—calling for the copyright law to secure writers' intellectual property rights and taking advantage of the rise of the printing industry, illustrators' skills in particular—and its mocking manner reaches the elaborated level by tactically incorporating visual images into his text in *M'Fingal*.

From this perspective, in the rest of this chapter, *M'Fingal* is interpreted as the author's farewell to politics. To this end, the last scene in *M'Fingal* merits attention

because it offers the most flippant portrayal of M'Fingal as a political leader, in which he escapes from the political space where the Tories gather for a meeting and the Whigs rush to lynch them. When he escapes, he does not hesitate to expose his fellows to "tarring, feath'ring, kicks and drubs" (177). Such an ungrateful attitude toward his friends might seem unworthy of his status as a political leader, but a footnote dares to regard this flight as one deserving "the grand catastrophe of this immortal work," or rather, "So sublime a *denouement*, as the French critics term it, never appeared before in Epic Poetry, except that of the Hero turning Papist, in the Henriade of Voltaire" (177; italics original). In terms of "Epic Poetry," M'Fingal's flight is justified as appropriate for his "modern epic poem." Such justification finally leads to the concluding stanza presenting the figure of Noah in his ark:

> So when wise Noah summon'd greeting,
>
> All animals to gen'ral meeting,
>
> From every side the members went,
>
> All kinds of beasts to represent;
>
> Each, from the flood, took care t' embark,
>
> And save his carcase in the ark:

But as it fares in state and church,

Left his constituents in the lurch. (Canto IV, 177)

Here, M'Fingal's seemingly negative escape is juxtaposed with Noah's positive embarkment. The last two lines suggest that the representation system that Noah's ark embodies would become defunct in revolutionary America; yet, by doing so, the cause of M'Fingal's escape from an already defunct system is defended at the same time.[10] M'Fingal's last escape cannot be justified in political terms; he does not deserve to be acclaimed as a good political leader. Needless to say, it is not that Trumbull blinds himself to contemporary politics but that he engages in its critique by depicting the figure escaping from the political theater.

Trumbull chose the way of becoming a man of letters despite or because he witnessed the center of politics in John Adams' Boston office in 1773. The next section subtlizes M'Fingal's social and psychological situations, revealing that Trumbull's deep disappointment with contemporary politics closely relates to his friendship with Dwight.

[10] Paul Giles points out that this final stanza deals with representation in political and artistic terms (60).

3. A Stranger in Society: "Mark'd Like Their Great Forerunner, Cain"

M'Fingal represents the loyalist's ambiguous status and ontological crisis during the Revolutionary Period. Janice Potter writes about the situation encountered by the loyalists after the breakout of the Revolutionary War:

> [In 1776,] [m]any [Loyalists] had fled to Boston to escape the harassments of the Patriots who controlled the Massachusetts countryside. When British authorities had decided that Boston was indefensible, Loyalists in the blocked city were given less than five days to prepare for their departure, and most took with them only whatever personal property they could carry. Some had abandoned valuable land and magnificent houses; virtually all were leaving behind close friends and relatives. (vii)

Potter goes on to write about the circumstances encountered by the loyalists in post-revolutionary America:

> In 1783 about 28,000 Loyalists left the city for various parts of what is now Canada. Refugees and their belongings crowded the docks as the spring fleet was loading for Nova Scotia. Added to those who left on

> British ships were an unknown number who traveled overland through the wilderness of northern New York to the British colony of Quebec. (vii)

Although Trumbull's description of M'Fingal is basically comical, as previously discussed, he belongs to one of the most tragic stories of the Revolutionary Period; the loyalists were lynched and persecuted as political foes coming from the native country.

Nonetheless, the manner in which Trumbull presents M'Fingal is not necessarily pessimistic; neither is it sympathetic. Rather, he is portrayed as a go-between, who sometimes subordinates himself to society and sometimes attempts to subvert it. Such characteristics can be grasped through the complicated use of the term "Yankee." Consider the first paragraph of *M'Fingal*. The heroic protagonist M'Fingal appears in a triumphal mood with the martial song *Yankee Doodle*:

> WHEN Yankies, skill'd in martial rule,
>
> First put the British troops to school;
>
> Instructed them in warlike trade,
>
> And new manœuvres of parade,
>
> The true war-dance of Yankee reels,

And *manual exercise* of heels;

Made them give up, like saints complete,

The arm of flesh, and trust the feet . . . . (Canto I, 3; italics original)

Returning from the Battle of Lexington, the "Yankies" triumphantly "school" the "British troops," especially in "new manœuvres of parade," the "true war-dance of Yankee reels," and the "manual exercise of heels." These lines demonstrate the British soldiers' concentration on their feet, synchronized with the rhythm of the Yankee music. The footsteps' rigorous regulation accords with the perfect rhymes "rule/school," "trade/parade," "reels/heels," and "complete/feet." All the rhymes in the first paragraph are perfect. *M'Fingal* begins with such a triumphal rhythm (a humiliated one for the British), and in the last lines of the first paragraph, M'Fingal comes up: "Great 'Squire M'FINGAL took his way . . . [and] Steer'd homeward to his native town" (4).

New England is "his native town," and the reference to the "Yankees" as "the people of the four eastern states" (3) is confirmed in an inserted note. The ties between M'Fingal and the Yankee society seem natural. Nonetheless, a debate scene between the Tory M'Fingal and the Whig Honorius[11] makes visible M'Fingal's ambiguous

[11] Moses Coit Tyler suggests that Honorius is a portrait of John Adams (*The Literary History of the American Revolution, 1763–1783* 432), which scholars have admitted, except for Lennox Grey. For Grey's argument, see 509–14.

position in that society:

> Did not <u>our</u> troops show great discerning,
>
> And skill <u>your</u> various arts in learning?
>
> Outwent <u>they</u> not each native noodle
>
> By far, in playing Yankee-doodle,
>
> Which as 'twas your New-England tune,
>
> 'Twas marvellous they took so soon? (Canto II, 55–56; emphasis added)

The pronoun "our" refers to both the Tories and the Whigs, and the pronoun "they" alludes to the British, but the pronoun "you" addresses the Whigs. Regarding "Yankee-doodle" as "your New-England tune," M'Fingal definitely distinguishes himself from "you" the Yankees. Such a gesture of keeping distance discloses the Tory's status in those days. If the music of *Yankee Doodle* sounds patriotic, M'Fingal's self-consciousness is slightly discordant with it although he belongs to the Yankee society.

Additionally, a key factor for understanding *M'Fingal* more profoundly resides in what "Honorius" represents, that is, honor. Among the scholars who have studied the culture of honor in America,[12] Craig Bruce Smith argues that in eighteenth-century

[12] The early studies on honor are Evarts B. Greene's "The Code of Honor in Colonial and Revolutionary Times, with Special Reference to New England" (1927) and Louis B. Wright's *First Gentleman of Virginia* (1940). The later studies, Bertram Wyatt-Brown's

America, "[h]onor and virtue were central components of the college curriculum" in New England, including Yale, where students were immersed in the culture of honor via the study of moral philosophy, as described in Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Lord Shaftesbury's *An Inquiry concerning Virtue*, and Francis Hutchinson's *Short Introduction to Moral Philosophy*. Subsequently, the concept of honor became a core factor that drove the American Revolution; Smith argues that significantly, the code of honor served to justify the boycotts of the British goods, the mob riots against the loyalists, such as Thomas Hutchinson, and the separation from the British Crown.[13] As Smith states, if the concept of honor was voiced repeatedly during this period, then one could easily infer from such repeated moral justification that they desired to avoid a feeling of guilt for breaking laws, committing acts of violence, and showing ingratitude toward their old connection. Although Smith focuses on the ethical dimension rather than on the rhetorical one regarding honor (10), it is unnecessary to separate them. At the time of the Revolutionary War, honor was presumably not honor

---

Southern Honor (1982) and David Hackett Fischer's *Albion's Seed* (1989), go beyond a regional framework. More recently, Joanne B. Freeman's *Affairs of Honor* (2001) argues that the code of honor formed "a *grammar of political combat*" in post-revolutionary America (xxii; italics original), which functioned to connect with political friends, fight against foes, and ingratiate oneself with the privileged class, while Smith's *American Honor* (2018) pays broader attention to how the code of honor provided opportunities for lower-class men, women, and African Americans to participate in the public sphere and how it had changed from the colonial period through the Revolutionary Period.

[13] For more details, see Smith 47–97.

as it should be; their honor or their moral superiority necessitated their opponents' dishonor.

Educated at Yale and acquainted with the congressional members during the revolutionary period, Trumbull was probably versed with the culture of honor. Otherwise, the name "Honorius" would not have been used. What is at stake here is M'Fingal's heroism because insofar as his action is directed against Honorius, whatever M'Fingal does, right or wrong, must be dishonor. Figures 3 and 4 indicate this aspect, for instance. Both depict the scenes of the town meeting that are included in Canto I. Both present the dispute between M'Fingal (representing the Tories) and Honorius (representing the Whigs). However, the 1820 version highlights the contrast between them—order and disorder—more starkly. In this edition, M'Fingal's lifted cane and his fellows' distorted faces and postures indicating their readiness to rush at him are strongly contrasted to the Whigs' upright positions and their canes firmly planted on the ground. Honorius seems to calm down such disorder in accordance with what his name represents: honor. By virtue of the sunshine from the left, the Tories are overshadowed, and the Whigs are lit; the boundary between order and disorder or honor and dishonor is visibly delineated. A comic touch is evident, yet under this surface,

chiaroscuro reveals not only the political conflict between M'Fingal and Honorius but also their reciprocal relationship of mutual definition, as shown in light and darkness.

In considering M'Fingal's difficulty in further attaining heroism, Figures 7 (the 1795 version) and 8 (the 1825 version) are noteworthy. Apparently, they present different scenes, but both are inserted at almost the same timing in Canto II of *M'Fingal* so that they offer a common theme, which is suggested in the title of Figure 7, "British Heroism." This motif seems true for the figure of Abijah White shown in Figure 8, to whom the cited lines refer: "ABIJAH WHITE. / IN AWFUL POMP DESCENDING DOWN / BORE TERROR ON THE FACTIOUS TOWN." Its mocking tone is obvious, but it is uncertain why Abijah White is suddenly featured here. He is only mentioned once in the text, and featuring White seems a little strange because all other illustrations in the 1820 edition present M'Fingal. However, the key to solving this mystery is presented in Figure 8 itself, with the juxtaposition of the names "Mc.FINGAL" and "ABIJAH WHITE." Indeed, both men are significantly overlapped with each other in the image of "Hudibras." It has been admitted that *M'Fingal* is indebted to Samuel Butler's *Hudibras* in light of the hero's behavior, political attack, mockery of epic conventions, and poetic techniques, such as the use of a farfetched simile, imperfect

rhyme, extravagant language, and an epigram.[14] Moreover, a footnote about Abijah White presents him as "a second Hudibras" (66). It follows that through the hidden connection between White and M'Fingal, M'Fingal's British heroism is indirectly laughed at. However, more importantly, it should not be underestimated that the name "Abijah White" itself divulges M'Fingal's epistemological isolation; "Abijah White" evokes the significance of the name "Fingal," which means "white stranger."[15]

To consider the link between M'Fingal's sense of being a stranger and his difficulty in attaining heroism, it would be useful to examine the scene where M'Fingal and his buddy (simply called "the Constable") are attacked at the liberty pole. First of all, the Constable easily submits to the patriots when seized and raised to the top of the liberty pole (108–10). However, when threatened in the same way, M'Fingal does not submit, crying, "And can you think my faith will alter, / By tarring, whipping, or the halter? / I'll stand the worst; for recompense / I trust King George and Providence" (112). This declaration sounds heroic, but Trumbull's manner of writing remains

[14] See Cowie 148–51; Granger 499–508; Gimmestad 88–89; McWilliams 72–79; Wells 85–87.

[15] For instance, John Pinkerton identifies "Fingal" with "White Stranger" in the *Edinburgh Magazine* in 1789 (89). Trumbull seems versed with the controversy on *Fingal* after the 1760s—especially by Samuel Johnson, Hugh Blair, and Charles O'Conor—because the line "Old Fingal spelt it with a MAC" (Canto I, 4) implies his knowledge that Macpherson's "Fingal" relates to "Fin Mac Coul." Considering his penetration, it would be safe to say that Trumbull was familiar with the meaning of the name Fingal.

hilarious:

> Not so our 'Squire submits to rule,
>
> But stood, heroic as a mule. (Canto III, 110)

Nonetheless, the "rule" is the Whig's rule, so these lines indicate that M'Fingal cannot avoid being a mule as far as he remains in the society grounded on the code of Honorius.

Similar to the Constable, the loyalist Malcolm insists on political conversion, as presented in Canto IV. After seeing the loyalists defeated and Malcolm hanged in his vision, M'Fingal exhorts escape from America: "Ah, fly my friend! . . . escape, /And keep yourself from this sad scrape" (126). In response to M'Fingal's vision, calling it "confusion" and "delusion," Malcolm asserts, "'Tis time our principles to change" (133) and justifies it by Fate: "see how Fate, herself turn'd traitor, / Inverts the ancient course of nature; / And changes manners, tempers, climes, / To suit the genius of the times!" (157).

Although Malcolm justifies political conversion, he betrays his anxiety that he turned out to be a "traitor." At this point, it becomes clearer that the Tories or the loyalists are compelled into a moral impasse. If he joins the Whig party, he is a traitor of the Tories; if he remains a Tory, he is marked with the stigma of dishonor and

persecuted in his native country. After mentioning Cornwallis' surrender, the British evacuation, and the loyalists' exile, Malcolm identifies the loyalists with the biblical character Cain:

> See where, reliev'd from sad embargo,
>
> Steer off consign'd a recreant cargo;
>
> Like old scape-goats to roam in pain,
>
> Mark'd like their great forerunner, Cain. (Canto IV, 165)

Charged with the murder of his brother Abel, Cain was exiled to Nod, the east of Eden. By associating a loyalist with Cain, Trumbull may blame the loyalists for fratricide in the "civil war," and the adjective "recreant" may refer to them, so the adjective "great" may sound disdainful and ironic. Needless to say, the figure of Cain is not a trivial one; Trumbull abhorred religious enthusiasts, but his basic mentality can be considered grounded on religious faith.[16] The rhymed couplet "Cain" and "pain" is not limited to a mere reproach or facile sympathy. Rather, it is the painful recognition that the American revolutionaries, including Trumbull, need to repress their sense of guilt—not only for fratricide but also for the act of imputing the sin of fratricide to their own

[16] See Cowie 2–24.

brothers—to survive the crisis of the times; the identification with Cain can also be applied to the patriots in light of the "civil war." Hence, they are likened to "old scape-goats"; their fate is to pay for the actions of others, including Trumbull.

Moreover, Figure 12 in the 1794 version and Trumbull's treatment of this in the 1825 version indicate his desire to repress such a dismal memory of an American scapegoat. Figure 12 depicts M'Fingal's vision of Malcolm being hanged. This illustration must have been considered the main theme in Canto IV since the figure's title "The Vision" significantly corresponds to the title of Canto IV itself, "The Vision." Notwithstanding the identical titles, Figure 12 is dropped in the 1825 edition. It is probably because this omission depends on the principle of the 1825 version: the development of a comic tone. One can easily suppose that the reason for the removal is its lack of a comic tone. Ironically, it emphasizes the fact that the loyalists' fate, as seen in Malcolm's hanging, would never be laughable. Thus, the absence of "The Vision" in the 1820 edition is none other than a sign of repression. What is repressed is the sense of sin for fratricide in the civil war, as well as the sense of guilt for turning the loyalists into a scapegoat through the ritualized violence—lynching, persecution, and hanging in the name of liberty and honor.

However, it should not be underestimated that Trumbull chooses a mocking manner, which seems flippant, ungrateful, and irresponsible for reality. It is because Trumbull's sense of distance is derived from his close relationship with Dwight. Precocious as he was, similar to Dwight, Trumbull was quite bored with his contemporaries in his college days, yet after Dwight entered Yale two years after him, Trumbull was drawn to this prodigy. The two men became friends, served as tutors at Yale during the same period (1771–72), and attempted together to reform the curriculum system, shifting its weight from classics to modern literature. Recalling the days when he encountered Dwight at Yale, he recorded his impression. Calling Dwight "a rising genius," he noted, "That young gentleman had translated two of the finest Odes of Horace, in manner so elegant and poetical, as would not have disgraced his more mature productions. Happy in the discovery of a rising genius, Mr. Trumbull immediately sought his acquaintance, and began an intimacy, which continued during their joint residence at New-Haven, and a friendship terminated only by death" ("Memoir" 11–12). Considering their intimate relationship in the rest of their lives, it would not be difficult to assume Trumbull's familiarity with the tragedy that Dwight's father faced and Dwight's own difficult situation in the community where he belonged

and his inner conflict. Nonetheless, what counts is Trumbull's less sympathetic attitude toward M'Fingal. It is highly plausible that their intimacy strongly incited Trumbull to gain sympathy with the loyalists' social and psychological situation and forced him to be disappointed with the politics of that period because partisan debate would generate no more than a distinction between friends and foes. However, he astutely recognized that he could not understand Dwight's father's reality and Dwight's own reality *as they were*; rather, to consider that he was able to understand their realities would be nothing but arrogance or insincerity in their friendship. Despite being convinced that literature would narrate a forgotten individual's story that politics could not pick up, Trumbull kept performing the poetics of distance. However, under the surface of the poetics of distance that drove his flippant mocking manner, a sign of sincerity could be glimpsed.

Coda, or the M'Fingal Dinner

On July 16, 1824, the "M'Fingal Dinner" was organized at Washington Hall in New York to celebrate Trumbull. The *New-York Evening Post* reports the toasts offered by twenty-five distinguished persons. For instance, John Pintard mentions "[t]he memory of Butler, whose Hudibrastic wit and humour are better understood and better

relished in *New* than in Old England." Dr. Perkins acknowledges "[t]he Yankee nation in older time—patriotic and fruitful in expedients." Dr. Mitchell gives due recognition to "[t]he whig principles of the Revolution, which carried the country through its arduous struggle for independence" (3; italics original). It is uncertain whether Trumbull enjoyed this celebration, but definitely, the power of *M'Fingal*'s double tongue was flatly centralized in a patriotic, popular tone.

One could easily expect what would happen next. "*M'Fingal* gradually went out of fashion," Cowie writes, "[t]he romantic poetry of Poe, the sentimental poetry of Longfellow, and the rough-hewn poetry of Whitman represents three styles of American poetry with which the dusty Hudibrastics and old-fashioned wit of *M'Fingal* could not compete" (183). However, any romanticism, sentimentalism, or populism could not be qualified to carry out Trumbull's literary endeavor. Sympathy failed him. Strategic abstinence or the double tongue in words and figures invites the readers to question what it says, conceals, and needs to repress. By responding to such an invitation, the readers can grasp another aestheticism that has hitherto been ignored. What drove Trumbull to write *M'Fingal* at the bottom of his heart would be the sense of sin for the fate that a loyalist encountered behind the scenes of the American

Revolution.

For Dwight and Trumbull, writing the poem is a means to heal a sense of anxiety or to transform such a tormented memory into the inspiration for poesy. During the Revolutionary War, an ordinary individual was sometimes swallowed by the overwhelming flood of the times, but such a story was rarely narrated. Although their epics have not been appreciated very well so far, *M'Fingal* and *The Conquest* register a trace of the people lynched, persecuted, and forgotten.

Figures

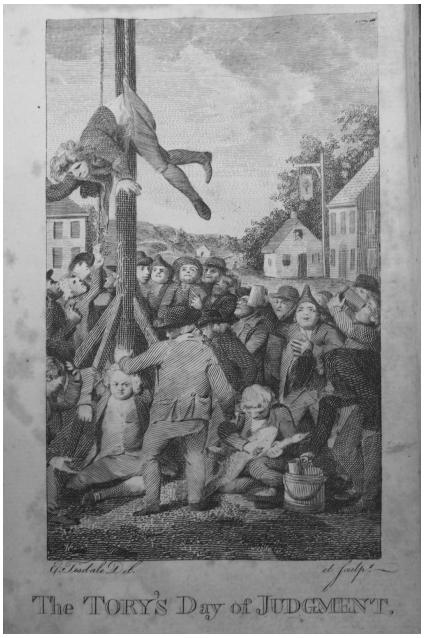

Fig. 1: "The Tory's Day of Judgment," *M'Fingal* (1795), Canto III.

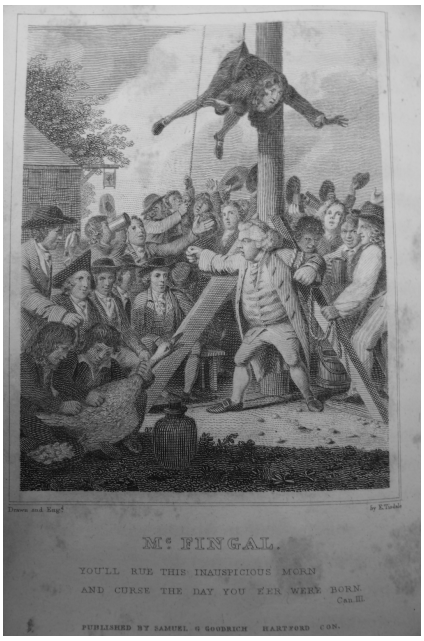

Fig. 2: *M'Fingal* (1820), Canto III.

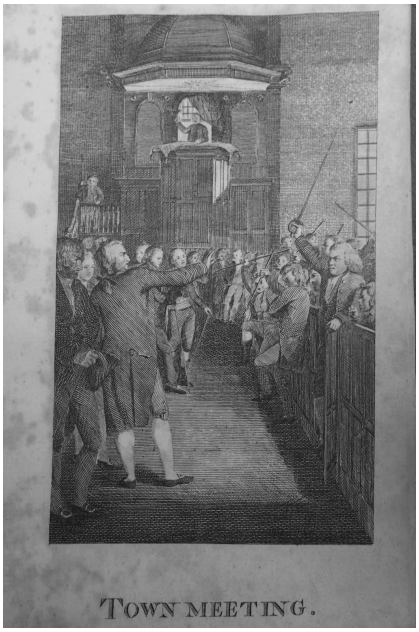

Fig. 3: "Town Meeting," *M'Fingal* (1795), Canto I.

Fig. 4: *M'Fingal* (1820), Canto I.

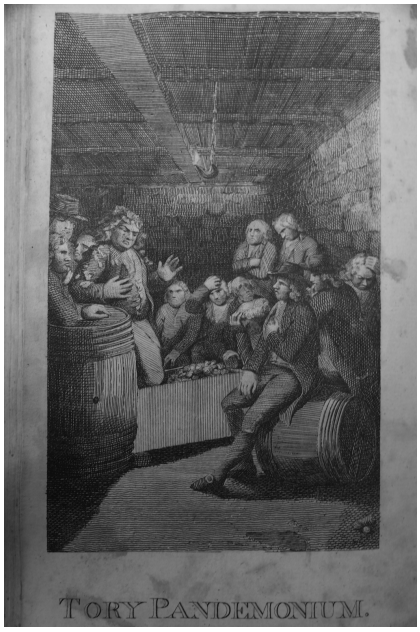

Fig. 5: "Tory Pandemonium," *M'Fingal* (1795), Canto IV.

Fig. 6: *M'Fingal* (1820), Canto IV.

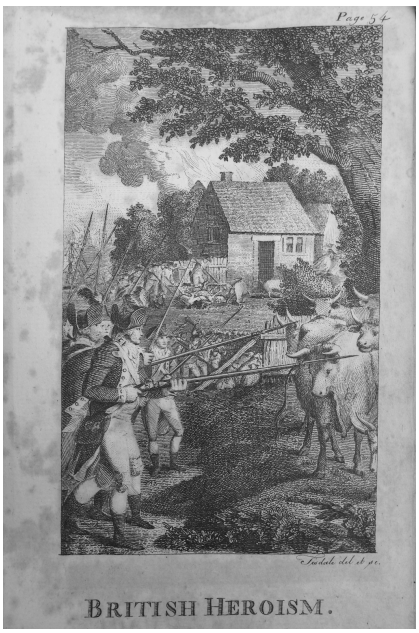

Fig. 7: "British Heroism," *M'Fingal* (1795), Canto II.

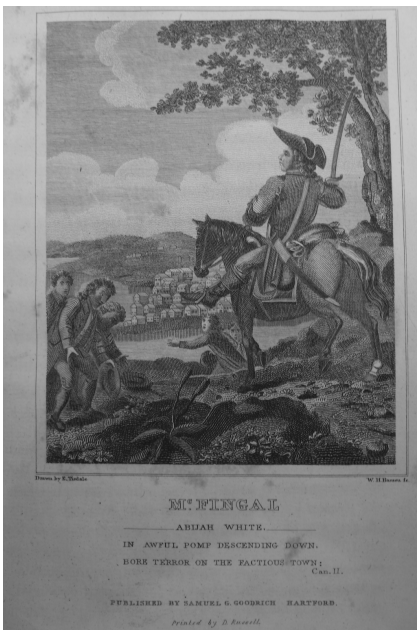

Fig. 8: *M'Fingal* (1820), Canto II.

Fig. 9: "The Yanky Chace," *M'Fingal* (1795), Canto II.

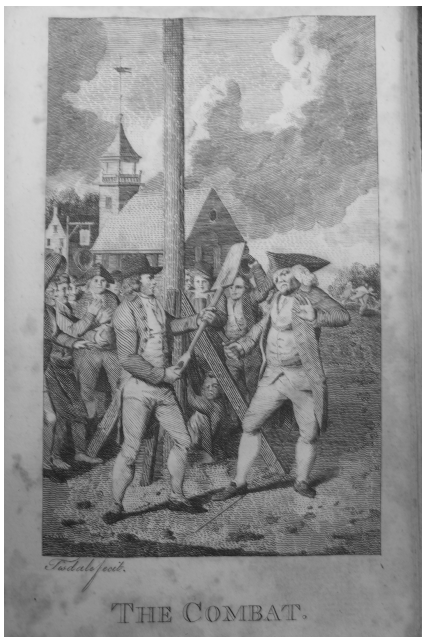

Fig. 10: "The Combat," *M'Fingal* (1795), Canto III.

Fig. 11: "The Procession," *M'Fingal* (1795), Canto III.

Fig. 12: "The Vision," *M'Fingal* (1795), Canto IV.

CHAPTER THREE

The Merlin of the West: The Wicked Wits' *The Anarchiad* (1786–87)

Part I illustrated that the existence of a traitor during the Revolutionary War was problematized, covertly in Dwight and overtly in Trumbull. In the post-revolutionary period, or the Federalist age, the Connecticut Wits developed both a sense of fraternity and its rhetorical discourse with a strong sense of mission, a result of the inherited vision Elliott calls "a cultural city upon a hill" and of the anxiety of recurrence of the tragedy in "the civil war" as well. Dealing with *The Anarchiad*, cowritten by the members but Dwight in the 1780s, this chapter investigates this sense of mission, illuminating the gothic aspect of the Western imagery.

The Anarchiad was the outcome of the Hartford Friendly Club, cowritten by Humphreys, Trumbull, Hopkins, and Barlow. Shocked by Shays' Rebellion in 1786 and frustrated with the antifederalist town fathers in Connecticut, they hit upon the composition of *The Anarchiad*. It consists of twelve issues, entitled "American Antiquities," which were anonymously issued in the *New Haven Gazette* and the *Connecticut Magazine* from October 26, 1786 to September 13, 1787. In the first issue,

a narrator was flattered to report his historic excavation in the "Western country," (4) Ohio, of an ancient epic entitled "The Anarchiad, a Poem on the restoration of Chaos and substantial Night, in twenty-four books" (5).[1] The narrator's explanatory letters and the excerpts from "The Anarchiad" constitute the basic form of the following eleven issues of "American Antiquities."[2] It was so widely circulated through New England that they became notoriously known as "the wicked wits."

The twelve installments have a consistent theme in a consistent, mocking tone, but it transformed as the political situation changed. The main theme of No. 1 through No. 10 is the battle between the allegorical characters Hesper and Anarch, reflecting the then-current conflict between the federal government, led by Washington, and anarchy caused by mob violence (e.g., Shays' Rebellion) and mobocracy by the antifederalist politicians. Numbers 11 and 12 feature a journey to the subterranean region by the American Bard and the Merlin of the West, alluding the contemporary debate over the northwest territory (Ohio), the *Northwest Ordinance* of 1787 in

[1] This article distinguishes "The Anarchiad" from *The Anarchiad*. The former refers to the ancient epic discovered in Ohio while the latter refers to the one reissued in a book form in 1861. Also, subsequent page references given in this article are based on the reprinted version of *The Anarchiad*, with Introduction and Index by William K. Bottorff (Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1967).

[2] The exceptions are 1) No. 6 and No.9 that lack the archeologist's letter, and 2) No. 5 and No. 8 that contain an ode and an elegy, respectively, instead of the excerpt from the epic "The Anarchiad."

particular. Looking back to the 1780s, when Shays' Rebellion shocked New England society and provoked anxiety about anarchy, Trumbull states, "[t]he friends of order, justice and regular authority, endeavoured to counteract this spirit [the horrors of civil war] by every effort in their power—by remonstrance, argument, ridicule and satire" ("Memoir" 20). To engage literature—for him, "remonstrance, argument, ridicule and satire"—was to endeavor to counteract the prevailing horrors in society.

Scholars have dealt with this work in light of the following points: the context, the form of the mock epic, and each author's specific contribution.[3] These studies, however, have underestimated the significance of issues 11 and 12. Typically, Leon Howard claims, "The concluding numbers of the *American Antiquities* made an anticlimax. Publishing their observation on August 16 and September 13, while the constitutional convention was meeting in Philadelphia, the Wits had nothing further to say in the interest of union and no ideas to contribute toward the solution of practical problems" (Howard 195; McWilliams 81; Van Dover 244). Reevaluating the last two issues of *The Anarchiad*, this chapter will focus on the Merlin of the West as an

[3] For the Federalist aspect, see Arner 233–35, Howard 169–205, and Silverman 513–15; for the genre, see McWilliams 79–82, Van Dover 237–47, and Giles 49–53; and for the cowriters' contribution, see Bottorff v–xii, Dowling, "Joel Barlow and 'The Anarchiad'" 18–33, and Cifelli 53–71.

embodiment of the Connecticut Wits' literary agenda but also arguing that such an idealistic agenda could have been achieved only if the anteriority of the indigenous people was first forgotten; the west in *The Anarchiad* is aestheticized as a gothic space that enables the Connecticut Wits to create the American gothic epic.

To this end, this chapter will first examine the manner in which their strong sense of mission—a result of the vision Elliott calls "a cultural city upon a hill" and of the anxiety of recurrence of the civil war—is recorded in *The Anarchiad*, making visible their mentality of self-caricature as represented in the act of calling themselves "the wicked wits." The next section will focus on the Merlin of the West and the text's nightmarish imagery of the "West," showing the Merlin of the West as the embodiment of the Connecticut Wits' literary agenda. Then, positing *The Anarchiad* as an American gothic epic, the final section will investigate the Connecticut Wits' conscience, with reference to the *Northwest Ordinance* of 1787, regarding the indigenous people.

1. The "Wicked Wits" at the Federalist Age

What drove the composition of *The Anarchiad* is the strength of friendship, cultivated at Yale in the 1760s and 1770s and Hartford in the 1780s, and the discourse

of fraternity. The latter is sublimated into the means to compose poesy. This section will first examine their strong sense of mission—as result of the vision Eliot calls "a cultural city upon a hill" and of anxiety of recurrence of the civil war as well—in light of the political environment of the 1780s, and will then make visible their mentality of self-caricature as represented in the act of calling themselves "the wicked wits." This structure provides a coolheaded and critical perspective for *The Anarchiad*.

The authors would envision the "American" literature to come, which was one of their motivations to write *The Anarchiad*. This motivation can be clearly seen in their critique of Robert Morris's internalization of the degeneration theory on America. Morris, a moneyed man and the Republican senator in Philadelphia, is ridiculed as a "humble copyist" in "American Antiquities No. 12" because he "echoes . . . these transatlantic imitators" (76) by internalizing Abbé Raynal's view that "America has never produced one good Poet, one able Mathematician, or one man of Genius in one single Art, or one single Science" (72). To refute Morris's internalized Raynal's statement, the authors quote in a footnote a counterargument to Morris, published in the *Daily Advertiser*: "This rich soil of freedom, which has already given to the world a crowd of heroes, doubtless will produce a luxuriant growth, and quick succession of

fine poets, profound philosophers, and eminent statemen" (77) by picking up such specific examples as Trumbull, Barlow and David Ramsay. Presenting the figure called "the American Bard" in "American Antiquities No. 12" is the authors' response to Morris as well.

However, their "America" is not politically neutral. Alluding to Jefferson's interests in the "natural history of America," especially the excavation in the northwestern territory, the authors of *The Anarchiad* ridicule Jefferson's endeavor by mockingly attributing its findings to no more than bizarre things, such as the "monstrous new-invented animal," a "most notable catfish," and a "hermit who surpasses all other hermits in longevity" (3).[4] As Judith Yaross Lee states, the main idea of *The Anarchiad* that the ancient epic was excavated in the western territory is none other than a parody of the "Republicans' interest in natural history," as found in Jefferson's *Notes on the State of Virginia* (34).

More specifically, "American Antiquities No. 8" merits attention, presenting a mock elegy entitled, "An Elegy on a Patriot. Occasioned by the awful and untimely

[4] In fact, the 1770s and 1780s saw the vogue of excavation: in 1772 Moravian missionary David Zeisberger already found embankments along the Muskingum River, and in 1775 the *Royal American Magazine* printed David Jones' report and diagram of the works at Circleville, Ohio. Because there were several opinions on discovered Indian monuments, constitutions, and customs, Jefferson wished to inquire "whether any, and which of these opinions were just," and then "determined to open and examine it thoroughly" (Jefferson 98).

Death of the Honorable William Wimble, who, by the coroner's inquest, was found to have come to his end by suffocation." William Wimble corresponds with Judge William Williams of Lebanon. He had not yet died when this issue was published, of course; the authors' aim was to prevent him from being elected as the Connecticut delegate to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. It begins with an elegiac tone, but soon turns into a comic mode: "IN yonder dark and narrow lodging, / There rest a patriot's body, / Which, after many a slip and dodging, / Death took in safe custody" (41). Its mocking tone gradually accelerates: "No one could equal him for style, / For art and elocution; / For dismal periods of a mile, / The *genius of confusion*" (42–43; italics original), ending up with as follows: "Yet shall the foolish folks, *for aye*, / Whose brains would fill a thimble, / Striking their pensive bosom, say, / 'Here lies poor WILLIAM WIMBLE'" (47; italics original). Because of their political motivations, they do not hesitate to ridicule Wimble as a politician who represents the "fools" in the state of Connecticut: "The poet did this speech relate— / 'From honest views, we sent him; / 'The fools are many in our State— / 'He goes to represent 'em'" (44). Probably reflecting their own virulent manner, in the following lines, the Connecticut Wits identify themselves with the "wicked wits":

And yet, though wicked wits kept sneering,

'Tis plain as nose in face is;

'Twas only by *electioneering*,

He got and held his places. (44; italics original)

The conflict described here between the authors and William Wimble is the tip of the iceberg. To understand their conflict more profoundly, it is necessary to refer to the context of *The Anarchiad*, especially the debates on the western territory between Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Congress. According to Howard, the core problem is that Connecticut became divided into two schemes: "The first called for the sale of unlocated lands, with both state and Continental securities accepted at pat in payment. The second proposed that the sale be made by townships, with the acceptance of Connecticut paper alone at par" (174). People thinking "it profitable to repudiate national obligation" (175) took the side of the latter, and that was Wimble, William Williams. As Howard notes, such allegorical characters as Wimble, Copper, Wronghead, and Froth "were [all] identified as 'Anarchists' by their opposition to the requisitions of Congress for the settlement of the national debt" (181). Because the national economy declined after the previous war and Continental currency lost its

value,[5] it might be reasonable to believe that they favor priority of the state's interests; yet, it was not reasonable to the Federalist wicked wits.

As self-proclaimed wicked wits, they did not present the vision of the American epic in a straight way. For instance, in the first issue, the narrator plays a role of a confidence man: "[T]his work ["The Anarchiad"] was well known to the ancients, and that, as it is the most perfect, it has undoubtedly been the model for all subsequent epic productions," the narrator playfully writes, "I shall attempt to prove that Homer, Virgil, and Milton have borrowed many of their capital beauties from it" (5). One can observe the idea of discovery, and the declaration of the existence of the ancient American epic is definitely driven by the eagerness for an American epic; however, the narrator's mocking manner reveals a sense of self-caricature, ridiculing the authors' own desire and aspiration.

Such an attitude is also found in "American Antiquities No. 5," which offers an ode entitled, "The Genius of America: A Song. To the Tune of 'The watery god, great Neptune, lay in dalliance soft, and amorous play, On Amphytrite's breast,' &c." Here,

[5] "By December 1782, . . . Soldiers and their officers had not been paid in months and other public creditors began to wander if they would ever be repaid" (Wright 66); "In 1786, Congress could not sell any of the $500,000 worth of domestic bonds it needed to bolster the federal army in the aftermath of Shays' Rebellion" (Wright 68; italics original)

the idea of "the Genius of America," which prevailed in late eighteenth-century America, and with which the members of the Connecticut Wits presumably identified, is targeted and nuanced.[6] Instead of an image of the future glory of America, a vision of the shades of night is offered in the jeremiad style. "Ye FATHERS! Spread your fame afar! / 'T is yours to still the sounds of war, / And bid the slaughter cease; / The peopling hamlets wide extend, / The harvest spring, the spires ascend, / 'Mid grateful songs of peace!":

> Shall steed to steed, and man to man,
>
> With discord thundering in the van,
>
> Again destroy the bliss!
>
> Enough my mystic words reveal;
>
> The rest the shades of night conceals,
>
> In fate's profound abyss! (28)

[6] According to Elliott, the Genius of America of the revolutionary period would be "apparent in every aspect of American life; in the boldness and political wisdom of its leaders; in the shrewdness and courage of its soldiers; in its crafts, inventions, industry, and commerce; and in its moral purity, artistic excellence, and devotion to the Christian God who had ordained its creation. This people of genius would lead mankind into the future in every branch of human endeavor. This symbol, repeated in sermons, speeches, and poetry throughout the 1770s and 1780s, fused the political conviction and religious belief that the providential union of history and geography had engendered a national equivalent of the individual genius who possessed the best of ancient and modern political thought, art, and culture" (29–30).

The inverted dark imagery of America is carried out with the rhyme scheme "aabccb," especially the "bliss," "reveal," "conceals," and "abyss." The figure of "bliss" is finally reversed into a vision of "profound abyss." Bookended by "bliss" and "abyss," the contradicting rhymed couplet "reveal" and "conceals" is effectively employed.

Of course, this jeremiad style, which consistently operates throughout *The Anarchiad*, can be interpreted as elitism, especially considering mob insurgence, such as Shays' Rebellion, is dealt with in "American Antiquities" No. 1. As Lawrimore sums up, historians' approaches to Shays' Rebellion have been shifted from top-down into bottom-up, arguing that these insurrections are "part of an extended class conflict between a small but concentrated coalition of urban elites and a largely dispersed group of backcountry nonelite and nonelected citizens" (366). From this angle, Ed White, calling the authors of *The Anarchiad* "the anti-Shaysite intellectuals" (31), suggests that "[i]n *The Anarchiad*, the Regulators' attempt to challenge moneyed interests became a manifestation of greed; attempts to stop the aggressive use of courts became a pathological resistance to authority; efforts to establish amoral economy became an impulse to anarchy" (34). The Connecticut Wits' elitist character cannot avoid criticism, but it is also important to keep in mind the gravity of the Federalist Age, which was

such an exceptional period that the sense of mission was reinforced more strongly than ever before.

Gordon S. Wood points out an exceptional aspect of the Federalist age, calling the atmosphere "awkward": "The Federalist age was awkward because so many of America's leaders were heroically confident they were in control of events. No generation in American history was so acutely conscious that what it did would affect future generations, or, in the common phrase of the day, 'millions yet unborn' (3)." Moreover, he writes, "The leaders felt an awesome responsibility not only for America's governments and political institutions but for its art, literature, and manners, indeed, for the entire culture" (3). The mentality of the Connecticut Wits no doubt belongs to that of this age; they could not but feel "an awesome responsibility" for American politics, culture, and literature.

The composition and publication of *The Anarchiad* exemplify the close link between politics and literature. Indeed, Humphreys played a significant role in such a close connection; he was able to deliver *The Anarchaid* to the hands of George Washington directly by enclosing this work in a letter to him. On November 16, 1786, he writes that, in this mock epic, "the force of ridicule has been found of more efficacy

than the force of argument, against the Antifederalists & Advocates for Mobs & Conventions," and "[i]t was pleasant enough to observe how some leading Men, of erroneous politics, were stung to the soul, by shafts of satire" (*George Washington Papers*). The force of literature—ridicule in this case—would be believed by him, and, as this letter discloses, the authors of *The Anarchiad* would fight against the Antifederalists through their own literary labors. The authors were able to believe in *The Anarchiad*'s utility and efficacy with a strong confidence because they knew that this work would reach Washington, who would be first president of the United States, through Humphreys' hand.

Such a sense of confidence in literature can be seen in the text of *The Anarchiad*. The narrator in "American Antiquities" highly appreciated the act of printing literary works rather than "those which commonly appear in American newspapers":

> The society of critics and antiquarians, who have spared neither expense nor trouble, in recovering those valuable remains of antiquity from oblivion, cannot help flattering themselves that their disinterested labors will continue to be rewarded with the plaudits of a grateful public. They are conscious that the manuscripts from which

> they have already given specimens, as well as many others in their possession, contain performances in poetry and prose of a very different complexion from those which commonly appear in American newspapers. (14)

Their disinterested acts are praised all the more because "recovering those valuable remains ["The Anarchiad"] of antiquity from oblivion" is expensive and troublesome.

Their belief in literature dwells in their belief in fraternity. In the narrator's explanatory note regarding the already mentioned ode, he attributes the role of an ode that deals with "love, conviviality, martial achievements, and imperial glory" to exciting "the feelings of patriotism." Moreover, he claims, "his species of poetry . . . may have as much influence on their manners, as the civil institutions of legislation" (25). Literature inspires "the feeling of patriotism," which encourages the national "manners" and "institutions of legislation" to improve. In other words, coming to light is the vision of the combination of poesy with the language of fraternity as contributing to the cultivation of the fledging country.

Of particular importance is *The Anarchiad*'s practical and scarcely idealistic aspects. The narrator continues to write, "the wilderness and grandeur of scenery, the

sublimity of description, the beauty of imagery, the boldness of transition, the melody of versification, and the predictive solemnity of diction, which give sufficient demonstration of its originality, will recommend it to the amateurs of poetry and music" (26). This statement, especially the phrase "recommend it to the amateurs of poetry and music," shows not only their eagerness for establishing American poetry by themselves but also their intention to guide the readers to the cultivated soil of poetry and music. The next section will investigate such a guiding spirit by drawing attention to the hitherto unnoticed character called the Merlin of the West.

2. The Merlin of the West, A Guide

Merlin is a well-known Arthurian witch, but the fact that the first Merlin in American literature appears in *The Anarchiad* has been overlooked.[7] In "American

[7] Based on Alan C. Lupack's essay, Peter H. Goodrich declares that "[i]t was in the nineteenth century that Merlin first entered American literature—not surprisingly, as a prophet—through Joseph Leigh's anti-British pamphlet *Illustration of the Fulfilment [sic] of the Prediction of Merlin* (1807)" (31). The nineteenth century had several writers dealing with Merlin; for example, Nathaniel Hawthorne ("The Antique Ring"), Ralph Waldo Emerson ("Merlin I," "Merlin II," "Merlin Song," "Politics," and "The Harp"), and Mark Twain (*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur*). For Merlin after the nineteenth century, see Lupack 230–49.

Also, as for the route of Merlin, Alan C. Lupack sums up as follows: Geoffrey of Monmouth's Merlin can be traced to the following figures: 1) Myrddin, the Welsh bard and prophet; 2) Lailoken, a Scottish wildman of the woods; and 3) Ambrosius Aureliannus, a British military leader who worked wonders. (Lupack, "Merlin as New-World Wizard," *Merlin: A Casebook*, edited by Peter H. Goodrich and Raymond H. Thompson, Routledge, 2003, p. 230)

Antiquities, No. 12," issued on September 13, 1787, the narrator introduces the Merlin of the West as "an ancient seer" who is able to explain "the nature of the country," which refers to the underground west in the world described in *The Anarchiad* and "the character of its inhabitants":

> In his progress through the shades, the [American] Bard is attended by an ancient seer, the MERLIN of the West, who explains to him the nature of the country, and the character of its inhabitants. (71)

The narrator then strengthens the mocking tone, saying their account was copied by Dante: "The account of the various regions and circles into which the Subterranean World is divided, has in many parts been copied by the famous Italian poet, Dante, in his "Inferno" (71); also, the narrator claims anteriority of the American Bard with regard to entering "the region of preexistent": "The American Bard seems to have been the first who entered the REGION OF PREEXISTENT SPIRITS, which has since been explored by the celebrated voyager, Ænas [sic], whose observations may be found in the Sixth Book of Virgil; and notwithstanding our author made his visit at a much earlier period, his relation appears to be equally curious and authentic" (71).

Intriguingly, in "American Antiquities No. 12," the Merlin of the West occupies

a large part of the narrative, while the American Bard rarely makes his voice heard. The authors no doubt put the American Bard at the center of this epic by calling him "American" Bard, and it is suggested that the American Bard is probably the author of "The Anarchiad." Nonetheless, the American Bard depends on the Merlin of the West, which resonates with the authors' critical attitude toward American originality as already discussed in the previous section; if so, the Merlin of the West can be read as an embodiment of the Connecticut Wits' literary motto: they attempted to play a role of a guiding spirit for American literature.

To consider this matter more profoundly, it is necessary to investigate the reason why this American Merlin is ascribed to the "West." Significant here is that the "West" is negatively described as "the Subterranean World" and "the Region of Preexistent Spirits." Given that the premise that *The Anarchiad* was discovered as an ancient epic in the western territory, Ohio, probably reflects on the rise of enthusiasm for origin-seeking, the excavation of "America," the description of the west should be positive. The Connecticut Wits no doubt belong to what Haywood calls "a great age of origin-seeking" on both sides of the Atlantic (35); they gained the motif of excavation from *The Rolliad* and James Macpherson's *Fingal, an Ancient Epic Poem* (1762), for Ossian

and Fingal are directly mentioned in *The Anarchiad* ("the ghost of Ossian" 65; "the fag-end man of M'Fingal" 81).[8] With regard to the American motivation to excavate the origin, Gordon M. Sayre claims that "[t]he American cultural elite was sensitive to accusations that the continent lacked any of the classical history on which Europeans founded their common culture, and the mounds appeared as evidence of such an antiquity" (226). Specifically, as Jason Goodwin notes, "the first settlers in the Northwest Territory arrived on the north bank of the Ohio in a boat called the *Mayflower*. A later party felt 'almost inclined . . . in imitation of Columbus, in transport to kiss the soil of Kentucky.' It was like the discovery of America all over again" (88; italics original). Frederick Jackson Turner observes in the region of the Ohio Valley "an independent and powerful force in shaping the development of a nation" (175). The post-revolutionary west might have appeared to be a key to the rediscovery of America.

Nonetheless, the west in "American Antiquities, No. 11" offers not dream but nightmare: the western region is presented as "the Land of Annihilation." In accordance with this name, this region does annihilate any desires: the "Ambition's toils," the "statesman's gloried name," the "hero's triumph," the "poet's fame," and

[8] As Ian Haywood notes, the "eighteenth century was a great age of origin-seeking" (35). During this time, archeology attained attention and the "MS became the touchstone of truth about the past" (Haywood 20).

the "Insatiate" throngs' "lust of gain" are nullified there: these are "lulled to rest, eternal stillness keep, / And curtain'd close in dead oblivion, sleep" (66). Also, this place is situated as the origin of anarchy on earth: the wretched are first born as a "pigmy populace" (67), and when "Matured for birth," they rise on the earth, "Incarnate *imps*, and veiled in human guise," in order to bring corruption into the earth (67). After rising on earth, "Like man [they] appear in stature, shape, and face— / Mix, undistinguished, with the common race; / Fill every *rank*, in each *profession* blend, / Power all their aim, and ruin all their end" (67; italics original). The imps penetrate such fields as medicine, religion, law, and politics.[9] Among them, the authors feature the last group called "Wimbles": "And shine the *Wimbles* of th' applauding land . . . lo! th' expected scene advances near . . . the *fiends' millennial year*! . . . What countless *imps* shall throng the new-born States!" (68–69; italics original). As already noted, Wimble is identified with Judge William Williams of Lebanon, the authors' main adversary in *The Anarchiad*.

Thus, the west emerges as an embodiment of corruption, where the antifederalist

[9] Sometimes, getting into "medicine's garb," with "the poisonous pill," they "Invent the nostrum, and, unlicensed, kill"; sometimes, draped in "sable robes," with "persecution's flame," they "abuse each sacred name"; sometimes, "at the wangling bar," one of them "confounds all right, and, arrogant in lies . . . before the judge's eyes"; and sometimes, "alluded by fleeting fame," they "seek on earth the politician's name" (67–68).

"Wimble" is copied and reproduced until it forms the plural "Wimbles," and they amassed fortunes which did not contribute to the Federal government. Moreover, the authors thought that giving priority to the state's interests would cause disunion of the fledging nation: they saw "the young DEMOCRACY of hell" rise from the land of Annihilation, deploring that "the *powers of Congress* fade" and "*public credit* sinks":

> See, from the shades, on tiny pinions swell
>
> And rise, the young DEMOCRACY of *hell*!
>
> Before their face the *powers of Congress* fade,
>
> And *public credit* sinks, an empty shade;
>
> Wild severance rages, wars intestine spread,
>
> Their boasted UNION hides her dying head;
>
> The forms of government in ruin hurled,
>
> Reluctant empire quits the western world. (69; italics original)

Because the "UNION" is losing, it no sooner reaches the trajectory of *translatio imperii* than it passes by the western world, America ("Reluctant empire quits the western world"). Identifying America with the "west" as opposed to the eastern world, the authors disclose a sense of responsibility as the American epicists as represented in

Berkeley's "Verses on the Prospect of Planting Art and Learning in America." Here, the regional west comes to represent a microcosm of America. If the regional west (the northwestern territory) and the Western world (America from a broader perspective) are conjured up as the ruined western image, the nightmarish vision of the west, the vision of "young DEMOCRACY of hell," is critical. *The Anarchiad* warns readers lest America would turn out to be a ruin.

Consider the role of the Merlin of the West in such a dismal place. In the issue of No. 12, a key topic is the degeneration thesis as described by the French and Scottish philosophers. James Ceaser explains that this thesis has two major points: 1) there is inferiority in American animals, including humans, and that "the American Indian was a lesser being than the European, . . . the Asian or the African," and 2) "everything [plants, animals, and humans] that was transported from the Old World to the New . . . became stunted and lost its vigor" (19).[10] These points are ridiculed in *The Anarchaid* in fact: they "invent new codes," "Write natural histories for their antipodes," "Tell how th' enfeebled powers of life decay, / Where falling suns defraud the western day" (74).

[10] Ceaser also divides the American responses to the degeneracy thesis into two groups: 1) the authors of *The Federalist Papers*, who reject "the application of natural history to political life" (21), and 2) those, including Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson, who collect "a body of data" to "question the empirical facts on which it [the thesis] rested" (21).

The “enfeebled powers of life” reflects the first point of American inferiority, and the line “falling suns defraud the western day” the second point. Indefatigably enumerating several types of feebleness,[11] the Merlin of the West comes to ridicule their intelligence itself: “their skulls conceive” only “vain whim” (75); the degeneration thesis is presented as the outcome of interested conception rather than disinterested, reasonable observation.

More specifically, William Robertson, a Scottish historian, is targeted. According to the narrator’s summary, Robertson insists that “the soil of America is prolific in nothing but reptiles and insects” (76). The Merlin of the West draws the American Bard’s attention to Robertson’s pride and blindness, presenting the following sight:

> See Scotland’s livy in historic pride,
>
> Rush, with blind fury, o’er th’ Atlantic tide;
>
> He lifts, in wrath, his plague-compelling wand,
>
> And deadly murrain blasts the fated land:
>
> His parent call awakes the insect train—

[11] “See vegetation, man, and bird, and beast, / Just by the distance' squares in size decreased; / See mountain pines to dwarfish reeds descend, / Aspiring oaks in pigmy shrub oaks end;— / The heaven-topp'd Andes sink a humble hill,— / Sea-like Potomac run a tinkling rill;— / Huge mammoth dwindle to a mouse's size— / Columbian turkeys turn European flies;— / Exotic birds, and foreign beasts, grow small, /And man, the lordliest, shrink to least of all” (74–75).

Gnats cloud the skies, and ants devour the plain;

Thick swarming frogs attend his magic voice—

Rods change to serpents, and the dust to lice. (76)

What matters is that the Merlin of the West inverts Robertson's claim of degeneration—"the soil of America is prolific in nothing but reptiles and insects"—by presenting Robertson's voice as the very cause of "the insect train"—"Gnats and ants." Likewise, his "plague-compelling wand" and "magic voice" are posited as triggers that bring about "deadly murrain" and "Thick swarming frogs." Thus, this passage insinuates that it is Robertson's history that deforms the reality of America. The inversion of cause and effect exposes his discourse as nothing but self-interest. Although the above inverted western landscape seems nightmarish, what the Merlin of the West suggests is another possibility that the west had been deformed by a "blind" historian's discourse.

In the last part of "American Antiquities No. 12," the Merlin of the West criticizes the history of America written by the Frenchman Michel Rene Hilliard D'Auberteul. D'Auberteul's history is ridiculed as "lies," but this part attacking D'Auberteul problematizes truth and falsehood because the part attacking D'Aubertuel's history includes a lie, mockingly saying that the lines are "closely copied by Pope, in one of

his smaller poems ["Messiah"]" (81). [12] Examine the actual lines ridiculing D'Auberteul:

> Virtue no more the generous breast shall fire,
>
> Nor radiant truth the historic page inspire;
>
> But lost, dissolved in thy superior shade,
>
> One tide of falsehood o'er the world be spread;
>
> In wit's light robe shall gaudy fiction shine,
>
> And all be lies, as in a work of thine. (82)

On the surface, the Merlin of the West, putting D'Auberteul in the place of the Messiah, ridicules his history on the American Revolution, where "Nor radiant truth the historic page inspire," and, in his "shade," instead of the Messiah's ray, "One tide of falsehood o'er the world be spread." Yet, what "wit's light robe" and "gaudy fiction" refer to should not be underestimated, for such criticism can turn back to the Merlin of the West and the Connecticut Wits themselves. Certainly, in comparison with Pope's "Messiah," John McWilliams observes *The Anarchiad*'s theme in darkness, while "Messiah" in

[12] "No more the rising *Sun* shall gild the Morn, / Nor Evening *Cynthia* fill her silver Horn, / But lost, dissolv'd in thy superior Rays; / One Tyde of Glory, one unclouded Blaze, /O'erflow thy Courts: The LIGHT HIMSELF shall shine / Reveal'd; and *God*'s eternal Day be thine!" / (Pope, "Messiah" ll. 99–104; emphasis in original)

light, mentioning the phrase, "wit's light robe": "*The Anarchiad* links 'wit's light robe' with 'gaudy fiction' and projects them both into the night of the Republic" (81; italics original). However, their sense of self-caricature should be noted. The term "wit" refers not only to D'Auberteul but also to the Connecticut "Wits" or the wicked "wits." An idea that "The Anarchiad" as the model of Homer, Virgil, Dante, Milton, and Pope is nothing but a "gaudy fiction." Thus, a "gaudy fiction" deserves Merlin's and the Wits' literary strategy rather than D'Auberteul. So considered, to counter the historical discourse, in which lies are presented as truth naively, at least for the authors of *The Anarchiad*, the Connecticut Wits would declare that the discourse of literature—a gaudy fiction, or the mock epic—blurs the boundaries of truth and lies per se. The last two lines reprove D'Auberteul, but it can be read as the wicked wits' literary manifesto as well.

However, it is important to consider the possibility that the western imagery is distorted not only by blind historians, including Robertson and D'Auberteul, but also by the wicked wits themselves. On one hand, the nightmarish western imagery enables the Connecticut Wits to create a unique American epic, and, as we shall see, *The Anarchiad* deserves to be called the American gothic epic; on the other hand, it requires

amnesia about the anteriority of the indigenous people. To engage with this issue and to examine the limit of the Connecticut Wits' conscience regarding the indigenous people, it is profitable to call into question an unnoticed context of *The Anarchiad*, that is, the *Northwest Ordinance*.

3. "And Seeks th' Expansion of th' Oblivious Pool"

The *Northwest Ordinance* was enacted on July 13, 1787, just before No. 11 was published on August 16. Gordon T. Stewart observes Ohio as composed of "geo-political hot spots like the Middle East" because the "area between the Ohio and the Lakes was at the crossroads of empires" (21). In the 1740s and 1750s, France and Britain struggled over this region; from the 1760s to the 1790s, Britain and America engaged in conflict; and "the Spain extended its control from Louisiana through the Mississippi (Stewart 21-22). After the Revolutionary War, Britain ceded this region to the United States in the Treaty of Paris of 1783. Further, as Stewart states, the *Northwestern Ordinance* of 1787 "tilted the balance toward the new United States" by providing "attractive conditions for white settlers . . . by reassuring existing and potential settlers that land titles would be solid" (35). For the government and settlers,

this ordinance was beneficial, but, for the native peoples, as Jack N. Rakove concludes, it was an "ambiguous achievement" (1). Certainly, Article III reads that "their [the native people's] lands and property shall never be taken from them without their consent; and, in their property, rights, and liberty, they shall never be invaded or disturbed, unless in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress" (United States 340). If America gained "property, rights, and liberty" through the Revolutionary War, one can observe in this its spirit and its application to the indigenous people. Yet, if the passage, "unless in just and lawful wars authorized by Congress" discloses that Congress' decision precedes, it follows that the native peoples must be subject to the laws of Congress in the name of liberty. As Rakove notes, "Before the empire of liberty could be extended, extensive Indian lands had to be liberated" (3). From the *Northwest Ordinance*, one can infer that this region constituted borderlands where white settlers, native people, and the federal government clashed with each other for their own sakes.

To locate the authors' position regarding this region, the following lines deserve an examination:

Chimeras sage, with plans commercial fraught,

> Sublime abortions of projecting thought!
>
> To paper coin, how copper mints succeed—
>
> How Indian wars in brains prolific breed!
>
> What strength, what firmness, guide the public helm!
>
> How troops disbanded guard the threaten'd realm!
>
> How treaties thrive! and, 'mid the sons of Ham,
>
> The LYBIAN LION shrinks before the LAMB!
>
> New modes of taxing spring from *Woglog*'s hands,
>
> And peerless *Wimble* sells the western lands! (69; italics in original and emphasis added)

As previously noted, Wimble takes a side with a plan to "sell the western lands" by the "Connecticut paper alone." Although it remains unclear who Woglog is precisely, it is clear that the reasoning used to attack Woglog's "New modes of taxing" is the same as that used to attack Wimble; taxing was another issue that deepened division between the state and the federal governments.[13] More than before the 1787 Ordinance, such

[13] Robert E. Wright explains that "Under this document [the Articles of Confederation], the national government could not directly tax" (69); as a result, the state governments taxed their own way, and the national government often failed to collect from them: there were "two simple realities: one, state governments *did not want to pay*, and two, they *could not pay*, owing to economic weakness and a dearth of political fortitude" (69; italics original).

politicians as Woglog and Wimble benefited from the speculation on the western territory and from the overflow of settlers. The settlers' movement, however, inevitably caused conflicts with the indigenous people who had lived there. The place thus became a "threaten'd realm" and required "troops disbanded guard." In fact, Humphreys was forced to tackle this urgent situation as a commander of a regiment from November 1, 1786 (Cifelli 60). Accordingly, for the authors, Woglog and Wimble only bred "Indian wars in brains." Nonetheless, it should not be ignored that this region was already recognized as "the public helm" in the text. If the northwest territory was the borderlands between white settlers, native people, and the federal government, the authors' interest is with the third; they could not go beyond this framework limit.

It does not mean that the Connecticut Wits' knowledge about the indigenous people and the related history was not profound. Considering their religious and educational backgrounds, they were presumably acquainted with colonial history, including the Pequot War, the Kind Philip War, and the French and Indian War. Also, they were familiar with the captivity narratives,[14] and recognized the significance of

[14] For example, Humphreys' prose "Essay on the Life of General Putnam" (1788) indicates his reception of the Indian war and captivity narratives. Bottorff observes in this prose "'Cooperian' Indians, soldiers, captivities, bloodlettings and heroism" and notes "Humphreys' Indians closely foreshadow Brown's [*Edgar Huntly*]" (xi–xii); also, Derounian-Stodola detects not only to Putnam's captivity but also Jemima Howe's captivity in this work. According to her, "From a melodramatic and romantic rendition of Putnam's captivity (and

the Indian Policy of the post-revolutionary period. However, they could not help but aestheticize them in *The Anarchiad*. In enumerating the findings in the western territory, not only the ancient epic "The Anarchiad," but also "an ample supply of great bones from the Wabash," the narrator writes:

> I need scarcely premise the ruins of fortifications yet visible, and other vestiges of art, in the Western country, had sufficiently demonstrated that this delightful region had once been occupied by a civilized people. (3–4)

Here they identify the natives as "a civilized people." It is probably because, as Luther Riggs and Bernard W. Sheehan point out, in the eighteenth century there were opinions that native people derived from Wales or Britain (Riggs vii; Sheehan 61),[15] so that one cannot say that these American authors romanticize the natives. Nonetheless, the authors attempt to describe these people in terms of "sublimity and horror" in another part of the text (64). In "American Antiquities No. 12," the narrator highlights "the hell

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entire life), Humphreys proceeds to an equally romanticized version of Howe's captivity. Humphreys depicts Howe as the heroine of a novel of seduction, 'a Canadian Clarissa'" (93).

[15] Also, Sheehan notes that there were several hypotheses of the Indian origin: Asia, the lost tribes of Israel (the Jews), the lost Alexandrian fleet of the fourth century B.C., and the lost Welshmen led by Madoc in the twelfth century. Yet he says that "all other opinions paled before the general consensus that the Indian had in some way crossed to the American continent from Asia" (61).

of the Gothic bards," saying, "Pictures of this kind, drawn by the pen of genius, most forcibly awaken our curiosity, and interest our attention" (64–65); then, significantly, he assigns such a gothic imagery to "the early inhabitants of this land," which does not refer to the indigenous people explicitly, but it strongly implies them. Moreover, the narrator introduces "the early inhabitants of this land" as related to "the wonders of the invisible world," relating them to "all the *witchcraft* and *possessions* of our immediate ancestors" (65; italics original). While the authors present the early inhabitants as "a civilized people," here "the early inhabitants" (the indigenous people) and "our immediate ancestors" (the colonial settlers) are definitely distinguished; then, "the early inhabitants of this land" are defamiliarized as equivalent to "the wonders of the invisible world" or "the witchcraft and possessions." If the west in *The Anarchiad* is irresistibly haunted with the anteriority of the natives, then the antecedents are forced into "the invisible world" where they become ghosts.

Indeed, the Merlin of the West invites the American Bard to a ghastly sight surrounded with a number of ghosts, phantoms, and shadowy specters:

> As hov'ring dreams the slumb'ring eye assail,
>
> Unnumber'd phantoms flit among the vale;

And sounds as vague and hollow meet the ear,

As startled fancy hears, or seems to hear.

What time the mourner, through the midnight gloom,

Sees shadowy spectres [sic] issuing from the tomb . . . (73)

"[A]stonish'd" by the "unreal forms," the American Bard "ask'd the wonder from the friendly guide" (73), and the guide explains that this is the "embryo home" of "Wits, poets, chiefs, and sages yet to come" (73–74). If the west in *The Anarchiad* is a microcosm of America, as already noted, it is reasonable that this nightmarish region is the "embryo" of all Americans, as seen in the guide's answer, although it is important to note that the noun "chief" discloses their recognition of the indigenous people.

Indeed, *The Anarchaid* can be situated as one of the early American gothic narratives. It can be said that the British gothic began with Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), and Radcliffe, Monk Lewis, Godwin, Hogg, Maturin, Mary Shelley followed. If, typically seen in Walpole's work, the imagery of a castle, or a ruin occupied the gothic imagination, such an imagery can be traced to the times of Henry VIII. According to Woodward, the Dissolution of the Monasteries ordered by Henry VIII during 1536–1541 transformed a number of Catholic abbeys into the typical ruins,

which gradually came to catch opportunistic businessmen' and melancholy antiquaries' attention and constitute the English gothic imagery (108–35). In contrast, as Toshio Yagi points out, the American gothic begins with imageries such as "the west" and "the Indian," because "American characteristics" should have been ascribed to what the old world did not have (77).

Indeed, *The Anarchiad* shows the imagery of ruin in the "West." When ridiculing "Wimbles" in "the Land of Annihilation," that is the "West" in *The Anarchiad*, they revoke the image of a ruin by writing "The forms of government in ruin hurled, / Reluctant empire quits the western world" (69). Also, when describing the excavated fortifications in the northwest territory, the narrator calls them "the ruins of fortifications" (4). Thus, seeing the imagery of a ruin in the west, *The Anarchiad* grafts the figure of west as the American characteristics onto the British gothic heritage.

What matters here is Teresa A. Goddu's argument that the gothic narrative encompasses double-edged affect: "while the gothic reveals what haunts the nation's narratives, it can also work to coalesce those narratives. . . . The gothic can strengthen as well as critique an idealized national identity" (10). If, as Bergland points out, "American literature has been haunted by ghostly Indians" (1) and "Native American

ghosts function both as representations of national guilt and as triumphant agents of Americanization" (4), then the above descriptions in *The Anarchid* might divulge their feeling of guilt. To "avoid horror," Bergland states, "civilized people must avoid being reminded of what has been buried" and "what has been conquered" (11). Such desire for oblivion, forgetfulness, or amnesia can be seen in *The Anarchiad*, especially the figure of "Lethe's streams" in the Land of Annihilation:

> Their [the imps'] task performed; again, by sovereign doom,
>
> The *fiend* [Annihilation] compels them to their native home.
>
> Where *Lethe's streams* through glooms tartarean roll,
>
> And seeks th' expansion of th' oblivious pool— (69–70; italics original)

Because the imps' have finished their earthly task, they are compelled to go to "their native home," the land of Annihilation, the west, in order to be annihilated. Moreover, going through "Lethe's streams" and the "oblivious pool," they finally reach the imagery of "one eternal void":

> Thither, again, they tend; and there, at last,
>
> Their projects, changes, and elections past,

> *Wimble* shall turn to *froth*, to *Bubo Zack*;
>
> *Ben* change to *Copper*; *Woglog* end in *Quack*:
>
> From shade to shade, from nought to nought, decoyed,
>
> All center whence they sprang—in one eternal void. (70; italics in original)

Since they finished their projects, such characters as Wimble, Froth, Bubo, Zack, Ben, Copper, Woglog, and Quack return home as well; they then mingle with each other until they are diluted to the point of being indistinguishable ("From shade to shade, from nought to nought"), falling into "one eternal void." The land of Annihilation, the west of *The Anarchiad*, comes to represent one eternal void. Of course, it cannot be known whether the authors recognized such desire—the amnesia about the anteriority of the indigenous people in the northwestern territory—as their own when they inscribe the figure of oblivion and void in *The Anarchiad*. On the surface of the text, the metaphor of Lethe's streams represents nothing but the vanity of such self-interested politicians and speculators as the Wimbles; yet, if one follows Bergland's theory, the authors' unconscious anxiety and guilt would be visible.

Nonetheless, *The Anarchiad*'s aestheticized and distorted representation of the

indigenous people cannot avoid criticism as cultural appropriation from the perspectives of the twentieth-and twenty-first centuries. However, it should be noted that they grasped the possibility of the American gothic narrative before Charles Brockden Brown's *Edgar Huntly* (1799), which Yagi and Goddu identify as one of America's first gothic novels (Yagi 77; Goddu 4). Amnesia about the natives, or cultural appropriation is an inherent vice from the nation's colonial history. If the American gothic is the effect of such vice, and if such a narrative is inevitably connected with national guilt and anxiety about alterity, then, because of their critical limit of the (in)ability to represent the native people, *The Anarchiad* should be reread without blinding ourselves to what they achieved and what they repressed.

Coda, or Luther G. Riggs' Excavation

When Luther G. Riggs reprinted these twelve issues in book form in 1861, he gave them the title *The Anarchiad: A New England Poem (1786-87). Written in Concert by David Humphreys, Joel Barlow, John Trumbull, and Dr. Lemuel Hopkins*. Then, *The Anarchiad* came into being. The following line probably attracted and motivated him to publish this work in the year of 1861, on the eve of the Civil War: "YE LIVE

UNITED, OR DIVIDED DIE!" (63). Indeed, the next quotation from *The Anarchiad* offers the continuity between the post-revolutionary and the antebellum periods:

> Shall lordly Hudson part contending powers,
>
> And broad Potomac lave two hostile shores?
>
> Must Alleghany's sacred summits bear
>
> The impious bulwarks of perpetual war?
>
> His hundred streams receive your heroes slain,
>
> And bear your sons inglorious to the main?
>
> Will States cement, by feebler bonds allied,
>
> Or join more closely, as they more divide? (62)

The Hudson, the Potomac, and the Alleghany's hundred streams are significant, because they flow to Washington as the intersection of East/West and North/South. For Riggs, "contending powers" and "two hostile shores" suggest the sectional conflict between the North (the Federalist Adams, the New-Englander) and the South (The Republican Jefferson, the Virginian), although "North" and "South" are not mentioned explicitly here. The last couplet's "allied" and "divide" resonate with the same intensity to the line "YE LIVE UNITED, OR DIVIDED DIE!"

Riggs' excavation demonstrates the fact that *The Anarchiad* had the possibility to keep appealing to the nineteenth-century men of letters. It is primarily because *The Anarchiad* was none other than the effect of their strong sense of mission—the strong confidence that their literary engagement would contribute to making the current political situation much better— which was motivated by a strength of solidarity and the rhetoric of fraternity cultivated at Yale in the 1760s and 1770s and Hartford in the 1780s, and such a sense of responsibility was also reflected on and accelerated by the sentiment of the Federalist age of the 1780s.

CHAPTER FOUR

Gothic Concerto: Lemuel Hopkins "Guillotina" Series (1796–99)

If *The Anarchiad* reflects on the strong sense of confidence of the authors in literary engagement in the Federalist age of the 1780s, "Guillotina," written by Lemuel Hopkins, one of the authors of *The Anarchiad*, registers the pessimistic and anxious atmosphere of the 1790s. "[T]the Federalist financial revolution was under way and the centralized economy was making the fledgling United States more appealing on the global economic stage," David Lawrimore points out. "However, by the time [1796] . . . this optimism was considerably muted" (376). Such a transition is evident in Hopkins' "Guillotina."

Simultaneously, like *The Anarchiad*, Hopkins' "Guillotina" deserves to be considered an American gothic epic. If the American gothic both strengthens and critiques national identity, as Goddu states, Hopkins' work strengthens and critiques not only the national identity but also the fraternal identity of the Connecticut Wits, the solidarity of which reached a fissure when Barlow betrayed the members: he left for France in 1788 and became a Republican in the 1790s. From this angle, this chapter

will argue that Hopkins' "Guillotina" acquires its unique status in the age of the Connecticut Wits: it embodies the strength of the Federalist Connecticut Wits through the use of the gothic imagery of the muse "Guillotina," an apotheosis of the newly invented execution machine, the guillotine. At the same time, it also questions their solidarity by inscribing his attachment to the banished but still beloved friend, Barlow, under the surface of the text.

Lemuel Hopkins was born on June 19, 1750, in Waterbury, Connecticut, to a wealthy farmer of that town. By virtue of his father's guidance, he gained a good education and engaged in the labors of the field. Yet, he had a delicate constitution and suffered from a "cough, hoarseness, a pain in the breast and the spitting of blood." "[T]the circumstance of an hereditary predisposition to that disease [consumption]," Elihu Hubbard Smith supposes, "led Dr. Hopkins to its particular consideration, and laid the foundation of his future fame" (468), that is, his reputation as a physician.

Hopkins began the study of his profession in Wallingford and then Litchfield, where he started practicing in 1776. He eventually joined the army, volunteering as a soldier in the Revolutionary War. In 1784, he moved to Hartford and continued his practice. He was one of the founders of the Medical Society of Connecticut and

"retained the highest reputation," James Thacher notes, "both in the theory and practice of medicine, of any physician in his country, or perhaps in the state" (299).[1]

As a man of letters, Hopkins was also distinguished. In Hartford, he engaged with *The Anarchiad* as a result of his participation in the Hartford Friendly Club, where he participated in enthusiastic discussions with the members. Hopkins's wife "frequently found him sitting in the same attitude and position in the morning, that she left him in on retiring at night" (qtd. in Thacher 306). Although he is now an almost forgotten poet in American literature,[2] the anthologists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries included his poems: *The Hypocrite's Hope*, *The Democratiad*, and *An Elegy on the Victim of a Cancer Quack* were often selected as his most distinguished works.

The pieces of "Guillotina" were not chosen for anthologies, but it does not mean that they do not deserve attention. These issues were annually published in the

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[1] As for his biography, Elihu Hubbard Smith's "Lemuel Hopkins" (the *Monthly Magazine and British Register*, VI, July through December, 1798; rpt. in the *Monthly Magazine and American Review*, vol. 1, no. 6, September-December, 1799, pp. 468-70); Thacher's *American Medical Biography* (1828), pp. 298-304; Anderson's The Town and City of Waterbury, Connecticut, from the Aboriginal Period to the Year Eighteen Hundred and Ninety-Five, vol. 3, pp. 927-28.

[2] See Smith 139-53, Carey 34, 142-45, Kettle 272-84, Duyckinck 319-22. In the twentieth century, Parrington highly appreciated Hopkins as "the most picturesque member of the group, the most characteristically Yankee" (xxix), see also xxixd-xxxi, 415-20. However, anthologists in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries did not pay attention to him, see Parini, Lehman, Sollors and Marcus, and Baym and Levine. There is only one biographical essay by Steiner. Wells, in his newest book, *Poetry Wars: Verse and Politics in the American Revolution and Early Republic* (2018), casts light on Hopkins, especially his *The Democratiad*, see 5-7, 201-05.

Connecticut Courant from 1796 through 1799 as new-year songs. In them, Hopkins features "the Tenth Muse Guillotina," an apotheosis of a guillotine, which had been recently invented in France and used during the French Revolution. Hopkins implores the muse Guillotina to drop her fatal edge on the heads of his political opponents, the Republicans. It is not difficult to observe that he shares Trumbull's and Humphreys' political sense of duty as Federalist intellectuals and their confidence in literature as a forceful means to critique society, as evident in *The Anarchiad*.

However, how much Hopkins personal attachment to Barlow affected the framework of "Guillotina" deserves careful attention. As Walter R. Steiner notes, "a warm friendship had sprung up between them" (17) in Hartford in the 1780s. Barlow, one of the writers of *The Anarchiad*, left Hartford for France in 1788 as an agent for the Scioto Land Company to sell the Northwest Territory, Ohio. Although this business quickly failed, Barlow became acquainted with radical intellectuals in France, witnessed the French Revolution and guillotine executions, and later, importantly, became a Jeffersonian Republican. This meant a farewell to his erstwhile Federalist friends, including Hopkins.

Mentioning the contrast between the Federalist Dwight and the Republican

Barlow is almost a cliché in the scholarship on the Connecticut Wits, and the story of the fissure between Barlow and the other members of the Connecticut Wits has been told often. Noah Webster was the severest critics of Barlow's change: "One word more, Sir, from an old friend who once loved and respected you [Barlow]," Webster wrote, "You went from America with a good character for talents and for good breeding. . . . Mr. Barlow, in divesting yourself of your religion, you have lost your good manners, and like the French by the same process you have commenced a rude, insulting, dogmatical egotist" ("To Joel Barlow," November 16, 1798, 193-94). Webster and Barlow were in the same class of 1777 at Yale and were both involved with the Hartford Friendly Club in the 1780s. Because of that, Barlow's conversion in France greatly shocked Webster. Yet, the same was not true of Hopkins, who suggested his attachment to Barlow in his personal letters and inscribed his wish for the friend's return to Hartford.

Hopkins oscillated between his Federalist responsibility and his personal attachment to his friend Barlow. The last piece of "Guillotina," in 1799, reflects not only the decline of the Federalist age of the 1790s but also Hopkins sense of resignation to meet with Barlow. Such resignation probably came from a gulf between Barlow, a promising man of letters in Paris, and Hopkins, an ordinary (although prominent in the

state) physician in Hartford. This inquiry will argue that such a state of mind allowed Hopkins to create a unique epic quite different from other members' works, such as Trumbull's *M'Fingal*, Dwight's *The Conquest of Canäan*, *The Anarchiad*, and Barlow's *The Vision of Columbus* (later *The Columbiad*).

To this end, this chapter first examines the invention of the guillotine in France during the French Revolution, showing that the guillotine was an ironic child of ideal concepts—equality and efficacy—as cultivated by the enlightenment philosophy and reasoning of eighteenth century Europe, and was a dismal consequence of the Revolution. The next section clarifies the Federalist aspect of Hopkins with reference to the Whisky Rebellion, the letters between Banneker and Jefferson, and the XYZ Affair. Drawing attention to Hopkins' knowledge of the epic and his reference to the patriotic motif "Columbia" and Dryden's *Aeneid*, the last section investigates what he conceals under the surface of the text through the figure of Palinurus, Aeneas's reliable pilot and friend.

1. The Birth of Guillotina

The guillotine, an execution machine, was first used in 1791. The noun

"guillotine" was first used in English (the *OED*) in 1792. Four years later and across the Atlantic, this machine was transformed into the Tenth Muse, Guillotina, by the hand of Lemuel Hopkins. The first piece of 1796, "Guillotina; Or the Annual Song of the Tenth Muse," begins with the poet's invocation: "COME Guillotina, Muse divine, / Whose voice o'erawes the tuneful nine." "Guillotina" serves to critique its original source of inspiration, the guillotine, as an ironic result of the ideal concepts of equality and efficacy as cultivated by the enlightenment philosophy and reasoning of eighteenth century Europe and also as a sign of failure of the French Revolution.

The guillotine was brought into being by three French men: a conceiver, a designer, and a manufacturer. The first was Dr. Joseph-Ignace Guillotin (1738–1814), a deputy from Paris and professor of anatomy at the Faculty of Medicine. Because execution by decapitation was limited to members of the aristocracy in those days, on October 10, 1789, before the National Assembly, Guillotin proposed that 1) "Crimes of the same kind shall be published by the same kind of punishment, whatever be the rank of the criminal"; 2) "In all cases (whatever be the crime) of capital punishment, it shall be of the same kind—that is, beheading—and it shall be executed by means of a machine"; and 3) "Crime being personal, the punishment, whatever it may be, of a

criminal, shall inflict no disgrace on his family" ("Dr Guillotin" 219). These propositions were adjourned, so that he delivered them again on December 1 in the same year. He reportedly exclaimed, "Now, with my machine, I cut off your head in the twinkling of an eye, and you never feel it!" which brought about "a general laugh" ("Dr Guillotin" 219).

Guillotin's proposition was not received seriously at first, but the Assembly later reached the same agenda as Guillotin. The equality of decapitation was admitted into the new penal code on September 25, 1792, but, as Charles-Henri Sanson, the hereditary executioner, wrote in his memoir, there was "the cruelty, uncertainty, and torture of beheading by the sword" under the old system, so that the Assembly returned to Guillotin's idea of the necessity of inventing an efficient machine. Dr. Antoine Louis (1723–92), a secretary of the Academy of Surgery, inquired about the possibility of manufacturing such a machine; he researched and finally presented a possible design for it. By Louis' solicitation, Tobias Schmidt (1768–1821), a harpsichord maker from Strasbourg, was assigned to manufacture the machine and carry out the mission. After several tests with items, animals, and corpses, the guillotine successfully executed its first live victim, Jacques Nicolas Pelletier, on April 25, 1792.

What is important to note is the underlying belief in equality and efficiency that drove the French intellectuals, including Guillotin, to achieve the invention of such an execution machine and its consequences. Regarding Guillotin's propositions to the Assembly, it is uncertain whether Hopkins knew of them first hand. However, according to Gerould, the imagery of the guillotine prevailed as "a most distinguished project for equality" (24),[3] and comic songs offering a female apotheosis of the guillotine, such as "Most high and mighty Lady Guillotine" or "Sainte Guillotine," were frequently sung in the streets of Paris (33–37). Hopkins likely drew the idea of Guillotina as his muse from these. Significantly, such comic songs ridiculed the increase in executions during the French Revolution: for example, one song says, "Make way for the guillotine. / The guillotine will go everywhere, / For those who hoard and cheat" (qtd. in Gerould 35). As the the French Revolution devolved into the Reign of Terror, the guillotine gradually became a symbol of the failure of the French Revolution, losing the original, ideal concepts that brought it into being.

As Daniel Gerould claims, although "In the past, executions had derived their drama from the prolonged agony of the victims . . . Speed now was the keynote . . . the

[3] As for the name of "guillotine," according to Gerould, "For a time the new instrument was known as little Lousion or Louisette after its designer, but it soon regained the more popular name of guillotine" (23).

guillotine soon provided the most engrossing theatre in all of Europe" (25). Guillotin's statement on the equality of punishment and the necessity of an efficient machine that carried out such equality reflects the age of enlightenment; Guillotin's motivation and that of those who participated in its invention must have been sincere. Nevertheless, it is ironic that such an endeavor resulted in a tragic spectacle in French history. In "the most engrossing theatre in all of Europe," the accumulation of beheaded bodies was considered a consequence of grotesquely disciplined and lightened human death. Considering Hopkins' critique of the French Revolution in the 1790s, it is possible that he captured this ironic moment as the inspiration for his black-humored "Guillotina."

2. The Federalist Mock-Epic

Hopkins employed the French motif of the guillotine due to contemporary political circumstances. The Federalists and the Republicans disagreed about diplomatic policy: the former sided with Britain and the latter with France.

First of all, it is necessary to examine Hopkins' Federalist position in "Guillotina." The poet requires the muse's voice "o'eawes the tuneful nine," but what he requires most is Guillotina's fatal edge that brings about death to enemies:

Come sing again! since Ninety-Five,

Has left some Antis still alive,

Some Jacobins as pert as ever,

Tho' much was hop'd from Yellow-fever; . . .

A host of unhang'd Democrats,

And Speculators thick as rats . . . ("Guillotina, for 1797" 1)

Guillotina's voice brings about "the Annual Song," but it also provides the sound of the clash between the edge and the head ("A host of unhang'd Democrats").

What makes these lines puzzling is the reference to "Yellow-fever." In 1795, the previous year of publication ("Ninety-Five"), yellow fever wreaked havoc in New England, and Hopkins, as a professional physician, devoted himself to patients suffering from this pestilence. Hopkins, as a poet, did not hesitate to express his displeasure with the enemies' survival, implying that yellow fever should have destroyed many more ("Tho' much was hop'd from Yellow-fever"). The contradiction between his undeniable devotion and his implications about yellow fever must have bewildered readers who knew of his profession, but this is Hopkins' consistent tone in "Guillotina." His profile as a physician recedes; his conservative, Federalist judgment

is foregrounded. Thus, “some Jacobins,” “A host of unhang’d Democrats,” and “Speculators,” are called “Antis,” “TRAITOR,” and “an evil” that “neither heathen God, nor Devil, / Would own engendering.”

Thanks to such enemies, America was closely losing unification. In this situation, George Washington played a significant role for Hopkins: “’Tis these, in contrast with the GREAT, / Whose virtue saves the unhinging State” (“Guillotina; Or the Annual Song of the Tenth Muse” (1). Hopkins wished that “the GREAT,” that is, Washington, would save “the unhinging State.” This situation was caused by the conflict between the Federalists and the Republicans.

Both parties disagreed on diplomatic policy, and the disagreement featuring the Whiskey Rebellion of 1794 merits special attention. The Whiskey Rebellion was sparked by taxation on whiskey by the federal government to make up for debts of the Revolutionary War. This taxation impressed a heavy burden on whiskey makers, particularly the relatively poor in the backcountry. This resulted in an insurgence in 1794. To suppress this insurgency, the federal government organized an army led by Washington. The mission succeeded, and this success reinforced the Federalists’ initiative.

This incident drew the attention of contemporary literati: Hugh Henry Brackenridge (1748–1816) in *Modern Chivalry* (1792–1815) features mob violence in this affair; Susanna Rowson (1762–1824) in *The Volunteers* (1795) composes a forbidden romance in light of the political conflict. Hopkins emphasized the folly of related politicians, particularly the first governor of Pennsylvania, Thomas Mifflin (1744–1800). In the 1797 section of "Guillotina," Mifflin speaks to French diplomat Pierre-Auguste Adet as follows: "'Monsieur will think we're drunk, I fear. / 'We're fetter'd, sire [sir],—we're in the clims [climes]—" ("Guillotina for 1797" 1). The reason why "Monsieur" refers to Adet is clarified in the following triplet:

> The wise Monsieur P.A. Adet,
>
> Successor to Monsieur Fauchet,
>
> Successor to Monsieur Genet. ("Guillotina for 1797" 1)

In this excerpt, Hopkins insinuates the intimacy between the Pennsylvanian politicians and the French diplomat.

To understand the relationship between Pennsylvania and France through antifederalist groups, societies, and clubs, it is useful to recognize Pennsylvania as the center of democratic societies in post-revolutionary America. According to Koschnik,

the Society of the Friends of Liberty and Equality in Philadelphia, founded in January 1793, "may have offered the most immediate model for organized political action" and "opened subscriptions to support the French army, resolved to monitor the conduct of French officials and monarchist refugees, and celebrated the Franco-American alliance and French military victories" (618–19). Edmond Genet, whom Hopkins mentioned in the above quotation, was appointed as president of the Friends of Liberty and Equality, and when he arrived in Philadelphia in May I793, "the Democratic societies' future officers greeted him with a wave of public addresses and celebrations" (619). Moreover, the Society included Hopkins' targeted persons, including John Swanwick and Alexander James Dallas (620). Thus, "Guillotina" rightly captured and ridiculed the unwanted gravity of Pennsylvania as the central place where democratic societies were organized at a rapid speed.

Hopkins' ridicule becomes the sharpest when looking into the description of a drunk and onomatopoeia "hup":

> "Hup—sir,—we want your potent list,
>
> "To help—hup—help us from this shift—
>
> "McKean's damn'd drunk—and so am I—

> “I can’t speak florid—but I’ll try.
>
> “Perhaps—here Dallas, hold me up—
>
> “It isn’t polite to stagger—hup—
>
> “To stag—hup—stagger whilst we’re here—
>
> “Monsieur will think we’re drunk, I fear.
>
> “We’re fetter’d, sire [sir],—we’re in the clims [climes]—
>
> “And every thing about—hup—swims—
>
> “But since the—hup—of last October—
>
> “I'd tell you—damn you—if I’m sober—
>
> “Here, Swanwick, here—get up and speak—
>
> “You’re made by nature *for to squeak*.” (“Guillotina for 1797” 1; italics original)

The Whiskey Rebellion was not carried out by drunks, of course, but Hopkins presents Mifflin as a drunk, his staggering steps, and his hiccups. This representation implies the inferiority of Mufflin’s mind, body, and social manner. Because he is drunk, he cannot speak properly nor hold his body without the help of Alexander James Dallas (1759–1817), a secretary for Mifflin, (“Dallas, hold me up”), and he admits his impoliteness

(“It isn’t polite to stagger”).

Insertions of “hup” in the sixth and seventh lines (“‘It isn’t polite to *stagger*—hup— / ‘To *stag*—hup—*stagger* whilst we’re here—”; emphasis added) serves as an effective way to highlight the verb “stagger.” This inserted “hup” placed between two dashes, “—hup—,” adds an elaborate visual of the interruptions in Mifflin’s drunken speech; and, if the thrice-repeated “stagger” makes the word “stag” evoke an image of stag party, the intimacy between the politicians—Mufflin; Thomas McKean (1734–1817), the second governor of Pennsylvania; Dallas; and John Swanwick (1759–98), a Republican—can be highly mocked.

It is unsurprising that, of all the Republican politicians, Thomas Jefferson was the chief target of the issues of “Guillotina.” Consider the correspondence between Jefferson and Benjamin Banneker. Benjamin Banneker (1731–1806), the first black astronomer and maker of an almanac. He sent a letter to Jefferson on August 19, 1791, insisting on the “injustice of a state of slavery.” He writes, “This Sir, was a time in which you clearly saw into the injustice of a State of Slavery, and in which you had just apprehensions of the horrors of its condition.” By presupposing Jefferson’s “abhorrence,” he grapples with a (in)famous sentence of “The Declaration of

Independence": "it was now Sir, that your abhorrence thereof was so excited, that you publicly held forth this true and invaluable doctrine, which is worthy to be recorded and remembered in all Succeeding ages. 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness'" (7). After Banneker received Jefferson's reply, he reprinted it in his 1792 almanac.

In the "Guillotina" of 1798, Hopkins makes fun of the correspondence between Jefferson and Banneker:

> And yet, when Banneker the *black*,
>
> Copied, or made his almanac,
>
> And sent, to *sooth*, with ardent yearning,
>
> And *coax* this great High-Priest of learning. ("Guillotina, for the Year 1798" 4; italics original)

By italicizing the verb "coax," Hopkins suggests that Banneker appropriates the "learning" of "this great High-Priest," that is, Jefferson's drafted text of "The Declaration of Independence." Moreover, Jefferson's "negro theory" is attacked:

> He [Jefferson] stood amaz'd as Aaron would,

> If his gold-calf had chew'd the cud,
>
> And all his negro theory vain
>
> Revers'd, fled off to Nod like Cain—
>
> And then sent fraternizing smacks,
>
> To Banneker and all the blacks;
>
> And told them how he *long'd* to see,
>
> His *sable brethren* all *set free*. ("Guillotina, for the Year 1798" 4; italics original)

By juxtaposing Aaron's amazement and Jefferson's, Hopkins places the latter in a person who should be considered a criminal; by indicating Aaron's amazement at the moment when "his gold-calf had chew'd the cud," Hopkins implies Jefferson's assumption that a "black" is like Aaron's gold-calf, that is, not a human being.

Hopkins also suggests that Jefferson's "negro theory" deserves banishment as Cain endured because of its vice. The imagery of "Nod," or a place of exile, merits more attention. In *Notes on the State of Virginia,* Jefferson proposes the principle of his "negro theory": that blacks be moved to Africa. This claim was taken to the Society of Colonization and later cast its shadow on *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). If we read the

above excerpt from this perspective, the noun "smack" ("[Jefferson] sent fraternizing smacks") evokes the image of a vessel carrying blacks. In fact, the noun "smack" evokes the sound of a whip, reminding us of slavery. Therefore, the couplets reveal the dark memory of slavery ("smacks and blacks") as well as Banneker's feast ("black and almanac"). Furthermore, the noun "smack" also refers to the sound of a "kiss," as well as the slap of a hand bespeaking rejection. Thus, the phrase "fraternizing smack" elaborately represents Jefferson's ambivalent attitude toward his "sable brethren." His hypocritical attitude toward the "sable brethren" was brought to light.

Hopkins' disagreement about pro-France attitudes and his attack against Jefferson converged with the XYZ Affair, in which Hopkins attributed the political failure to Jefferson. The XYZ Affair began when three American envoys were dispatched under the Adams' administration. They tried to negotiate with a French foreign minister, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord (1754–1838), to mitigate the damage to the French-American relationship caused by the Jay Treaty of 1794. Talleyrand, however, would not meet the three envoys; instead, he sent three French secret agents who asked for bribes. The American envoys declined this proposal, ending up with a failed negotiation. The name of the "XYZ Affair" comes from the reprinted

French letters asking for bribes in which Adams replaced the names of three French agents with the letters X, Y, and Z.

Hopkins presents a character named Logan as one of the American envoys, fabricating a dialog between Logan and Autun (Talleyrand): "[AUTUN]—'I have a farming friend near Paris, / 'Whom your [Logan's] good chit-chat would not harrass [sic]; / 'I'll introduce you there with pleasure, / 'And my good wishes without measure.'" Then, this "demo-envoy" obeys Talleyrand, but declares "Talleyrand is but a coot." Hopkins writes "I could relate this expedition, / Thro' to the end of Logan's mission." He describes the consequence of the XYZ Affair, implying that Jefferson should be "hang'd":

> And how the Sage repel'd the stuff,
>
> With ah! ah! ah!—a sore rebuff!
>
> But I forbear, he may be bang'd,
>
> Before 'tis o'er, and THOMAS hang'd. ("Guillotina, for the Year 1799" 1)

The phrases "the Sage repel'd the stuff" and "a sore rebuff" suggest the American envoys refused the proposed bribes. The extent to which Jefferson was involved in the

XYZ Affair and its failed consequence remains unclear, but Hopkins' intention is obvious.

Thus, it can be said that the French motif of the guillotine comes from the political conflict between the Federalists and the Jeffersonian Republicans with regard to diplomatic policy in particular. Nevertheless, "Guillotina" also requires consideration of the friendship between the members of the Connecticut Wits in the 1790s. Of course, it is well known that Barlow's political and religious conversion during this time disquieted Dwight, "the last great Federalist / Congregationalist" (Fliegelman 314). Barlow and Dwight can be considered in stark contrast in the Connecticut Wits, mirroring the post-revolutionary, American social atmosphere. Such a contrast is not true of Hopkins, as already noted. Although Hopkins held a Federalist position, his affection for Barlow did not decrease; rather, it increased because of the separation.

For Hopkins, friends were given a special place. When arriving in Hartford, he wrote in a letter to his brother-in-law:

> Though the clouds, wind and stars fought against us, yet Goods and Family arrived safe in Port, in due time. . . . We unloaded at Mr. Limon's,

> but I am not sure we shall live there till he leaves the House. However I believe we shall live somewhere on one side or the other of the un-equinoxial line of Death; and I do not much care where, or on which side said line, provided I have my Friends about me. (qtd. In Steiner 17)

The last subjunctive sentence, "provided I have my Friends about me," discloses that Hopkins makes much of the presence of friends rather than "Goods and Family."

Hartford was a nostalgic place where Hopkins enjoyed participating in the Friendly Club in the 1780s. He missed it in the 1790s: "Hartford has become a very different place to me," he wrote in 1790, "since you [Barlow] and friend Walcott left it, and, Trumbull apart, has no more charms for me than Muskingmum" ("Letter to Joel Barlow, on April 18, 1790"). "O Hartford," he also exclaims, "has thou for me? Pleasant indeed shalt thou remain, but chiefly for the joys that are past" ("Letter to Oliver Walcott Jr. on January 28, 1795"). Among his friends, Barlow occupied a special status. In the same letter to Olive Walcott, Hopkins reported that "I was very glad lately to hear from our friend Barlow's letter that he (Joel) got at Hamburg" ("Letter to Oliver Walcott Jr. on January 28, 1795"). Hopkins also implied his wish for Barlow's return, writing "[he] hope to sell my Litchfield property timely for moving to some place where you

[Barlow] shall live when you return: for you know I would make large sacrifice for the sake of engaging my old friends," and "I calculate that we shall renew our acquaintance" ("Letter to Joel Barlow, on April 18, 1790").

From this perspective, the French motif comes to have additional significance because France serves as a place that evokes the presence and absence of Barlow. The guillotine itself is a motif that Barlow used in the 1780s, in a poem he composed entitled "A New Song, called The Guillotine" (rpt. In *Greenleaf's New York Journal*, Oct. 18, 1794). Although the Federalist attack is, to a great extent, explicit, the guillotine can also be interpreted as a hidden agenda of the friendship between the poet and his beloved friend, Barlow.

3. What Palinurus Knew

However, as the Federalist age came to a close, Hopkins' attachment gradually shifted to resignation to meet with Barlow again. By drawing attention to Hopkins' knowledge of the epic tradition and his reference to the patriotic motif "Columbia" and Dryden's *Aeneid*, this final section reevaluates Hopkins as the greatest minor poet of the age of the Connecticut Wits.

Indeed, Hopkins was quite familiar with the epic tradition. Although he did not share the Yale education of the other members of the Connecticut Wits, Thatcher notes that "[h]e was indefatigable in his literary and scientific labors . . . his knowledge was very extensive, his mind highly cultivated, he was not only thoroughly read in the best writers of his profession, but in those of the arts and sciences and modern literature generally" (306). Moreover, "His memory was remarkably strong and retentive; he would quote every writer he had read, whether medical or literary . . . So familiar to him were great English poets, that he would entertain his friends by repeating their more interesting writings; the works of Pope and Milton were his particular favorites" (306). Indeed, Hopkins received a Master of Arts from Yale in 1784. Thus, it can be said that Hopkins was as well versed in the theory and practice of the epic as the other members of the Wits. A patriotic attitude can also be seen in "Guillotina." Hopkins' inspiration for Guillotina as "the Tenth Muse" probably derives from Ann Bradstreet's *The Tenth Muse: Lately Sprung up in America* (1650).[4]

Nevertheless, Hopkins distanced himself from his friends' epics. In the last

[4] Bradstreet's *The Tenth Muse* was first published in London in 1650. The second edition was issued in Boston in 1678. According to Cotton Mather (1663–1728), her poems, "divers times Printed, have afforded a grateful Entertainment unto the Ingenious, and a Monument for her Memory beyond the Stateliest Marbles" (Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana,* Book II 17; italics original). In 1758, the second edition was reprinted in Boston, and was later reprinted many times (1867, 1897, 1905, 1932, 1965, and 1967).

piece of "Guillotina" of 1799, the poet not only conjures up Guillotina, but also invokes all ten muses: "To song return ye tuneful Nine, / Inspire and burnish ev'ry line. / Come all ye Choir from sky-built nest, / With MUSE THE TENTH who sings the best." By doing so, the singularity of Guillotina is lessened, although he considers her "the best." Rather, the image of the choir of ten muses is foregrounded. Then, a contrast between the muses' loftiness and the poet's humility is offered: the muses "wing the sky" "high o'er the earth," seeing through "at one quick glance" "All things that growling mortals do." By contrast, human beings, including the poet, are described as follows:

> While we, involv'd in cloudy vapours,
>
> Prone on the earth, must trust *the papers*;
>
> Which often tell *old news* thrice o'er;
>
> And often *lies*, at least a score. ("Guillotina, for the Year 1799" 1)

What is presented is not only myopia or shortsightedness ("involv'd in cloudy vapours, / Prone on the earth") but also our inability to access to truth ("must trust the papers; / Which often tell old news thrice o'er; / And often lies, at least a score").

Whether or not truth belongs only to them is not obscure; but the poet's humility becomes clearer when he uses the auxiliary verb "deign": "—Deign then to

grasp the scenes of sun, / While Earth roll'd last around the sun; / Which on her surface made you smile, / From lordly Hudson to the Nile." Here again, the muses' wider perspective is highlighted in geographical terms like "Hudson" and "Nile." Then, significantly, their "smooth manner" is brought to light:

> Some serious things and weighty too,
>
> *Ye Muses* we'll expect from you;
>
> But in a manner smooth as oil,
>
> All fit to make a Brahmin smile. ("Guillotina, for the Year 1799" 1; italics original)

If we interpret "Ye Muses" as the epic muse, "Some serious things and weighty" means stories narrated in epic poetry, like the *Iliad*, the *Aeneid*, *Divine Comedy*, *Paradise Lost,* and so on. What Hopkins offers is something different than such epic narratives: "a manner smooth as oil" enough to "make a Brahmin smile."

The American epic has been thought to have begun with Dwight's *The Conquest of Canaan* (1785) or Barlow's *The Vision of Columbus* (1787) (latter, *The Columbiad* [1807]).[5] These works were written based on their knowledge modeled on Milton's

[5] See Pearce 59-69, Miller 12-29, McWilliams 42-66, and Phillips 37-71.

Paradise Lost, Dryden's translation of the *Aeneid*, Pope's translation of the *Iliad*, and the theory of Lord Kames' *Elements of Criticism*, with which Hopkins was presumably familiar thanks to the friendship between them. Thus, it is reasonable to consider that, presenting the distinction between "Some serious things and weighty" and "a manner smooth," Hopkins distinguishes his own style of writing from that of his friends. Indeed, Hopkins could have phrased his title "Guillotiniad." As Richmond Bond points out, the suffix "-iad" in titles of epics became very popular in the middle-eighteenth century on both sides of the Atlantic. In fact, Hopkins participated in *The Anarchiad* (1786–87) and issued *The Democratiad* (1795) himself.

In general, an epic narrates a national history or other important matters. Although the mock-epic primarily aims to mock the epic, it still involves "Some serious things and weighty," like *M'Fingal* and *The Anarchiad.* In contrast, "Guillotina" is nothing but an annual song, not a national history. Although it sharply critiques contemporary politics, it conceals personal aesthetics under the surface.

In the following lines, Hopkins tries to cast himself an American poet by appreciating Columbia's future glory:

—Clear then Columbia did'st thou view,

What erst thy PALINURUS knew;

Whose eye had mark'd thy torpid state,

And read for thee this page of fate,

On whom full currents of addresses,

Burst duteous from thy numerous presses;

And gave his firm undaunted mind,

With wisdom fraught, and taste refin'd. ("Guillotina, for the Year 1799" 1)

Palinurus is a friend and reliable pilot for Aeneas. On the surface, the poet appreciates "What erst thy PALINURUS knew" as well as his eyes, "firm undaunted mind," "wisdom fraught," and "taste refin'd" to indicate that with Palinurus' helpful navigation, Columbia escapes from the "torpid state," moving in the right direction in the "page of fate." Hopkins seems not only to declare Columbia's glorious future as an American poet but also to suggest that friendship between Palinurus and Columbia leads to a positive consequence.

Yet there is another possible interpretation. Recalling the fact that Palinurus dies in the *Aeneid* ("Headlong he [Palinurus] fell, and struggling in the Main, / Cry'd out for

helping hands, but cry'd in vain" [Book V, ll. 1118–19]), it becomes visible that, notwithstanding Palinurus' knowledge of navigation, what he knew at length was vanity and his fate of death. What Columbia captures is not necessarily Palinurus' abilities for future use, but the loss of her pilot and beloved friend. If we juxtapose Columbia with Aeneas, her loss can be inferred from Aeneas' depression: "Deplor'd his Death; and thus his Pain express'd / For Faith repos'd on Seas, and on the flatt'ring Sky, / Thy naked Corps in doom'd, on Shores unknown to lye" (Virgil, Book 5, ll. 1135-36).

Hopkins hides the separation between Aeneas and Palinurus from the surface of his text when referring to Columbia and Palinurus; when he disguises himself as an American poet of the greatest degree in "Guillotina" by referring to Columbia, he hides the story of fraternal separation with which Hopkins sympathizes to the greatest degree. It is not that he uses the figure of Columbia as camouflage; rather, it proves that whenever he ponders a "torpid state," like the "unhinging State" that was caused by the political conflict in post-revolutionary America, he cannot help but recall his personal separation from his friend Barlow.

If we see in the relationship between Aeneas and Palinurus as reminiscent of that between Barlow and Hopkins, we should not ignore Hopkins' deep resignation to

meet with him again. In the *Aeneid*, despite the loss of the reliable pilot Palinurus, the vessel goes on as if nothing happened:

> On *Neptune*'s Faith the floating Fleet relies;
>
> But what the Man forsook, the God supplies;
>
> And o'er the dang'rous Deep secure the Navy flies.
>
> (Book V, ll. 1122–24; italics original)

Unlike Aeneas, Palinurus is just one of the characters in the epic narrative of the *Aeneid*. Likewise, Hopkins is just an ordinary person in America history who did not write an epic on national history, nor establish his status in a European political theater like Barlow. The motifs of "Columbia" and "Palinurus" express Hopkins' self-consciousness as an American poet on the basis of link with the other members of the Connecticut Wits—Dwight, Trumbull, Humphreys, and Barlow—but "Palinurus" discloses Hopkins' sense of isolation. In fact, Hopkins wrote in 1790, "I rejoice that you [Barlow] are on the theater of their noble achievements" ("Letter to Joel Barlow, on April 18th, 1790"). The term "theater" reveals not only Hopkins' praise for Barlow but also his sense of separation: if Barlow is on the theater, Hopkins is sitting in the audience. This letter implies a rift between them in a geographical and psychological

sense. Barlow left Harford for France and distinguished himself in the center of the world; Hopkins remained in Hartford and possibly envisioned his own death in the same way as Palinurus "on Shores unknown."

Coda

Although the reason why the fifth piece of "Guillotina" came out in 1799 is unclear, the death of Washington presumably had an effect. For Hopkins, Washington was "the GREAT" that saved "the unhinging State," as already noted, and "splendid noon-tide blaze" in "a darkness more profound" ("Guillotina, for the Year 1799" 1). Nonetheless, he died on December 14, 1799. His death suggested that the "unhinging State" would become unhinged states; it also meant the impossibility of a reunion between Hopkins and his beloved friend Barlow. With the end of the Federalist age, Hopkins died in 1801, the year the Jefferson administration began, as if his burning spirit—driven by the strength of fraternity and his attachment to a traitor—was consumed.

Still, Hopkins retained his hope even in death. From his deathbed, Hopkins wrote that:

> God, who is the great author and governor of all things, regulates and controls all events; even the smallest, as well as the greatest, are the objects of his care. It is as necessary for us to die as to be born, that we may fill up the chances essential to the perpetuation of our natures" (qtd. in Anderson 301).

Because of his self-consciousness, a sense of fraternity is elaborately concealed from the surface of the text, and the Federalist gothic imagery—which reinforces the fissure of the friendship between Hopkins and Barlow—is foregrounded. Such a perverted gesture might be called the inverted poetics of fraternity, which allowed Hopkins to create a unique American epic in the age of the Connecticut Wits.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Melancholic Muse: David Humphreys' *A Poem on the Death of General Washington* (1800/1804)

Hopkins died as one of "the smallest," while George Washington died as one of "the greatest." One of the most important contributors to Washington's legend was David Humphreys, called the "belov'd" of Washington by his contemporaries (Frank Landon Humphreys iv) and the most skilled in the rhetoric of fraternity among the Connecticut Wits. This chapter will examine *A Poem on the Death of General Washington*, which was delivered in 1800 in Madrid and published in 1804 in America, and will question Humphreys' vision of national unity, calibrating the critical limit of the poetics of fraternity.

His contemporaries considered Humphreys "a major living American poet" (Bottorff v); the anthologies in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries contained Humphreys' works,[1] and he was acknowledged as one of the first American sonneteers.[2] However, he is now an almost forgotten poet like Hopkins. David

[1] Smith 117–39, Carey 112–21, 136–42, 147–57, and 162–69, Kettle 259–72, and Duyckinck 373–78.

[2] See Davidson 180–87.

Humphreys was born in Derby, Connecticut, in 1752. At Yale, he became acquainted with Trumbull, Dwight, and Barlow. In 1776, he began his military career as an infantryman, and in 1780, he was promoted to aide-de-camp to Washington. In 1784, he was appointed to a commission to negotiate commercial treaties with European nations. After returning to America, Humphreys moved to Mount Vernon, Washington's home, in 1787. In 1790, he sailed for Portugal and Spain on a diplomatic mission and was later appointed the first full Minister Plenipotentiary to the court at Madrid in 1796. He stayed there until Thomas Jefferson recalled him, and he returned in 1802.[3]

A Poem expresses Humphreys' oscillation between his personal grief and his sense of duty to narrate Washington's death. This work can be divided into four parts: 1) the poet who falls into grief manages to justify a composition on the death by invoking melancholy as his muse (ll. 1–146); 2) tracing the life and career of Washington until the Revolutionary War (ll. 147–478); 3) the poet falls into grief again but defends the composition with the help of Muse and Mnemosyne, tracing

[3] Franck Landon Humphreys' *Life and Times of David Humphreys, Soldier, Statesman, Poet, "Belov'd of Washington*," published in 1917, remains the most comprehensive biography of Humphreys; Cifelli's *David Humphreys* (1981) is a concise literary biography; and Howard's chapters "David Humphreys" and "The Honorable David Humphreys" in *The Connecticut Wits* (1943) are informative and insightful.

Washington's career during the 1790s (ll. 479–746); 4) the poet consoles Mrs. Washington (ll. 747–860). The main theme is that the language of intimacy between Humphreys and Washington dramatizes the oscillation between the poet's grief and his sense of duty to memorialize Washington, the objectives of which are, according to "Letter to Mrs. Washington" (added to the version of *Miscellaneous Works*), "first, for myself, of holding a kind of spiritual intercourse with him; and, next, of exhibiting for others an admirable model for imitation" (153).

Scholars have underappreciated *A Poem* and have pointed out its oratorical and elegiac aspects: Leon Howard emphasizes Humphreys' dependency on John Ward's *A System of Oratory* (120); Edward M. Cifelli analyzes *A Poem* as the elegy based on Ward's aestheticism (99); and Max Cavitch stated: "His elegy [*A Poem*] . . . does not yet mediate critically between the two [of sensibility and public virtue] (90).[4] Rather, this chapter draws attention to the fact that Humphreys writes this piece in the framework of an epic, which makes possible his vision of national unity after Washington's death; however, arguing such a mission in the language of intimacy entails limitations regarding political factions, race, and gender.

4 See Howard 254–55, Cifelli 96–99, and Cavitch 88–90.

More specifically, this chapter will first show that *A Poem* as an American epic provides the image of the all-American hero Washington by focusing on his role as the commander-in-chief in the Revolutionary War and his presidency in the 1780s and 1790. The next section will demonstrate that Humphreys invites readers to sympathize with the poet's grief through using the figure and grammar of "Melancholy," showing that he attempts to cement the national solidarity. Then, the final section will question his vision of the nation by focusing on the manners he offers the loyalists, Native Americans, African Americans, and Martha Washington.

1. As an American Epic

Humphreys' intention to present *A Poem* as an epic can be seen in his added prose "Advertisement." Here, he claims that he features "the military talents" of Washington in *A Poem* by mentioning the framework of the epic. He strongly believes in "the charm of poesy" and hopes a poem featuring "glowing descriptions of battles successfully fought for freedom" and "fire of heroism"—the elements of the epic—would "elevate the rising generation to emulate the exalted deeds of their fathers" and be "so essentially necessary for the defence of free state" (161).

Consider the first stanza of *A Poem*, in which the memory of American independence is closely connected with the figure of Washington:

> OH, Independence of our western world,
>
> Beneath whose banner broad in war unfurl'd,
>
> With Washington I toil'd! beneath whose shade
>
> With him beheld thy fruits in peace display'd! (ll. 1–4)

By repeating the preposition "with" twice, Humphreys' close connection with Washington in war and peace is highly emphasized. In "Letter to Mrs. Washington," Humphreys writes "For, conscious I am that few have had opportunities of knowing him [Washington] better" and "that none could appreciate more justly his morals and his merits" (153).

Furthermore, Humphreys indicated his knowledge of the controversy concerning the modern epic versus the ancient epic, as debated in eighteenth-century France and England: "certain it is, the greater part of modern poets have [sic] not been equally successful in this species of composition. And this want of success, it may fairly be concluded, had frequently happened from a servile use of hackneyed expressions, as well as from a confused mixture of ideas, with respect to ancient and modern arms and

tactics" (160). Ancient arms and tactics are linked with the Greek and Roman wars, as described in Homer's *Iliad* and in Virgil's *Aeneid.* According to Herbert F. Tucker, the two founding texts of this debate are attributed to Thomas Rymer's translation of René Rapin's *Reflections on Aristotle's Poetics* (1674) and René Le Bossu's *Traité du Poème Epique* (1675), and the latter's influence on Dryden and Pope is significant (31).[5] Presumably, Humphreys was familiar with such controversy via Pope's and Dryden's works. Considering his conclusion that unsuccessful modern epics commit "a confused mixture of ideas, with respect to ancient and modern arms and tactics," it is logical to consider that he focuses on modern military tactics in *A Poem* to make his attempt successful.

For Humphreys, the modern tactics are assigned to "discipline" and "order." For example, in the scene where "New arms" and "modern tactics" are mentioned (ll. 221–22), he first draws attention to "discipline": "Where discipline through thousands breathes one soul, / Combines their strength and animates the whole" (ll. 223–24). Through the existence of discipline, thousands of soldiers gather together as "one soul,"

[5] Tucker also makes much of the year 1715 because of Pope's translation of *Iliad* and the "perennial *Querelle*" in France: "the cloven apparatus to Pope's *Iliad* . . . reflected neatly a larger, unresolved Augustan contest between modern and ancient perspectives on literary value. For at just this time Paris was witnessing a fresh outbreak of hostilities in the perennial *Querelle*, as dueling Homeric translations produced by the *ancienne* Dacier and the *modern* La Motte drew down a storm of pamphleteering and salon oratory" (33; italics original).

and the "moving world" obeys the "leader's nod" (ll. 225). "Order" plays a significant role as well: "In front the Gen'rals ordering loud are heard" (ll. 348); the General says, "'To right display the columns—march! halt! dress!'" (l. 350), and the host obeys and proceeds according to the order:

> From solid columns lengthening lines now wheel,
>
> Front form'd to frond, and steel oppos'd to steel.
>
> The hosts stretch opposite in equal length,
>
> The same their order and the same their strength.
>
> Two lines had each and corps of strong reserve,
>
> To stay the lines where'er the battle swerve;
>
> To turn the hostile flank, the charge sustain,
>
> To guard the baggage and the batt'ring train. (ll. 351–58; emphasis added)

The ordered formation is displayed by repeating the same words and the same syntaxes ("Front form'd to frond, and steel oppos'd to steel" and "The same their order and the same their strength"). The General's order is also foregrounded from the repeated infinitive verbs ("To stay," "To turn," and "To guard").

Furthermore, the fifth line—"Two lines had each and corps of strong reserve," particularly "two lines"—deserves attention. The "two lines" stand in a battlefield that holds the same amounts of soldiers in a group. Yet, if the phrase "two lines" is read as an allusion to the rhymed couplets the poet uses consistently, the rhymed couplets' procession seems to correspond with the soldiers' procession in two lines: each two lines move according to the poet's order, as if they were the soldiers advancing according to the General's—that is, Washington's—discipline and order: "March! Halt! Dress!" Embellished with the mixture of the modern military tactics and the Popean heroic couplets, *A Poem* comes to embody the modern American epic Humphreys envisions.

If the Revolutionary War allowed Washington to become the hero of America, what is required next is to situate Washington in the context of post-revolutionary America, particularly the 1780s and the 1790s. A key is the hero's hidden anguish and fortitude. Humphreys mentions the "secrets of his [Washington's] soul" (l. 507), which refers to his "smother'd anguish" (l. 508). Such anguish stems from the defeat in the Battle of Long Island (1776), and its firmness is highlighted by the rhymed words ("how firm he met the shock, / Impassable his breast, a diamond rock?" [ll. 515–16;

emphasis added]). It is this highly smothered anguish that induces Washington to believe in "independence" and to hold the "unconquerable soul":

> Stern independence steel'd his stubborn breast—
>
> Unmov'd, by more than mountains weight opprest,
>
> Remain'd the matchless soul—unmov'd alone
>
> Th' unconquerable soul of Washington. (ll. 525–28)

The reason for the emphasis on Washington's fortitude by the twice-repeated word "unmov'd" can be understood within the context of the anxiety experienced in the 1790s due to the political turmoil between the Federalists and the Republicans and due to the French Revolution. The poet complains about the civil conflict (ll. 561–62), bringing to light the anxiety about anarchy by using liquid imagery like the "Atlantic," the "multitude of waves," and the "watery world":

> As hoarse with rage th' Atlantic roars and raves,
>
> And heaves on high his multitude of waves,
>
> What time the storm, by angry spirits hurl'd
>
> Rocks the foundations of the watery world: —
>
> So rag'd the storm of anarchy—the crowd

By demagogues excited, mad and loud,

Their Pandemonium held—no more was seen

The calm debate—till Washington serene

From every State conven'd the chosen sire,

Where Penn's fair city lifts her gilded spires. (ll. 565–74)

The watery world is due to the French Revolution, which is identified as the cause of the "storm of anarchy" in post-revolutionary America. Such undulation of the world is also dramatized by dashes (impatience) and enjambment (prolongment). More specifically, the words "the storm of anarchy" and "the crowd" are attached by a dash "—"; however, the moment when the subject "the crowd" meets its verb "held" is prolonged by enjambment twice, as if the readers felt the enormity of the "Pandemonium." The scene of pandemonium is linked to "no more" by a dash; after prolonging by enjambment the answer as to what is no more, the poet first posits a pessimistic answer (what is no more is the "calm debate") but quickly jumps to the figure of "Washington serene" by the use of a dash. In consequence of this rhetorical ebb and flow, the Miltonic pandemonium is transfigured into the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Washington's virtuous fortitude, contrasted with the

"watery world," thus serves as a key figure not only to highlight American independence but also to celebrate the ratification of the Constitution in 1788.

Eventually, Washington is brought to light as the leader with mind "scarcely stain'd" and maintaining "One spotless course" from the transatlantic perspective (ll. 651–52):

> A light among the nations shining clear,
>
> To gild the darkness in each hemisphere!
>
> Say, dazzling conq'rors! who as comets glar'd,
>
> How mean your splendour when to his [Washington's] compar'd! (ll. 655–58)

The nouns "hemisphere" and the foreign "conq'rors," as well as the statement that "How mean your splendor when to his compar'd!," declares the superiority of Washington from the hemispheric perspective.[6] Considering that *A Poem* was first delivered in "the house of the American legation in city [Madrid], in presence of a respectable number of persons belonging to different nations" ("Dedication to Mrs. Washington" 155), Humphreys definitely attempts to present Washington as the

[6] As Murphy points out, the hemispheric frame is found in documents of the early national period such as George Washington's Farewell Address, Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, or poems of Joel Barlow and Philip Freneau (14).

"American" hero and to distinguish him from European ones. Furthermore, in "Dedication to Mrs. Washington," written the day after *A Poem* was delivered in Madrid and added when published as part of *Miscellaneous Works*, Humphreys shows his hemispheric perspective, reporting how foreign nations, France and Britain in particular, received Washington's death, emphasizing its significance: "his whole existence was a piece, . . . he died as he lived, for the good of mankind. Perhaps the efficacy of his example could not be so much needed at any moment hereafter as it is at present, to recommend systems of morals and manners calculated to promote the public felicity" (156). Furthermore, in "Advertisement," beginning with the line "Since the following Poem will probably be perused by some foreigners who have not much acquaintance with the United States" (159), he betrays his ambition that *A Poem* would appeal to and be circulated through "foreigners," which suggests his desire to compose the American epic by himself.

2. The Poetics of Sympathy

However, Humphreys not only wants *A Poem* to be an American epic but a vision of national unity for the audience because of his keen anxiety after Washington's death.

Therefore, Humphreys invites readers to sympathize with the poet's grief by taking advantage of the figure and grammar of "Melancholy" as his muse. Cifelli roughly points out that Humphreys' invocation to "Melancholy" reflects "a Gothic apostrophe to melancholy, in the Graveyard tradition" (97); however, this reference to melancholy deserves more analysis because it plays a crucial role in illuminating Humphreys' skill to highlight his oscillation between his personal grief and his sense of duty to narrate Washington's death. His literary skill—the invocation to "Melancholy," the elaboration of grammatical moods, and the repeated rhetorical questions—dramatizes his composition of the epic that results from overcoming his painful moment, and such dramatic discourse facilitates the readers' sympathy and emotional commitment to the poet's skillful texture.

Traditionally, melancholy has been thought to circulate through a body as black bile; however, after a long philosophical and visual history, the eighteenth century saw the appearance of melancholy as a poetical muse.[7] The "poets of the eighteenth

[7] According to Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, the modern meaning of the term "melancholy" is three-fold, roughly speaking: 1) mental illness, 2) a type of character, and 3) a temporary state of mind: "In modern speech the word 'melancholy' is used to denote any one of several somewhat different things. It can mean a mental illness characterized mainly by attacks of anxiety, deep depression and fatigue—though it is true that recently the medial concept has largely become disintegrated. It may mean a type of character—generally associated with a certain type of physique—which together with the sanguine, the choleric and the phlegmatic, constituted the system of the 'four humours,' or the 'four complexions' as the old expression was. It may mean a temporary state of mind,

century," John Baker explains, "often enthusiastically, call on the muse of melancholy to inspire their own musings and poetic composition" (Ch. 3).[8] Upon the death of Washington, Humphreys first emphasizes his difficulty of writing due to being overwhelmed with "Unutterable feelings," "sensibilities" and "greater grief" (ll. 22–24). "Then ask your breast, each feeling patriot, ask," Humphreys writes, "How dread the duty and how great the task?" The duty is dread because he cannot "tell what sorrow fills my[his] breast," and he keeps asking, as follows: "Can all the sighs that will not be suppress, / The struggling voice and eyes that overflow, / Effuse such deep, immeasurable woe?" (ll. 25–30). Even though he gathers his sighs, voice, and eyes all, the combined whole is never enough to "Effuse such deep, immeasurable woe."

Intriguingly, Humphreys first invites readers to a scene that induces Washington's physical "pain" relating to "nerve" and "vein": "view the scene of death,

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sometimes painful and depressing, sometimes merely mildly pensive or nostalgic" (1).

[8] Graveyard poetry can be generally assigned to Thomas Parnell's "Night-Piece on Death" (1721), Robert Blair's *The Grave* (1743), Edward Young's *Night Thoughts* (1742–45), and Thomas Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* (1751); for a more detailed discussion on the term and the definition of "graveyard poetry," see Parisot's "Introduction." On graveyard poetry's influence on America, the *Encyclopedia of Gothic Literature* refers to only Philip Freneau's works ("The House of Night," "To the Memory," "To Sir Toby," "The Dying Indian," "The Indian Burying Ground," "The British Prison Ship") and to William Cullen Bryant's "Thanatopsis" (161–62). However, not only *A Poem on the Death of General Washington* but also Humphreys' other works, for instance, *Sonnets* (among twelve sonnets, particularly, V "On Life," VI "On a Night-Storm at Sea," VII "On a Clam Morning which Succeeded a Night-Storm at Sea," VIII "On the Immortality of the Soul," IX "On the Death of Major John Pallsgrave Wyllys," and XII "On Receiving the News of the Death of General Washington), affirm its place.

where keener pain / Palsies each nerve, and thrills through every vein" (ll. 31–32). Then, he leads them to his own grief by connecting their bodies, such as their "lips" and "eyes," with his own:

> Take a last gaze—in ruins where he lies!—
>
> Pale your mute lips—and red your failing eyes— (ll. 35–36)

In mentioning "Pale your mute lips" and "red your failing eyes," Humphreys attempts to overlap them with his own "struggling voice and eyes that overflow." One could observe that Humphreys employs the effect of sympathy, as described in Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), which defines sympathy as a "fellow feeling" (10); sympathy is invoked "when we place ourselves in the situation of another man, and view it, as it were, with his eyes and from his station" (109–10). Smith's readers place their feet into sufferers' shoes, while Humphreys invites readers' bodies to enter his own body. By doing so, he becomes a medium through which each audience member connects with each other to create some kind of community. Such a sense of community is found in his invitation as well. He says: "Ye sorrowing inmates of his mournful dome, / Ye sad domestics, kindred, neighbours, come!" (ll. 33–34).

According to Emory Elliott, the Scottish philosophers' works were introduced

to colleges in Philadelphia, New Jersey, and New Haven in the late eighteenth century; at Yale, Presidents Thomas Clapp and Ezra Stiles taught Lord Kames' *Elements of Criticism* (1762), James Beattie's *Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth* (1771), and Hugh Blaire's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783; 30–35). Through these works, students at Yale, including Humphreys, presumably learned the theory of sympathy.

However, Humphreys' grief is not a mere grief demanding sympathy but rather a grief requiring the memorialization, or mythologization, of Washington. He falls into silence because of his "deep, immeasurable woe" but then sublimates such dumbness to articulate Washington's greatness: "But, dumbly eloquent, despair shall tell, / How long ye lov'd him, and, ev'n more, how well!" (ll. 37–38). Although Humphreys expresses an excellent paradox here (silence signaling sincere affection), he must speak out; thus, he demands invocation to "Melancholy":

> Come, thou! whose voice alone my country hears,
>
> To woe abandon'd, and dissolve'd in tears;
>
> Come, Melancholy! come—in sorrow steep
>
> The dirge of death, and teach my words to weep! (ll. 39–42)

Undoubtedly, he calls upon “Melancholy” for “poetic composition” to “teach my words to weep.” However, he proceeds against his public duty, seeking the very melancholic mood with which he desires silence: “Thee [Melancholy] will I woo in every haunted place, / And give my bosom to thy cold embrace” [ll. 43–44]; he departs from mirth (“Adieu, ye gayer scenes—a long farewell / To festal domes where mirth and music dwell” [ll. 45–46]), exploring more gloomy places with his muse:

> I seek the house of mourning—there, my soul,
>
> Thy [Melancholy’s] daring flights, ’mid damps of death, control!
>
> Or let me rove where spectres haunt the glooms,
>
> In meditations lost among the tombs;
>
> Hold visionary converse with my chief,
>
> And long indulge the luxury of grief. (ll. 47–52)

The yearning for “visionary converse” with the dead Washington and for indulgence in “luxury of grief” seems to correspond with his desire for silence, as opposed to the public duty of “poetic composition.” His elaboration of grammatical mood also reveals how painfully he leaves for performing the public duty of poetic composition. While he had basically used declarative sentences to this point, he now changes into an

optative mood:

> Can stoic precepts grief like this assuage,
>
> Grief not confin'd to nation, sex, or age!
>
> Could apathy our sense of grief benumb,
>
> Matter inanimate, no longer dumb,
>
> Would find a tongue—shall he, whose guiding sword
>
> Our path to Independence first explor'd,
>
> Sleep unremember'd? (ll. 53–59)

First, Humphreys wishes that "stoic precepts" assuage "grief," and then in the third line, written in a subjunctive mood, he calls for "apathy" to benumb his grief. Although such a state of mind brought by stoicism and apathy seems a harmless composure, one should not ignore that such a composure is suggested as "Matter inanimate," the state of which seems to lack any human feelings or memories. Yet, without any conjunctions in the fourth and fifth lines, he suddenly jumps from dumbness or oblivion into speaking out: "find a tongue." By moving from the optative to the subjunctive, and from the modal auxiliary "could" to "would," the expectancy of finding a tongue is gradually raised. Eventually, the poet reaches a rhetorical question with "shall." On the surface, by using

this form, he claims that Washington should not remain "unremember'd," meaning that he should write the epic to honor Washington. However, if in the fifth line the poet could not help but use "—," and there is some difference between the dash "—" and the period "." (a sign of pause), then it would be possible that the "—" signifies the poet's fear of interrupting the rise in the motivation for writing. As if he were overwhelmed with such a fear, he eagerly asks the questions: "Shall fill their breasts and fire them to the field? / Shall not the western world bewail the blow / That laid our chief, the first of mortals, low?" (ll. 62–64); and at the last "shall" question, he returns to his duty to present Washington as the "example" for "endless generations to pursue":

> And shall not he (th' example plac'd in view
>
> For endless generations to pursue)
>
> Who for his country spent his every breath,
>
> Speak from the tomb and serve it after death? (ll. 65–68)

By the use of the rhetorical question "shall not he speak from the tomb and serve it after death?," Humphreys asserts that Washington "should speak" and "serve" his country after death at last. Thus, the invocation to the muse "Melancholy," the elaboration of grammatical moods, and the repeated rhetorical questions dramatize Humphreys'

"dumbly eloquent, despair," which "shall tell / How long ye lov'd him, and, ev'n more, how well!"

Furthermore, the poet once again invites readers to oscillate between despair and hope upon the death of Washington by using rhetorical questions with the auxiliary verb "shall":

> Then shall we rest forlorn beyond relief,
>
> Dumb in despair and stupified [sic] with grief?
>
> To drear forgetfulness consign our friends,
>
> And lose the hope "that being never ends?" . . .
>
> Shall we remain as mourners without hope? (ll. 785–92)

In terms of rhetorical questions, it is usual to read them as follows: 1) we should not rest forlorn beyond relief; 2) we should not rest dumb in despair and stupefied with grief; 3) we should not consign our friends to drear forgetfulness; 4) we should not lose the hope; and 5) we should not remain as mourners with hope. These lines demand climbing out of being "dumb in despair" and of being "stupified with grief" for the purpose of preventing his consigning to "drear forgetfulness." Indeed, "we" are forbidden from remaining mourners because the act of remembering is great and

necessary. However, recollection is sometimes accompanied with pain; no sooner do we recollect the death of the beloved than a sense of loss—the absence of the dead—is inevitably brought to mind; when the intensity of pain is intolerable, people need to be benumbed. Thus, the impetuous imperative (should not forget) is another way of expressing agony (could not remember). If so, the above quotations can be reread as an invitation to painless apathy, dumbness, or oblivion: 1) shall we rest forlorn beyond relief?; 2) shall we rest dumb in despair and stupefied with grief?; 3) shall we consign our friends to drear forgetfulness?; 4) shall we lose the hope?; and 5) shall we remain as mourners without hope? Certainly, these lines suggest the resurrection of Washington and justify the poetical composition on his death: "Ev'n that lost form shall rise from kindred dust, / Fair in the renovation of the just. . . . That world, for suff'ring man, of bright rewards, / Thus fir'd the song of heav'n-illumin'd bards" (799–804); yet, the undulation between the imperative for remembrance (should not) and the invitation to oblivion (shall we) is elaborately intertwined, through which the unfathomable depth of Humphreys' sense of loss can be grasped. Humphreys invites the readers to this uncertain realm between hope and despair with the first-person plural subject "we."

3. A Paradox of Sensibility

Despite his sincere grief and his sense of duty to commemorate Washington's death, Humphreys' vision of national unity could be exclusive and based on political faction, race, and gender. This section calls into question the manners in which the poet deals with the loyalists, Native Americans, African Americans, and Martha Washington.

Consider the following scene of the Battle of Monmouth (1778), in which "false Columbians" are called "Ingrates":

> And false Columbians cloath'd like them in green:
>
> Ingrates! to play a patricidal part,
>
> And strive to stab their country to the heart! (ll. 296–98)

The "false Columbians" corresponds with the loyalists in that they take sides with the British who put on the "green" military uniform. Because such an act seems a betrayal, at least for the poet, they deserve being called ingrates; and the reason why their act is patricide is because the father they attempt to kill is America, or rather, presumably, Washington. However, the father in the context of the Revolutionary War is usually ascribed to Britain's George III. Therefore, the sinful memory of patricide is displaced into the "false Columbians." If seeing Washington as a national father comes from the

desire to forget the old father and their own sense of sin, the loyalists as the false Columbians are excluded to justify the Revolutionary War, to reinforce national solidarity, and to survive the times of crisis.

Indeed, Humphreys illustrates Washington as the father, and such an illustration inevitably shapes a patriarchal figure with relation to the marginalized people. For instance, Humphreys depicts the Native Americans as the "conquer'd savage" (l. 619); he also offers the scene in which Washington "foster'd [them] as a child" (620) and "taught" the "works of peace and arts of civil life . . . to wean them from the scalping-knife" (623–24). Indeed, according to John Demos, "President George Washington and his secretary of war, Henry Knox, declared the start of an official 'civilization policy,'" and its basic goals were "to turn Indians from hunters into settled agriculturalists; to draw them fully into the orbit of Christianity; and to attach them to the principle of private, as opposed to communal, ownership of property" (133). Humphreys does not use Native Americans as an example of the national culture; rather, he uses them as an example of barbarism, as opposed to the revolutionaries' civilization.[9] For example, he

[9] On the later eighteenth century, Tucker claims that "epic wholeness and heroic value had to migrate from chiefly formal and moral neoclassic grounds to the cultural grounds" (44), taking its example from James Macpherson's prose epics: *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* (1760), *Fingal: An Ancient Epic Poem* (1762), and *Temora: An Ancient Epic Poem* (1763). It is highly possible that Humphreys leaned the ancient and modern debate on the epic and the cultural shift through the works of Pope and Macpherson.

depicts his sires' war against the Native Americans "in woods and swamps": "No more in woods and swamps the war was wag'd, / As when our sires the native race engag'd" (201–02). To emphasize the brutality of the "native race" or the "painted savages" (203), he depends on the stereotypical description: "when from captive heads the scalps they tore, / And wav'd the trophies reeking warm with gore" (207–08). Given that Humphreys knew that the later eighteenth century still saw the Indian captivities and wars,[10] distinguishing the Indian wars from the contemporary times (with the phrase "No more") implies not only the gap between the ancient and the modern but also the cultural chasm between the barbaric disorder and the enlightened discipline.

Humphreys also reports on "Afric's sons" (l. 626): "Return'd from war, I saw them round him [Washington] press, / And all their speechless glee by artless signs express" (ll. 625–30). This scene was one day in 1781, when Washington briefly galloped from the army to Mount Vernon with Humphreys. Thus, the above lines are what only Humphreys was able to capture, which means the proof of their intimacy.

[10] Humphreys' prose "Essay on the Life of General Putnam" (1788) indicates his reception of the Indian war and captivity narratives. Indeed, Bottorff observes in this prose "'Cooperian' Indians, soldiers, captivities, bloodlettings and heroism" and notes "Humphreys' Indians closely foreshadow Brown's [*Edgar Huntly*]" (xi–xii). In addition, Derounian-Stodola pays attention not only to Putnam's captivity but also to Jemima Howe's captivity in this work. According to her, "From a melodramatic and romantic rendition of Putnam's captivity (and entire life), Humphreys proceeds to an equally romanticized version of Howe's captivity. Humphreys depicts Howe as the heroine of a novel of seduction, 'a Canadian Clarissa'" (93).

However, what matters is the difference between Washington and Humphreys regarding slaves. When presenting slaves in Mount Vernon, what is underscored is submission ("I saw them round him press") and verbal inferiority ("their speechless glee by artless sign"). However, as Henry Wienceck insists, Washington believed in the intellectual capacity of African Americans (208); he needed the support of African Americans during the Revolutionary War (189–249); and, significantly, he proposed in his will that the slaves in Mount Vernon be emancipated: "No other Founding Father," Wienceck writes, "would set his slaved free, and certainly none of them contemplated educating slaves as Washington did" (5). Nonetheless, what Humphreys wants to present in the above lines is the figure of a father, emphasizing the boundary between master and slaves and the latter's inferiority.

Thus, Humphreys' vision of national unity depends on racial patriarchy, and as far as it concerns the language of fraternity, its racial exclusion becomes visible. The language of fraternity is applied to friends or brothers, and the above lines reveal that Humphreys does not regard Native Americans and African Americans as his friends. Using the terms of love and affection instead of fraternity, Eustace writes, "the veil of love revealed as much as it concealed; it allowed for the imposition and the refutation,

but above all for the negotiation of power" (149). What the discourse of fraternity in *A Poem* reveals is no doubt Humphreys' oscillation between grief and sense of duty, and what it conceals is his racial hierarchy. Conversely, by doing so, the discourse of fraternity reinforces such hierarchy; this is what Eustace calls "the negotiation of power." Eustace claims that "By dint of strategic ambiguity, invocations of love and affection allowed for the sure transmission of coded status signals" (149). Through the "transmission of coded status signals," the rhetoric of fraternity comes to distinguish one status from another, which ultimately means the strength of intimate order relies on the principle of exclusiveness.

What matters is that Humphreys' desire for exclusiveness in *A Poem* appears in an extreme manner. Certainly, part of Humphreys' sense of fraternity stems from experiencing an army camp during the Revolutionary War. As Richard Godbeer points out, "General Washington's aides-de-camp lived and worked together as a tightly knit group of young men," and Washington "referred habitually to his staff as a 'family' and to his aides as 'the gentleman of the family'" (120). However, Humphreys emphasizes their exceptional relationship by insisting "conscious I am that few have had opportunities of knowing him [Washington] better, and that none could appreciate more

justly his morals and his merits" ("Letter to Mrs. Washington" 153). To more precisely consider the extent to which Humphreys' sense of intimacy depends on exclusiveness, it is profitable to pay attention to the manner in which he deals with Martha Washington in *A Poem*.

Near the end of *A Poem*, Humphreys says: "once more to meet! . . . still had I hop'd to view / Thy [Washington's] face once more" (ll. 748–50). To subdue such grief and desire, he turns his attention to the "one sad duty" of giving "comfort" to Mrs. Washington (ll. 752–54). Promising her to let "higher consolations flow" and to "dry at length th' unceasing tear of woe" (ll. 761–62), he writes: "Soon shalt thou meet him on th' immortal coast, / And all thy grief in ecstacy [sic] be lost" (ll. 765–66). Humphreys executes the duty for the bereaved lady; however, this act suggests he recognizes that his desire to meet with Washington once more must not be fulfilled because such a desire and its fulfilment no doubt belongs to Mrs. Washington. While Mrs. Washington shall meet him "on th' immortal coast," Humphreys should not meet him there. However, by mentioning Mrs. Washington and distinguishing his grief from hers in terms of the possibility to meet with Washington again, the poet succeeds in dramatizing his grief as a thing that could not be relieved, lightened, and reduced into

a common framework like a marital relationship. The deeper his distance from Washington and from the possibility to meet him again is, the stronger his sense of attachment and exceptional intimacy becomes, although such strength of attachment and intimacy is unstable and fragile because it is no more than the effect of his own highly skilled rhetoric, or rather his desire covertly inscribed in *A Poem*, not necessarily a direct reflection of reality.

Finally, one must investigate the unstable and fragile aspect of the fraternity discourse in *A Poem*. Before the final stanza, wherein the poet hears Washington's voice through a vision, the poet calls the "prophets" to bring about the apocalyptic scene: "To final ruin, stars and comets rush, / Suns suns consume and systems systems crush—" (ll.811–12). This mutual consumption goes on with the imagery of a circle: "These heav'ns stretch'd visible, together roll / Inflam'd, and vanish like a burning scroll— / Though death, and night, and chaos rule the ball, / Though nature's self decay—the soul, o'er all" (ll. 813–16; emphasis added). Two pairs of couplets, "roll and scroll" and "ball and all," underscore the impression of a circle with the pronunciation and the shape of the mouth: "O." This "O" imagery runs into the concluding stanza: "Open, ye gates, instinct with vital force, / That earth with heaven may hold high intercourse! /

Open, ye portals of eternal day!" (ll. 843–45). Through these open "gates" (O) for "high intercourse," the "sons of bliss," "Myriads of angels," and "sainted hosts" (ll. 847–49) appear, and the last one is: "Thou, Washington!" (l. 850). The poet gains a vision here: "And, lo! what vision bursts upon my sight" (l. 851); then, he hears his voice:

> 'Tis he—and hark! I hear, or seem to hear,
>
> A more than mortal voice invade my ear;
>
> "To me," the vision cries, "to speak is giv'n,
>
> Mortals! attend the warning voice of heav'n:
>
> Your likeness love! adore the pow'r divine!
>
> So shall your days be blest, your end like mine!
>
> So will Omnipotence your freedom guard,
>
> And bliss unbounded be your great reward!" (ll. 853–60)

Washington plunges into the poet's body (the voice invades his ear); and one can observe Washington has occupied the poet because the overlapping voice is spoken from the poet's mouth. Through Washington's voice, the poet presents the vision of America's future glory ("So will Omnipotence your freedom guard, / And bliss unbounded be your great reward!"), which seems perfect for the design of the American

epic. The line "So shall your days be blest, your end like mine!" also proves Humphreys' objective to present Washington as "an admirable model" in terms of "like mine." Here, the overlapping voices, or the textual communication, can correspond with the poet's objective: "holding a kind of spiritual intercourse with him." However, the phrase "seem to hear" sounds a little uncertain about hearing the voice, getting the vision, and encountering his friend.

Humphreys' American epic is motivated by Muse and Mnemosyne, embodying the memory of his friend, the sense of intimacy, and the rhetoric of fraternity. No other poets build an intimate relationship and deal with Washington as an epic hero as Humphreys did. However, by the same token, their highly constructed relationship for *A Poem* demands its political, racial, and sexual exclusiveness, and such rhetorical appropriation in the text cannot help but return to the poet Humphreys as an indelible trace of anxiety.

Coda

Still, Washington allured Humphreys. On June 12, 1796, Washington wrote the following letter to Humphreys in Europe:

> Whenever you [Humphreys] shall think, with the poet or philosopher, 'that the post of honour is a private station,' and may be disposed to enjoy yourself in my shades—I do not mean the shades below, where, if you put it off long, I may be reclining, I can only repeat, that you will meet with the same cordial reception at Mount-Vernon that you have always found at that place. ("Letter to David Humphreys" 390–91)

By the use of parenthetic sentences, Washington notes Humphreys' delight in his shades, which means Washington's shelter, Mount Vernon, where Humphreys had stayed from 1787 until 1790 and from where he left for Europe on a diplomatic mission. At the same time, however, the "shades below" alludes to the subterranean world, namely hell. The sentence "if you put it off long, I may be reclining" thus comes to mean that if Humphreys comes back to Mount Vernon, Washington would pass away. It literally says, "I am dying to see you."

As Cifelli points out, Humphreys did not face the news of Washington's death out of the blue. He had probably expected it beforehand and had already prepared to compose a poem on this issue since he had engaged several works on Washington: "An Ode, to His Excellency General Washington" (written in 1776), "Mount-Vernon: An

Ode" (written 1796), and "Sonnet XII: On Receiving the News of the Death of General Washington" (written in 1799–1800). Thus, *A Poem* was a well-prepared text. However, this does not mean Humphreys' grief was insincere. Unlike Hopkins, Washington and Humphreys' bond was never broken by the turbulent age of the 1790s. Unlike *The Anarchiad*, Humphreys chose, instead of the mock-epic, the hybrid form of elegy and epic to highlight Washington's prominence. Unlike Dwight and Trumbull, Humphreys was able to deal with Washington directly as his epic hero. Washington's death made Humphreys create an American epic in his own way. Simultaneously, however, it reveals the limitation of the poetics of fraternity; and, if Washington's death brought about the end of the Federalist Age, it would put an end to the Connecticut Wits' strong connection with the national frame as well.

Still, as Bottorff summarizes, Humphreys deserves the names of "the romancer, the myth-maker, the 'wooden' neoclassical poet, the Enlightenment gentleman" (xii). Although Bottorff seems to skew this sentence a little negatively with "wooden" and *A Poem* is not truly appreciated, Humphreys' admiration for the president and particularly his vision of a national family, with Washington as a national father and Native Americans and African Americans as his children, can be said to be adopted in

American history. A sculpture entitled *Equestrian Statue of Theodore Roosevelt*, by James Earle Fraise, demonstrates the trace of the tradition Humphreys inscribes in *A Poem*. In this work, Theodore Roosevelt is riding on a horse, with two men—a Native American and an African American—serving under the president.

CHAPTER SIX

On Zamor, A Traitor: Joel Barlow's *The Columbiad* (1807)

While Humphreys mythologizes Washington in the language of intimacy, Barlow crystalizes the memory of fraternity with the Connecticut Wits in his work *The Columbiad*. Yet, this chapter argues that Barlow's isolation and distance from the members of, or his awareness of being a traitor within, the Connecticut Wits allowed him to create a unique American epic, distanced not only from the Federalist Connecticut Wits but also from the Republican principle.

Joel Barlow was born at a Redding farmhouse, which was, according to Leon Howard, far from the "New England Brahminism that might have been seen in the homes of Trumbull, Dwight, and Humphreys" (133). His literary gift, however, charmed Pastor Bartlett of Redding to help him enter Moor's School, Dartmouth—and, later, Yale—where he became acquainted with Trumbull, Dwight, Humphreys, and Webster. He engaged in several professions, becoming a school teacher, graduating from a master's theology course, then becoming a chaplain in the army, a student of law, and a bookshop owner; additionally, he participated in the Hartford Friendly Club,

joined the composition of the Federalist mock-epic *The Anarchiad* (1786–87), and issued his own work, *The Vision of Columbus*, in 1787. After that, he left for France to work as an agent for the Scioto Land Company in 1788, where he became familiar with William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, Joseph Johnson, and Thomas Paine, witnessed the French Revolution, and, eventually, turned out as a Republican. Thomas Jefferson urged Barlow to write an American history from a Republican perspective, and although Barlow never carried it out, it was one of the indispensable backgrounds for the revision and expansion of *The Vision* into *The Columbiad*, published in 1807: "the real object of the poem," Barlow says in the preface of *The Columbiad*, "is to inculcate the love of rational liberty, and to discountenance the deleterious passion for violence and war; to show that on the basis of republican principle all good morals, as well as good government and hope of permanent peace, must be founded; and to convince the student in political science that the theoretical question of the future advancement of human society" (v).[1]

[1] For the biography of Joel Barlow, there are seven book-length studies. Todd's *Life and Letters of Joel Barlow, LL.D. Poet, Statesman, Philosopher* (1886), Miller's *Joel Barlow: Revolutionists, London, 1791–1792* (1932), and Zunder's *The Early Days of Joel Barlow, A Connecticut Wit* (1934) narrowly focus on Barlow's personal letters, London days, and early days, respectively. Woodress's *A Yankee's Odyssey: The Life of Joel Barlow* (1958) can be a comprehensive work, but Barlow's republicanism is not sufficiently analyzed; Ford's *Joel Barlow* (1971) is a concise literary biography; Bernstein's *Joel Barlow: A Connecticut Yankee in the Age of Revolution* (1985) explores his republicanism in a European context; and, eventually, Buel's *Joel Barlow: American Citizen in a Revolutionary World* (2011), the most recent and comprehensive work, reconsiders Barlow's republican thoughts in both contexts of

Previous studies have regarded Barlow's *The Columbiad* not as a text to read but as a craft to look at: Woodless calls *The Vision* "a dinosaur in the clay pits of literary history" (86), writing, "the *Vision of Columbus*, transformed into the *Columbiad*, came from the press of Fry and Kammerer. The event was parturition with great labor—a literary anti-climax but a graphic arts triumph" (245). Indeed, by virtue of its "graphic arts triumph," *The Columbiad* was exhibited at Charles Willson Peale's museum.[2] More recently, however, Barlow's "Pan-American shot" has garnered attention, a work which, according to McWilliams, intends to draw "the reader ever upward until all of North and South America are seen as one land mass ordained by Nature to be one western hemisphere, one New World," (57). Although William C. Dowling states that Books II and III, which focus on Manco Capac, the first Inca prince on South America, are "digressions from the main narrative" (115), Ralph Bauer claims that these form the "center to his epic" (206).

Europe and America.

Chapter-length but influential literary and biographical studies are Tyler's "The Literary Strivings of Mr. Joel Barlow" in *Three Men of Letters* (1895), Dos Passos's "Citizen Barlow of the Republic of the World" in *The Ground We Stand on: Some Examples from the History of a Political Creed* (1941), Howard's "Joel Barlow" and "Citizen Joel Barlow" in *The Connecticut Wits* (1943), Elliott's "Joel Barlow: Innocence and Experience Abroad" in *Revolutionary Writers: Literature and Authority in the New Republic, 1725–1810* (1986).

[2] To publish *The Columbiad* as one of the most excellent "American" books, Barlow and his partner Robert Fulton carefully chose printers, papermakers, typefounders, illustrators, publishers, and bookbinders; see Bidwell. For a response to *The Columbiad*, see Woodress 267–71, and McWilliams 63, Buel 294–302.

The Columbiad begins with a scene where Christopher Columbus is jailed underground in Spain. Following a depressed monologue, Hesper, the guardian genius of western clime, suddenly appears, liberates Columbus, and brings him to the top of the mount of vision overlooking the Atlantic, showing a history of America (Book I). A dialogue between Columbus (questioning) and Hesper (answering) concerning the vision continues until the end of *The Columbiad*. The first scene of the vision involves indigenous people in South America, especially Manco Capac in Peru (Books II and III); following this, the vision presents Europe's history, the "discovery" of America, English colonization, the French and Indian War, and the Revolutionary War (Books IV–VII). They sing a psalm of peace, then Atlas, Hesper's brother and the guardian genius of Africa, emerges, severely criticizing slavery in America (Book VIII). Columbus casts doubt on America's future due to the cyclical nature inherent in the rise and fall of civilizations, while Hesper disproves it on the grounds of the progression of ancient Greece and Rome into America, ending with a prophecy of the future glory of America and universal harmony on earth. The main theme is the archetypal American epic based on what Griffith calls "a secular millennialism," which differs from Dwight's biblical epic *The Conquest of Canäan* in terms of geography (a Pan-American view,

not limited to New England), chronology (Manco Capac, not the Pilgrim fathers), and the hero's action (Columbus, a spectator, unlike Joshua).[3]

Scholars have paid a great deal of attention to the character named Manco Capac; Steven Blakemore draws a parallel between the speeches from Manco Capac (in Book III) and George Washington (in Book V), which describe "the two good American 'races'" which "were confronted with oppressive, imperialist nations in a conflict between civilization and savagery" (131). Also, Bauer claims that "the Inca past becomes America's Classical Antiquity" (219). However, the significance of Zamor, Manco Capac's adversary, has not been sufficiently analyzed. Nonetheless, a close examination of Zamor's portrayal leads us to observe a multifaceted racial reality—slavery, in particular—as reflected in the period of the American and French Revolutions, as well as Barlow's hidden agenda in *The Columbiad*. This chapter presents the vanquished Zamor as a racialized sign of the paradox between heroic emancipation (independence), mere treachery (patricide), and the author's projected personality.

[3] For Barlow's secular millennialism, Dowling explains on ground of Barlow's demystification of religious ideology, see 95–126, esp. 112. Also, Sutton deals with Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi America* and Barlow's *The Columbiad* as the "contrasting Puritan and Enlightenment views" and "important . . . forerunners of more successful works in the American epic tradition" (69–70).

Specifically, the first section of this chapter demonstrates that *The Columbiad* still contains Barlow's sense of intimacy with and indebtedness to his friends in Connecticut, even though the friendship between Barlow and the other members of the Connecticut Wits was broken up due to his religious and political conversion in the 1790s. To clarify Barlow's distance from the other members of the Wits, the next section examines Barlow's abolitionist attitude, then interrogates his narrative strategy in relation to Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Then, the third section investigates Zamor and reveals that *The Columbiad* registers a racial dilemma. The final section draws attention to dispersed imageries, such as "a scaly nation" and "the golden fleece," to illuminate that *The Columbiad* employs a subversiveness that questions the principle of the republic.

1. The Crystallization of Fraternity, or Farewell to Friends

The friendship between Barlow and the other members of the Connecticut Wits was broken up due to Barlow's religious and political conversion in the 1790s, but *The Columbiad* still conveys his sense of intimacy with and indebtedness to the friends.

He chose Popean heroic couplets such as *The Conquest, M'Fingal*, *The*

Anarchiad, "Guillotina," and *A Poem*. *The Vision*, published in 1787, which is the early version of *The Columbiad*, invokes the memory of his friendship. Dwight helped Barlow finish the first draft of *The Vision*; Humphreys delivered this poem to the hands of George Washington and John Adams, who endeavored several publishers in London for the purpose of publishing the London edition; and Trumbull cooperated with Barlow to enact the copyright law in Connecticut for protection of their works *M'Fingal* and *The Vision* from unmerciful publishers.

Indeed, *The Columbiad* is haunted with the memory of the Connecticut Wits: it should not be ignored that the figure of the guardian spirit named Hesper derives from their collaborative work *The Anarchiad*; the episode of Lucinda's death is based on the episode of Jane McCrea, also from *The Anarchiad*, which mentions the French adaptation of this story by Michel René Hilliard-d'Auberteuil; the incident of the prison ship is also narrated in *M'Fingal*, which indicates Barlow's and Trumbull's shared interest; and although the Pan-American imagination presents Barlow's uniqueness and originality, the idea of the apotheosis of Washington was directly inherited from Humphreys' attempt to mythologize in *A Poem*.

Significantly, Barlow mentions the names of Trumbull, Dwight, and Humphreys

in *The Columbiad*. In these lines, Barlow presents each friend's characteristics: Trumbull writes satires, Dwight, epics, and Humphreys, elegies. Barlow first captures Trumbull's keen intelligence, depicting him "[w]ith lynx-eyed glance thro nature far to pierce" (Book VIII, 659); Barlow also presents Trumbull as a leading poet like Dwight, putting him in "An Epistle from Dr. Dwight to Col. Humphreys," saying, "See Trumbull lead the train. His skilful hand / Hurls the keen darts of satire round the land. / Pride, knavery, dullness feel his mortal stings" (663–65). As for Dwight, Barlow seems to posit him as a representative of the American epic: "For Dwight's high harp the epic Muse sublime / Hails her new empire in the western clime" (673–74). Clearly, in terms of *translatio imperii,* Barlow envisions that Dwight's work contributed to the development of the American epic. A specific work in Barlow's mind indubitably would have been *The Conquest of Canäan*:

> His voice revives old Canaan's promised land,
>
> The long-fought fields of Jacob's chosen band.
>
> In Hanniel's fate, proud faction finds its doom . . . . (677–79)

What matters here is Barlow's attention to the character Hanniel and his "fate." The term "faction" implies Barlow's understanding of the contemporary context—the civil

war between loyalists and patriots—and the phrase "Hanniel's fate" suggests not only his death in the end but also the critical situation he had to face, that is, a state of being between a "fair unchanging friend, or open foe" (*The Conquest of Canäan*, Book IV 64); hence, a traitor. Barlow described Dwight with the motif of a traitor, but he seems to have been attracted by Humphreys' abundant feelings and military career: "While freedom's cause his patriot bosom warms, / In counsel sage, nor inexpert in arms, / See Humphreys glorious from the field retire" (683–85). Of particular importance is how Barlow deliberately features Humphreys' rhetoric of fraternity; when Humphreys "[s]heathe[s] the glad sword and string[s] the soothing lyre" (686), Barlow writes:

> That lyre which erst, in hours of dark despair.
>
> Roused the sad realms to finish well the war.
>
> O'er fallen friends, with all the strength of woe.
>
> Fraternal sighs in his strong numbers flow . . . . (687–90)

Fallen soldiers are "fallen friends," and Barlow aptly captures that his "Fraternal sighs" allows Humphreys to make "his strong numbers."

Of course, such crystallized fraternity is nothing but lip service; still, it seems to betray the significance, for Barlow, of the memory of friendship cultivated at the

Society of Brothers in Unity and in the classroom at Yale in the 1760s and 1770s as well as the Hartford Friendly Club in the 1780s. However, it cannot be understated that *The Columbiad* was written after Barlow's conversion and along with the Republican principle as expressed in the preface. Then, it would be necessary to clarify Barlow's distance from the other members. To this end, the manners in which Barlow employs the rhetoric of fellow-feeling, or sympathy, and the issue of slavery in *The Columbiad* in comparison with Humphreys' *A Poem* deserves consideration.

2. Beyond the Power of Sympathy

This section first examines Barlow's abolitionist attitude, and then interrogates his narrative strategy. Barlow invites readers to recognize the misery and atrocity of slavery by foregrounding his first-person narrator's voice ("I") and by drawing on the theory of sympathy as described in Adam Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759); nonetheless, Barlow casts doubt on a sympathizer, bespeaking anxiety concerning what sympathy would bring about.

Barlow's keen awareness of slavery can be found in his commencement speech poem at Yale in 1778, entitled *The Prospect of Peace*.[4] Although his attitude towards

[4] Barlow writes: "Afric's unhappy children, now no more / Shall feel the cruel chains they felt before, / But every State in this just mean agree, / To bless mankind, and set th'

slavery did not stand out in *The Vision*, it did in *The Columbiad*, largely because of an intellectual exchange with Joseph Johnson and Mary Wollstonecraft in 1791. Johnson invited Wollstonecraft to serve as a reviewer for his magazine *The Analytical Review*, and her reviews reflected her current interest in the abolition debate (Ferguson 91). Eventually, in Book VIII of *The Columbiad*, called "Atlas," "[g]reat brother guardian of old Afric's clime" (194) comes to the stage and blames Hesper for slavery in America, repeating the phrase "[e]nslave my tribes!" four times (212, 215, 223, and 235). Atlas says that unless Hesper were to abolish slavery, he would enact "[a] vengeance that shall shake the world's deep frame" (265). After Atlas disappears, the poet Barlow comes to confess what follows:

> You scorn the Titan's [Atlas'] threat; nor shall I strain
>
> The power of pathos in a task so vain
>
> As Afric's wrongs to sing; for what avails
>
> To harp for you these known familiar tales?
>
> To tongue mute misery, and re-rack the soul
>
> With crimes oft copied from that bloody scroll

oppressed free" (*The Prospect of Peace* 81–84)

> Where Slavery pens her woe; tho tis but there
>
> We learn the weight that mortal life can bear. (VIII, 319–26; emphasis added)

A sense of uncertainty about tales seems to be observed ("for what avails / To harp for you there known familiar tales?"). The poet, however, comes to recapture the belief in "the bloody scroll," that is, the tales about slavery, because from these bloody tales, "[w]e learn the weight that mortal life can bear." The term "weight" might correspond with readers' physical reactions to the tales, since they "startle still the accustom'd ear," "shake the nerve," and "[m]elt every heart" (327–29; emphasis added). Hence, Barlow demands that the tales about the slaves' captivated, bloody bodies appeal to readers' bodies to "break the barbarous chain" (330).

Significantly, in the above lines Barlow refers to himself as "I" for the first time, which is an unusual characteristic in *The Columbiad*. Given the basic structures utilized by Columbus (a questioning reader) and Hesper (an answering narrator), as Pearce suggests (64), Barlow's adoption of "I" breaks this structure, creating a new space for the reader and the poet to be referred to as "you and I," finally leading to the use of the pronoun "we" to establish a sense of solidarity and a feeling of a unified community or

nation that does not necessarily exclude slaves.

Like Humphreys, to invite readers to his textual space, Barlow utilizes the effect of sympathy, described in Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* as "fellow-feeling" (10).[5] In fact, to allow readers to imagine themselves in the situations of the slaves, Barlow depicts the captured Americans in British prison ships at the Wallabout Bay during the Revolutionary War (Book VI) and the black slaves (Book VIII) using the same phrases: both groups of captives are placed in "dungeon(s)" (VI, 34 / VIII, 255) and suffer "hot contagion" (VI, 54 / VIII, 259). The couplet "breath and death" is also used in both, as follows:

> a) But as the infected mass [the prisoners] resign their breath,
>
> She [the prison ship] keeps with joy the register of death. (VI, 63–64)
>
> b) Sucks hot contagion with his [the slave's] quivering breath,

[5] In America, the concept of sympathy was cultivated through the Revolutionary period; and in the field of sentimental fictions, one conspicuous female figure—Elizabeth Whitman— contributes to it to a great extent. Her life, especially the tragic death "in a tavern, seduced and abandoned" on July 25, 1788 (Davidson 222), was told and retold in William Hill Brown's *The Power of Sympathy* (1789), Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple* (1791), and Hannah Foster's *The Coquette* (1797). As Jay Fliegelman points out, he drank "deep from the fountain of sentimental fiction" (*Prodigals and Pilgrims* 136). Barlow was versed with the muse of the American sentimental fictions—Elizabeth Whitman. Significantly, Elizabeth Whitman has an intimate relationship with Barlow. "I spend every evening in Ladies' company" (qtd. in Woodress 62), he wrote in unemployment after graduation from Yale. This ladies' company includes Ruth Baldwin (his future wife), Elizabeth Stiles (a daughter of Ezra Stiles, the seventh president of Yale), and Whitman. Among them, Whitman inspired him to keep writing his epic and asked Dwight to help Barlow finish the 1779 draft of *The Vision* (Zunder 82).

And, rack'd with rending torture, sinks in death. (VIII, 259–60)

As Blakemore points out, Barlow's descriptions of the prison ship resemble those of the Middle Passage, especially the description of Helen Maria Williams' *A Poem on the Bill Lately Passed for Regulating the Slave Trade* (1788) (158). Furthermore, when Atlas refers to the enslaved American in Algiers: "[t]hy sons perchance! whom Barbary's coast can tell / The sweets of that loved scourge they wield so well" (VIII, 239–40), it reminds us of Barlow's mission to release the American captives from the Barbary pirates from 1795 through 1797.

After the Revolutionary War, America lost Britain's protection of its commerce from piracy in the Mediterranean. According to Gordon M. Sayre, "England, France, Spain, and the US all negotiated ransom and protection payments with the 'Barbary' or North African states" (350). From 1785 to 1786, American ships were taken by Algiers, and since Congress could not raise the required money for the redemption of the prisoners, the situation remained unchanged; yet, in 1792, Congress prepared the money to defray the expenses for an Algerian envoy, appointing men such as John Paul Jones (1792), Thomas Barclay (1792–93), and David Humphreys (1793–95) (Wilson 126–29); their mission failed. Then, from 1795, Barlow took over this charge and

succeeded with the mission. As Paul Baepler pointed out, although the Barbary captivity narrative had existed for more than three centuries, "it caught the attention of American readers primarily during the first half of the nineteenth century. Between John Foss's 1798 narrative and the numerous printings of James Riley's 1817 account . . . American publishers issued over a hundred American Barbary captivity editions" (24). Also, Susanna Rowson published *Slaves in Algiers: A Struggle for Freedom* and Royall Tyler issued *The Algerine Captive*. As such, Barlow's *The Columbiad* shares such broader historical and cultural contexts. More importantly, as Elizabeth Maddock Dillon claimed, the Barbary captivity narratives had covertly questioned slavery in America by depicting captured Americans being forced into slavery under a heathen master (422–29). Thus, it is quite understandable that *The Columbiad* invites audience members to imagine themselves as slaves to imply the wretchedness and atrocity of slavery in America.

Nonetheless, Barlow records doubt regarding sympathy, as follows:

> But why to sympathy for guidance fly,
>
> (Her aids uncertain and of scant supply)
>
> when your own self-excited sense affords

a guide more sure, and every sense accords? (VIII, 331–34)

For Barlow, sympathy is less certain than a "self-excited sense." If the rhyming couplet of "affords" and "accords" accentuates its effect of uniting "every sense," then lacking this self-excited sense can lead to anxiety about being negatively influenced by others. This is none other than what Sarah Knot calls "sympathy's power and disruptive possibility" (235). Taking up John André's execution as an example, Knot explains, "The spy had been lost in the hero, and indignation at the British major's crimes had ceded to admiration and to praise" (235). Certainly, sympathy can lead to the strength of unification; yet, it might simultaneously, dangerously induce compassion for a wretched person—for instance, a spy or a traitor—thus justifying its presence. Intriguingly, Barlow himself could not avoid being overwhelmed by such sympathy. A private letter betrays his embarrassment at the sight of André's execution: "My heart is thrown into a flutter [,] my dear [,] at the sight" ("Letter to Ruth Baldwin" on October 2, 1780). Barlow's fear for sympathy's disruptive possibility is easily detected here. However, suppose he also appreciates it or detects in it another opportunity to challenge established codes for the purpose of creating a new thing. To ensure that such possibilities are conveyed in *The Columbiad*, a key quality is attributed to Zamor.

For example, let us briefly examine his final scene, in which our familiar "breath and death" couplet is employed:

> Thus pour'd the vengeful chief [Zamor] his fainting breath,
>
> And lost his utterance in the gasp of death. (III, 853–54)

The couplet of "breath" and "death" previously describes the captives on the prison ship (Book VI) and the slave ship (Book VIII), which also suggests the state of American captives in Algeria. As such, it is understandable to utilize the phrase here; this scene demonstrates at length that Zamor is both captivated and vanquished by Manco Capac in Peru. However, considering what Zamor embodies, such as emancipation, transgression, and multilayered representation (as we shall see), it might seem more appropriate to consider Barlow's placement of the couplet "breath and death" as if the lines shackle Zamor's hands and feet. Even though, as Griffith asserts, Barlow employs the heroic couplets to "give a sense of order—the order of logic, the order of reason, the order of progress—for order is the principle on which his ideology was to rest" (243), it is also plausible that a sense of disorder precedes the necessity of order. If so, Zamor embodies disruptive power; or, as we shall see, Zamor might represent Barlow's desire for such power. The use of couplets when describing the figure of

Zamor—"death" and "breath," in particular—represents Barlow's internal struggle between a sense of order, logic, reason, and progress, and a desire for disruptive power, the possibilities represented by Zamor.

3. Who is Zamor?

As the text of "The Declaration of Independence" dropped parts regarding the idea of abolishing slavery, it can be said that equality, freedom, and independence were racially exclusive terms. By investigating the character of Zamor, this section shows that *The Columbiad* registers such racial dilemma, which was manifest as actual anxiety following the American and French Revolutions, which brought about the Haiti Revolution as well as other future movements.

Scholars have discussed the changes implemented when revising *The Vision* to become *The Columbiad*.[6] The ways in which Barlow transforms Zamor's portrayal through the revision, however, have not received attention. Nevertheless, changes to Zamor's portrayal reveal a multifaceted racial aspect—a Peruvian, Asian, and African slave—and a dilemma between emancipation and treachery, as reflected in the contexts

[6] See Maxfield 839–42, Parrington lxi–lxii, Howard 308–19, Woodress 246, 249–51, Dowling 4, Ford 74–84, Elliott 114–24, Bidwell 340–44, and Buel 289–94.

of the American and French Revolutions. Notable works for this investigation are Voltaire's *Alzire, ou les Américains*, Helen Maria Williams' *Peru, a Poem in Six Cantos* (1784), Olympe de Gouges' *Zamore and Mirza* (1783/84), and William Lloyd Garrison's *The Slave's Friend*, which contains "Zamor and Hinda" (1836).

However, the primary matter of importance is how Barlow emphasizes the Indian aspect of Zamor in *The Columbiad* more than in *The Vision*.[7] Through the revision, Zamor is first changed from a "leader" into a "chieftain," then from a "savage" into a "sachem":

> a) Zamor, the leader of the tyger-band . . . . (*The Vision* III, 443)
>
> a') Zamor, the chieftain of the Tyger-band . . . . (*The Columbiad* III, 439)
>
> b) The savage ceas'd; the chiefs of every race . . . . (*The Vision* III, 467)
>
> b') The sachem ceas'd; the chiefs of every race . . . . (*The Columbiad* III,

[7] This paper uses the 1787 edition of *The Vision* and the 1807 edition of *The Columbiad*. Although the 1825 version seems appropriate because it says that it is "with the last corrections of the author" and the modern authorized anthology *The Works of Joel Barlow* (1970) contains the 1825 version, the differences between the 1807 and 1825 versions are limited to orthography. For instance, the verb ending "d" is changed to "t" ("wish'd" [I, 18] to "wisht" [I, 18]); "ph" are changed to "f" ("gulph" [I, 220] to "gulf" [I, 220]); the prefix "en" is changed to "in" ("enclosed" [II, 272] to "inclosed" [II, 268]); "ou" are changed to "o" ("mould" [IV, 348] to "mold" [IV, 348]); "ough" are changed to "ow" ("plough" [V, 297] to "plow" [V, 295]); and "gh" are omitted ("straightens" [V, 649] to "straitens" [V, 647]). These changes are based on Barlow's thought on orthography. In the "Postscript," he writes, "[o]ur language is constantly and rapidly improving. . . . [we] will follow a closer definition and more accurate use of words, with a stricter attention to their orthography (the 1807 version 445, the 1825 version 435). Also, the significance of the 1793 edition of *The Vision*, see Ford 68–74.

463)

The term "savage" seems to conjure a stereotypical image of the native people, but what matters is that the word "sachem," which specifically refers to an indigenous leader, is not used in *The Vision* and is employed for the first time in *The Columbiad* (III, 231, 413, 424, and 676).[8] Moreover, in the last scene wherein Zamor is defeated by Manco Capac, the revision goes so far as to transform Zamor from a "savage" into a "monster":

c) Insult me not with tombs; the savage cried . . . . (*The Vision* III, 829)

c') Insult me not with tombs! the monster cried . . . . (*The Columbiad* III, 839)

If Manco Capac is Americanized based on a parallel relationship with George Washington, Zamor is Indianized or alienated as a monster through the revisions. As Danielle E. Conger argues, "Barlow's use of Native American histories to establish an 'American' tradition also replicated, in the form of conflicting images of the 'noble savage' and the 'red devil,' tensions inherent in late-eighteenth-century attitudes toward Native Americans" (559).[9] So considered, Barlow's attitude toward Native Americans

[8] In the revision between 1793 and 1807, the term "sachem" appears as follows: "[t]he wondering chief reply'd" (233) is changed to "[t]he sachem proud replied" (231); "o'er his shaggy brow" (413) is changed to "o'er the sachem's brow" (413); "when the squadrons tread" (424) is changed to "when the sachems tread" (424); and "from his grasping hand" (674) is changed to "from the sachem's hand" (676).

[9] Barlow suggests a distinction between Manco Capac's and Zamor's origins:

may require questioning. This inquiry, however, calls into question the transfiguration of Zamor in the context of the post-revolutionary period.

It is well-known that Barlow owes the history of South America written in Books II and III to Paul Rycault's translation of the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's *Comentarios reales de los incas* (1607; 1688) as well as William Robertson's *The History of America* (1777).[10] Manco Capac originates in these works; Zamor, however, has different roots. First of all, as Zunder suggests, the source of Zamor can be traced to Voltaire's "Zama" in *Alzire, ou les Américains* (220–21); however, Helen Maria Williams's *Peru*, *a Poem in Six Cantos* is a more accurate source because it brings into being a Peruvian bard named Zamor. Barlow joined Williams' salon after arriving in Europe (Buel 167), but both shared the period's atmosphere: South America had been attracting attention from both sides of the Atlantic when each work was being written. Tupac Amaru II, the leader of the Andean peasantry, led a revolt against Spanish colonialism from 1780 through 1782 (Leask 140). In America, *The Connecticut Courant* (Mar. 12, 1782) and *The Pennsylvania Gazette* (Jan. 2, 1782) reported this revolt (Wertheimer 89). Specifically, after 1782, Barlow expanded Book II of the 1779 first draft of *The Vision*,

Hellespont (II, 149) and Asia (II, 174).

[10] For Barlow's indebtedness to Vega and Robertson, see Zunder 220 and Bauer 203–32.

especially the part featuring Manco Capac and Zamor (Zunder 202–03). Tichi stated that the London publishers in 1792 suggested that Barlow drop Books II and III, though he did not (133–34); this episode implies that publishers recognized that the mention of Peru would draw the attention of British audiences, positively or negatively.[11]

Zamore and Mirza (1783/84), written by French feminist Olympe de Gouges, seems to influence Barlow's Zamor to no small degree. The titular Zamore is introduced as an educated Indian slave who kills his master after the master assaults Zamore's beloved Mirza. This work deals with the inequality of slavery, inviting the audience to tolerate and sympathize with Zamore. It is unclear whether Barlow knew of Gouges' *Zamore and Mirza* when he published *The Vision* in 1787,[12] but it is highly plausible that during his stay in Europe (1788–1805), before the publication of *The Columbiad* in 1807, he became familiar with her work. Barlow and Gouges belonged to the same intellectual milieu via Jacques Pierre Brissot, one of the leading members of the Society of the Friends of the Blacks (1789–93), which argued against slavery and the slave trade. Gouges supported the Society, and Brissot upheld in an article of *Le Patriote français*

[11] Robert Southey and Mary Wollstonecraft highly appreciated *The Vision*, the description of Manco Capac in particular; Leask suggests that Southey first attempted to identify his "Madoc" with Barlow's Manco Capac (139–41).

[12] *Zamore and Mirza* was written in 1783 through 1784, submitted to the Comédie Française in 1784; but Gouges published it in 1788 because the play was delayed for years; it was performed at the Comédie Française in 1789 (Miller 111–16).

(Oct. 15, 1789) Gouges's political stance (Blanc 91–94). According to Buel, Barlow was acquainted with Brissot in 1789 (112), began translating Brissot's *Nouveau Voyage dans les États Unis* in 1791, and eventually wrote about Brissot's death by guillotine in 1793.

In brief, Barlow's Zamor comes from Voltaire's *Alzire* and Williams' *Peru* and intersects with Gouges' *Zamore and Mirza*, ending up as the figure of a slave; Zamor later comes to represent a black slave. William Lloyd Garrison, the founder of the American Anti-Slavery Society (1833–70), issued a monthly children's magazine, *The Slave's Friend* (1836–38), which contained a story entitled "Zamor and Hinda" about two black slaves (vol. 3, no. 10, c. 1836). Thus, the figure of Zamor cannot be reduced to a mere representation of the "red devil" (Conger 559); rather, the racial layers of a Peruvian, Asian, and black slave should be noted.

The story of Zamor does not end here. Once upon a time, "Zamor . . . was brought from Bengal when [he was] quite a child," and later became "the favorite page" of Madam du Barry, Louis XV's "beautiful marchioness," by whom Zamor was educated, baptized, well-clothed, and "permitted to take any liberty whatever" (Lenotre 134–35). According to Christopher L. Miller, despite being "from Bengal," Zamor was widely

referred to as “le nègre de la du Barry,” and, significantly, Gouges, the author of *Zamore and Mirza*, “took the name of her slave-hero from this real-life Zamor” (123). More importantly, however, following the eruption of the French Revolution, Zamor turned out to be a traitor. When Madam du Barry was under arrest, “he [Zamor] was called as a witness when she appeared before the revolutionary tribunal” and he “gave evidence against her” (135–36). Barlow’s Zamor can resonate with the real-life Zamor through Gouges’ image of Zamore; Zamor represents not only a black slave but also a traitor after the French Revolution.

Thus, one can infer that the Indianization or the elimination of the black aspect of Zamor through revisions would be the effect of anxiety about association between emancipation and treason that the real-life Zamor embodied. The Indianization or the monsterization of Zamor makes the story of the battle between Manco Capac and Zamor more stable as the American epic about the tension between “America’s Classical Antiquity” and the “red devil” who is determined to be vanquished. Nonetheless, it would not be difficult that the real presence of Zamor, who was born in not privileged environment, delivered to the center of the world, educated there, and turned out to be a traitor at length, caught Barlow’s sympathetic attention.

In short, Zamor as a traitor comes to embody the racial dilemma of the post-revolutionary period—emancipation and transgression—, and the manipulation of Zamor's figure through the act of revisions cannot help but reveal Barlow's inner struggle between his recognition of necessity of a disruptive power Zamor represents to challenge the current society, and his rational reliance on rule and order to avoid the state of anarchy. Indeed, *The Columbiad* is haunted with such a dilemma: the friends in Connecticut, the effect of sympathy, and Zamor. From this perspective, such dispersed imageries as "a scaly nation" and "the golden fleece" in *The Columbiad* deserves special attention. The last section will investigate Barlow's visionary frame of the nation (seen in the streams of a scaly nation) and its integral component (captured in the threads of the golden fleece).

4. A Paradoxical Vision of America: The Poetics of Rape

The imagery of a scaly nation is used four times in *The Columbiad*. Each nation dwells in each place: the Allegany (IV, 359–64), the Potowmak (IV, 561–68), the Wallabout Bay (VI, 27–78), and Brazil (VIII, 467–78). These regions are remote in relation to one other at both the geographical and textual levels. By tracing the streams of the Allegany, however, the regions of the east and the west are significantly

channeled; likewise, by following the Potowmak, the north region is connected with the south; in addition, to capture the scaly nation imagery in Brazil, it is necessary to invoke the Pan-American perspective—North and South America as one land mass. In addition, when paying attention to Barlow's choice of the noun "nation," we observe his poetic design of the "united nation" in post-revolutionary America, which was almost divided regionally, politically, and religiously, especially because of the conflict between the Federalists and the Republicans. Regarding the description of the river in *The Columbiad*, Griffith writes, "Readers should take from the poem some abstract knowledge," because "[w]hat Barlow provides is not an image of what one would *see* as he looked at the Mississippi River, but something of what he might *know* about the river from studying a map" (242; emphasis in original). Each scaly nation appears to be unrelated to the others, but gathering them up leads to a map of America.

What matters is that Barlow's cartography does not present only a positive picture. Certainly, three schools of fish lead playful and productive lives: "scaly nations here their gambols led" (IV, 364); "round his loins the scaly nations play" (IV, 566); and "[p]rolific waves the scaly nations trace" (VIII, 469). The noun "gambol" and the adjective "prolific" indicate energetic productivity based on the rivers' circulation,

which illustrates the progressive vision of America. The rivers, however, not only bring about progression but also result in infection or degeneration. The third scaly nation in Wallabout Bay, New York, is forced to encounter the danger that they will "[c]atch the contagion, sicken, gasp and die" (VI, 78). Wallabout Bay was where the British prison ships anchored during the Revolutionary War. The *Jersey* was an infamous prison ship.[14] As Lossing writes, "the name of 'Hell' for the *Jersey* was a proper synonym" (867). Barlow describes a scene where a number of bodies are dropped from the ship: "As tost thro portholes from the encumber'd cave, / Corpse after corpse fall dashing in the wave; / Corpse after corpse, for days and months and years, / The tide bears off, and still its current clears." The current is still clear, but "o'erloaded with the putrid gore, / The slime-clad waters thicken round the shore," then, contamination by a flood of "their slaughter'd crews" exceeds the ocean's self-cleansing: "Here [the Great Ocean] purples, blushes for the race he bore / To rob and ravage this unconquer'd shore." As a result, "[t]he scaly nations, as they travel by, / Catch the contagion, sicken, gasp and die" (VI,

[14] Barlow writes in the note that he consulted with Elias Boodinot, who was in charge of negotiation with the British army to release American captives, and he mentions a prison ship called the *Jersey* ("Note No. 37" 423–24). The history of the prison ships in New York is traced to the possession of New York (Sept. 15, 1776) and the capture of Fort Washington (Nov. 16, 1776); "William Howe had at least 5000 prisoners," but "[t]o contain such a vast number of prisoners, the ordinary places of confinement were insufficient"; they were then sent to the prison ships (Onderdonk 207–11).

71–78). Thus, Barlow's map of America does not necessarily provide a positive perspective; rather, it encompasses anxiety about contagion and degeneracy.

In addition, the description of the prison ship deserves more attention because of its representation as a goddess in a black robe, as evident in the inserted illustration (Figure 1). As Blakemore points out, "The ubiquitous eighteenth-century American paradigm of Britain, the 'mother' or 'parent' country . . . may dovetail with the sexual allegory in which the consequences of becoming a prisoner are equated with the loss of national manhood . . . . Barlow discredits the 'mother country' by equating her with rape, castration, and venereal infection" (156). Indeed, the imagery of motherhood is paradoxically employed:

> See the black Prison Ship's expanding womb
>
> Impested thousands, quick and dead, entomb. (VI 43–44)

The rhyming couplet "womb and entomb" illuminates the tragedy that a number of corpses are delivered from the prison ship, which effectively represents the womb. Moreover, the lines in Figure 1 demonstrate her atrocity and inexorability: Barlow writes, "O'er the closed hatches ere she take her place, / She moves the massy planks a little space, / Opes a small passage to the cries below, / That feast her soul on messages

of wo / There sits with gaping ear and changeless eye, / Drinks every groan and treasures every sigh." Their "messages of wo," "groan," and "sigh" are nothing but her sources of satisfaction. Furthermore, she "[s]ustains the faint" and "[r]evives the dying" to prolong "their miseries," but, eventually, they die and contribute to her joy:

> But as the infected mass resign their breath,
>
> She keeps with joy the register of death. (VI 63–64)

This figure of a cruel mother who wears a black robe and engages "with rape, castration, and venereal infection" (Blackmore 156) vividly contrasts an innocent but debauched daughter in a white robe, as described in Figure 2.[15] In Book VI, Barlow narrates the death of Lucinda based on the incident of the murder of Jane McCrea on July 27th, 1777. At the moment when "[t]wo Mohawks met the maid [Lucinda]," Barlow writes:

> She starts, with eyes upturn'd and fleeting breath.
>
> In their raised axes views her instant death. (VI 661–62)

Barlow's description of Lucinda highlights her physical details, such as "her white hands," "[h]er hair, half lost along the shrubs she past," "her lovely waist," and "[h]er kerchief torn betrays the globes of snow" to emphasize "her weight of woe." More

[15] Barlow's *The Columbiad* constitutes the "Barlow-Vanderlyn-Smirke tradition" regarding the representation of the murder of Jane McCrea (489).

importantly, her scalp, acquired by the Mohawks, is exchanged for "British gold":

> Does all this eloquence suspend the knife?
>
> Does no superior bribe contest her life?
>
> There does: the scalps by British gold are paid;
>
> A long-hair'd scalp adorns that heavenly head . . . . (Book VI, 67–70)

Regarding the background of the murder of Jane McCrea, "The story of the actual event begins Burgoyne and his Indian mercenaries were preparing successfully southward from Canada through New York for the purpose of cutting the infant union in tow," Edgerton explains. "On the 27th of [July] occurred the scalping of Jane McCrea which quickly crystallized all the misgivings and resentments against the English" (482). It follows that in the context of the Revolutionary War, the appearance of McCrea/Lucinda in a white robe represents American innocence, which was debauched by the Mohawks, who were allies of the British army.

The significance of whiteness, however, is not limited to the American innocence; rather, it comes to represent civilization and enlightenment. While the black goddess of the prison ship is America's mother country, Manco Capac's lover named Oella comes to represent the Republican mother. According to Linda Kerber, "the

Republican Mother's life was dedicated to the service of civic virtue: she educated her sons for it, she condemned and corrected her husband's lapses from it."[16] Manco Capac admires Oella's ability to teach "the virgin race" "domestic joys to prize" (II 583–84); also, she cherishes their son, Rocha; and after Manco Capac confesses anxiety regarding his mission to bring civilization to the Peruvian tribes, she encourages him, saying, "Think not . . . my steps would part." Significantly, she is introduced as the first person to engage in spinning spindle in "Hesperia": "she, the first in all Hesperia, fed / The turning spindle with the twisting thread; / The woof, the shuttle follow'd her command, / Till various garments grew beneath her hand" (499–502). Among the various garments, a "vesture white" is made especially for Manco Capac as "[t]he sacred emblem of returning peace":

> Blest with the ardent hope, her sprightly mind
>
> A vesture white had for the prince design'd;

[16] For women's experience in late eighteenth- century America, see Norton's *Liberty's Daughters* and "The Evolution of White Women's Experience in Early America," 593–619, Lewis 689–721, Bloch's "American Feminine Ideals in Transition" and "The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary America," 37–58. For the philosophical background of the concept of the Republican Mother, see Karber and Zagarri. Also, Karber astutely recognizes that "For one woman, Republican Motherhood might mean an extension of vistas; for another it could be stifling" (205); in this respect, Knott explores "an alternative female voice between the limitations of patriarchal discourses and republican motherhood and the sexual restrictions of women's rights discourses" (428); for more specific discussion, see 425–56.

And here she seeks the wool to web the fleece,

The sacred emblem of returning peace. (II 507–10)

Moreover, Figure 3 shows Manco Capac imparting some knowledge or lessons to almost naked people; we come to understand that this white vesture represents enlightenment or civilization. Importantly, however, Oella is well aware of the effect of her white garment, saying, "Quick shall my ready hand two garments weave, / Whose sunny whiteness shall the tribe deceive; / Thus clad, their homage shall secure our sway / And hail us children of the god of day" (II 609–12). She acknowledges that her act of weaving is not divine but deceptive; the "sunny whiteness" to lead the tribe to hail this couple "children of the god of day" is nothing but the product of her act of fabrication.

Intriguingly, the imagery of a fleece of wool that Oella begins spinning is also scattered in *The Columbiad*, similar to "a scaly nation." Considering that to trace the imagery of a scaly nation is to draw the map of Barlow's America, when tracing the thread of the imagery of a fleece of wool, what kind of texture emerges? Like a scaly nation, the figure of fleece is employed four times, as in the following scenes: Oella's clothes-making (Book II); the early English colonization in Chesapeake (Book IV); the Battle of Bunker Hill in the Revolutionary War (Book V); and the psalm of peace sung

by the poet looking over all of New England in the post-Revolutionary era (Book VIII). Like a scaly nation, to trace the imagery of a fleece of wool requires the Pan-American perspective because it begins with Oella in Peru and ends with the poet in New England. Moreover, aside from Oella's instance, the other three examples of fleece imagery are mentioned based on the episode of the Golden Fleece, and America is juxtaposed with Colchis. For instance, the second mention of fleece confirms the early English colonization: "Your viewless capes, broad Chesapeak [sic], unfold, / And show your promised Colchis, fleeced with gold. / No plundering squadron your new Jason brings; / No pirate demigods nor hordes of kings / From shore to shore a faithless miscreant steers, / To steal a maid and leave a sire in tears" (Book IV 271–76). Here, the poet promises the fleece's protection. The third example of fleece, however, suggests that American golden fleece was stolen during the Revolutionary War: "So Leda's Twins from Colchis raped the Fleece, / And brought the treasure to their native Greece" (Book V 693–94). However, reading this part in context makes it clear that "Leda's Twins" refers to Marquis de Lafayette and Tadeusz Kościuszko, who engaged in the war and sided with America; therefore, it follows that the Golden Fleece that Leda's Twins stole is none other than "freedom," as implied by the following lines, which continue: "Here

move the Strangers [Lafayette and Kościuszko], here in freedom's cause"; and, indeed, both men devoted themselves to the cause of freedom in their countries—the French Revolution and Kościuszko Uprising, the latter of which was the rebellion by the Polish–Lithuanian force against Russian occupation. Indeed, "Freedom" is the most significant motif in *The Columbiad*. Barlow invokes the tradition of the epic in Book I, but he indicates his attempt to carry out a new kind of epic: "Almighty Freedom! give me venturous song . . . [I] Invoke no miracle, no Muse but thee [Freedom]" (23–30). This method of invocation (with "no miracle, no Muse") suggests a departure from traditional epics, including the *Iliad,* the *Aeneid*, or *Paradise Lost*.[17] The figure of fleece is thus connected with imagery crucial to *The Columbiad*: freedom.

Althoguh the plunder of fleece (or freedom) is positively described, the verb "rape" inevitably implies a negative nuance. As Tatsumi points out, if Cotton Mather rhetorically regards the witchcrafts and the governor Edmund Andros as those who "plunder," "invade," and "rape" the community and grasps them as a "foreign power," "The Declaration of Independence" inherits such a rhetoric—using the terms of

[17] Pearce puts Barlow's *The Columbiad* at the dawn of the American epic that leads to Whitman's *Song of Myself*, Pound's *The Cantos*, Crain's *The Bridge*, and Williams' *Paterson* in the point of his "impossible task—writing an epic without the sort linear, form-endowing narrative argument which takes its substance and its very life from the hero, the supra-human being, at its center" (60–61).

"plunder," "invade," and "rape"—for a critique of George III (306). It would not be difficult to suppose that Barlow also inherits this rhetoric, consciously or unconsciously, given his sympathy with the Republicanism and his close relationship with Jefferson. Of particular importance is that Barlow's "foreign power" is ascribed not only to "Leda's Twins"—Lafayette and Kościuszko, but also to Medea, wearing a white robe and, significantly, turning out to be a traitor.

Medea's act is featured in the final case. Employing this imagery, Barlow warns the audience against loss of it: he first says, "Think not, my friends, the patriot's task is done. / Or Freedom safe, because the battle's won" (Book VIII 79–80), then foregrounds "The Dragon thus, that watch'd the Colchian fleece, / Foil'd the fierce warriors of wide-plundering Greece" (95–96), presenting the scene where the dragon is forced to sleep by "blue vapors," "sounds melodious," and a "settling tremor" (121–23). "[T]he sly Priestess" and "her opiate spell" makes him fall into sleep as illustrated in Figure 4:

> But the sly Priestess brings her opiate spell,
>
> Soft charms that hush the triple hound of hell,
>
> Bids Orpheus tune his all enchanting lyre.

And join to calm the guardian's sleepless ire. (Book VIII)

Apparently, her opiate spell resonates with Japhia's war poetry, as presented in Dwight's *The Conquest*, in that its "soft charms" "hush the triple hound of hell" and "calm the guardian's sleepless ire." But this is not true in this part. As a result of the dragon's sleep, and "Flusht at the sight the pirates seize the spoil. / And ravaged Colchis rues the insidious toil." Despite this, Figure 4 illustrates the priestess in a white robe, like Oella and Lucinda, and brings about neither innocence nor enlightenment, but a crisis of freedom by her betrayal for her father and country. In fact, Barlow presents Medea as a person who "quit her native tribe," but "never share / The crimes and sufferings of the Colchian fair" (Book IV 283–84). If Barlow inherits the rhetoric of a "foreign power," he detects it within the community.

The Columbiad is replete with dilemma and paradox. The scaly nations represent expectation for prosperity and anxiety about degeneration; the golden fleece signals promise for its fulfilment and warning of its loss; also, the imagery of whiteness embodies not only innocence that can be raped but also enlightenment that can deceive and rape. Such eyes come to lead to paradoxical conclusion that the foreign power dwells within the community.

Figures

Fig. 1: "Cruelty Presided over the Prison Ship," Book VI, *The Columbiad*.

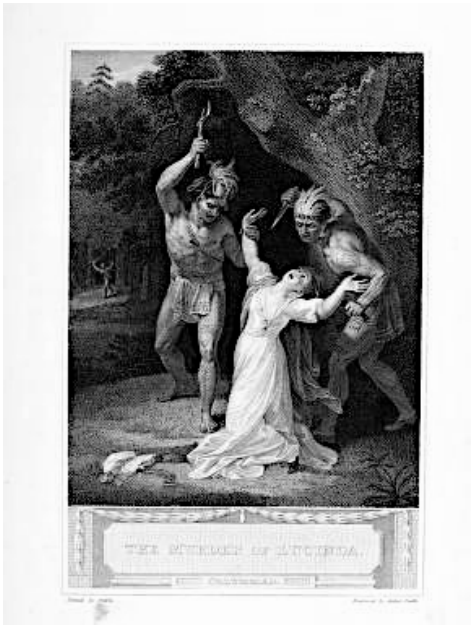

Fig. 2: "The Murder of Lucinda," Book VI, *The Columbiad*.

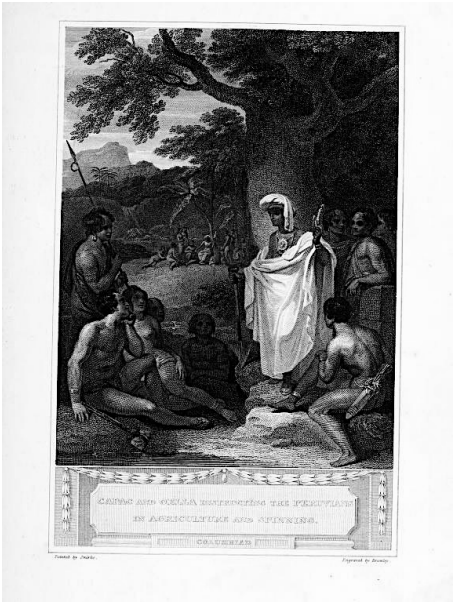

Fig. 3: Capac and Oella Instructing the Peruvians in Agriculture and Spinning," Book II, *The Columbiad*.

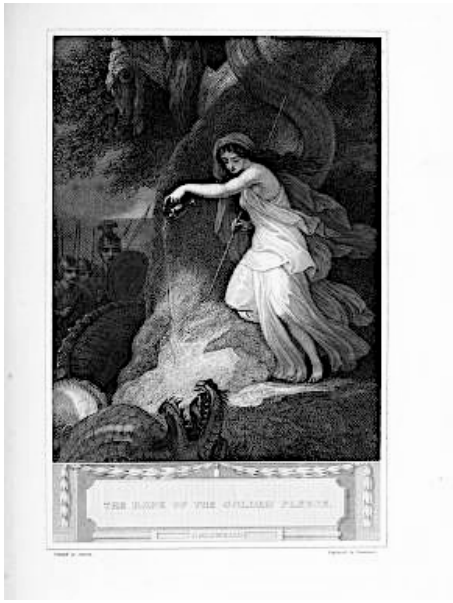

Fig. 4: "The Rape of the Golden Fleece," Book VIII, *The Columbiad*.

CODA

Noah's Ark and Beyond

This dissertation will conclude by drawing attention to Noah Webster. Although he is famous for being the father of the American dictionary, this last part will reposition him as the last of the epicists; a remembrancer of the American epic in the age of the Connecticut Wits.

In 1758 in Hartford, Noah Webster was born as the fifth and youngest child to Mercy Steele Webster and Noah Webster Senior, the descendent of John Webster, who had come to Massachusetts Bay Colony in the early 1630s. Noah Webster Senior was an ordinary farmer, and the manner in which Noah was raised remains obscure. In 1772, he informed his father that he would go to college. Due to financial problems, his father first hesitated, but finally he agreed and Noah started preparing for examinations. In 1774, he applied to Yale and was accepted. "Yale introduced Noah Webster," Rollins states, "to the Enlightenment" (*The Long Journey of Noah Webste*r 15), although he did not go through about two years of actual on-campus study because of the breakout of the Revolutionary War. After graduation from Yale, he failed to find long-term

employment, changing jobs and residences several times. He lived in Glastobury (1779), Hartford (1779–80), Litchfield (1780), Sharon (1780–81), and Goshen (1781–83). In 1783, he returned to Hartford, where he enjoyed the Friendly Club. He set out on tour along the Atlantic seaboard for publicity in 1785, but he came back to Hartford again in 1788 and resided there until 1793. After the experience of conversion in 1808, he began concentrating on his mission to compile a dictionary. In 1825 he finished it, publishing it in 1828 as *An American Dictionary of the English Language*.[1]

Scholars have pointed out Webster's significant transition in the 1780s and 1790s. "By reading philosophers like Rousseau during the last years of the Revolution and the first years of the peace," Bynack states, "Webster added to this zeal for democracy a belief in the innate goodness of human nature" (101). After the 1780s, however, it gradually changed. Webster's *Sketches of American Policy*, published in 1785, "encompassed two very different impulses" (Rollins, *The Long Journey of Noah Webster* 46); his belief on a revolutionary ideology and his Federalist tendency to order and rule. Considering several mob insurgences, including Shays' Rebellion, the

[1] As for the biography of Webster, Emily Elizabeth Fowler Ford's *Notes on the Life Webster* (1912) and Harry R. Warfel's *Noah Webster: Schoolmaster to America* (1936) are classical; Richard M. Rollins's *The Long Journey of Noah Webster* (1980) is an insightful and comprehensive one; Richard J. Moss's *Noah Webster* (1984) is a concise literary biography.

Whiskey Rebellion, and the French Revolution, Rollins goes on to say, "The event of the 1780s and 1790s had destroyed Webster's optimistic view of man and replaced it with a belief that man was innately evil and depraved" (*The Long Journey of Noah Webster* 80).

Importantly, however, the 1780s witnessed Webster's commitment to the Hartford Friendly Club with the members of the Connecticut Wits. Although he did not participate in the composition of *The Anarchiad* directly, his diary illustrates that he actively joined this club, discussing and exchanging several topics in detail. "At evening attend Club," Webster records in his diary, "converse upon the great question What are the means of improving & establishing the Union of the State" (January 25, 1785; *The Autobiographies of Noah Webster* 208); or, "At evening attend club, question, whether Polygamy is prohibited by the Law of nature" (February 8, 1785; 208); or, "Attend Club. Converse on this subject, 'Whether the being 3 attributes of a God are discoverable by the light of nature' (March 15, 1785; 209). Thus, his changed attitude, found in his later writings, can be derived not only from the external situations of the 1780s and 1790s, but also from his intellectual intercourses in Hartford. "Let us, then," he writes in his magazine *American Museum* in 1787, "be of one heart, and one mind. . . .

Let us remember our emblem, the twisted serpent, and its emphatical motto, UNITE, OR DIE" ("Address to All Federalists" 385), and also notes, "A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF CANNOT STAND. Our national existence depends as much as ever upon our union: and ITS CONSOLIDATION MOST ASSUREDLY INVOLVES OUR PROSPERITY, FELICITY, AND SAFETY" (385). The imagery of these statements closely echoes *The Anarchiad*'s cry "YE LIVE UNITED, OR DIVIDE DIE!"

What matters here is that such memory of fraternity before 1800 is inevitably registered in his masterpiece *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, published in 1828, because it contains quotations not only from the Bible, Milton, Dryden, Pope, and Johnson, but also from Dwight, Trumbull, Hopkins, Humphreys, and Barlow. In this sense, Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* emerges as the last place where the Connecticut Wits' words ultimately reach, even though they reach in a fragmented form, and Webster himself appears as the last of the remembrancers in the age of the Connecticut Wits.

And yet, his life until the publication of *An American Dictionary of the English Language* was never stable. The journey from a child in a Connecticut backcountry farm to the father of the American dictionary consists of a farewell from his father,

poverty after graduation, days of unemployment, failure in the practice of law, severe criticism by political opponents, and a split with friends, which made him suffer heavily. Nonetheless, as a consequence of such deep depression and anxiety, he came to gain the experience of conversion in 1808, and thereby recognized that he could compile a dictionary as his vocation. The pages that follow will trace Webster's dramatic life with reference to etymology and an attempt to read *An American Dictionary of the English Language* from the perspective that locates Webster as a crucial member of the Connecticut Wits.

1. The Rise and Fall of the Federalist Age

As already noted, the 1780s and 1790s witnessed the transition from an optimistic Webster to a pessimistic Webster. Yet, along with such a transition, Webster came to build his reputation as the "American school master" (qtd. in Rollins, *The Long Journey of Noah Webster* 48). After his other masterpiece, *Speller, Part I of The Grammatical Institute of the English Language*, published in 1783, succeeded in drawing public attention, Webster began a publicity tour along the Atlantic Coast in the hopes of building a reputation and, more importantly, interacting with the founding fathers, or

intellectuals, of the time: George Washington, Thomas Paine, David Rittenhouse, Benjamin Rush, David Ramsay, Aaron Burr, Samuel Lathem Mitchill, Roger Sherman, Simeon Baldwin, Timothy Pickering, and John Dickinson. One of the most important topics he discussed was his idea of a "national language." The principle idea was that a national language is necessary for a national government.[2] Such a view can be captured in his *Dissertations on the English Language*, published in 1789. "As an independent nation, our honor requires us to have a system of our own, in language as well as government," Webster claims, "Great Britain, whose children we are, and whose language we speak, should no longer be our standard; for the taste of her writers is already corrupted, and her language on the decline. (*Dissertations on the English Language* 20). Of course, this vision does not originate from Webster; he was indebted to such predecessors as Samuel Johnson, Robert Murray, Thomas Kenrick, Thomas Sheridan, and Joseph Priestle,[3] or the Berlin Academy in Prussia,[4] or John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Humane Understanding* (1690) and John Horne Tooke's *Diversions*

[2] For national language mission, see Rollins, "Words as Social Control" 415–30, Weinstein 85–108, Bynack 99–114.

[3] For Johnson's influence on Webster, see Landau 217–29.

[4] Bynack explains that it started with the work of the Academy's President, Louis Moreau Maupertuis's *Reflexions philosophiques sur I'origine des langues, et la signification des mots* (1748), and proceeded through Johann David Michaelis' *Dissertation on the Influence of Opinions Language and of Language on Opinions* (1760, the first English edition in 1769), to Johann Gottfried *Herder's On the Origin of Language* (1770), and efforts of this group contributes to a line of proto-Romantic nature of Germany's Enlightenment (104–05)

of Purley (1798). Moreover, a significant predecessor in America was Benjamin Franklin. According to Looby, Franklin and Webster met in person, discussed spelling reform, and shared and agreed on certain ideas and interests (7); in fact, Webster dedicated his *Dissertations on the English Language* to Franklin. The "American schoolmaster" succeeded in benefiting from the intellectual tradition of the eighteenth-century enlightenment.

However, criticism toward Webster inevitably increased as his pessimistic attitude continued and as the political conflict between the Federalists and the Republicans deteriorated. According to Rollins' collection, Thomas Greenleaf and Benjamin Franklin Bache called Webster a "Dunghill cock of faction," a "pusillanimous, half-begotten, self-dubbed patriot," the "most learned stultus," a "self-exalted pedagogue," a "quack," and a "mortal and incurable lunatic." English writer William Cobbett cried, "Wonderful Noah! Amazing prophet!" invoking Webster a "prophetical, political, and dictatorial newsman," "spiritual viper," "base creature," "rancorous villain," "contemptible creature," "political hypocrite," "demagogue coxcomb," "this prostitute wretch," "disappointed pedant," and "a most gross calumniator, a great fool, and a bare-faced liar" (Rollins, *The Long Journey of Noah*

Webster 84). It is hardly surprising that such attacks heavily burdened Webster both mentally and physically.

In addition, the split with Joel Barlow definitely had a great influence on his mental state. As already noted in Chapter 4, dealing with the friendship between Barlow and Lemuel Hopkins, Webster severely accused Barlow of his political and religious conversion in the 1790s, calling him "a rude, insulting, dogmatical egotist" ("Letter to Joel Barlow, on November 16, 1798," 194). For Webster, who cherished the memories of his days at Yale and Hartford, and thereby established himself as one of the Federalist intellectuals, Barlow's conversion into a Jeffersonian Republican was nothing but proof of a traitor, and, significantly, must have been an ominous sign of the destruction of their friendship.

Thus, the sense of fraternity cultivated at Yale in the 1760s and 1770s and at the Hartford Friendly Club in the 1780s had gradually disappeared along with his patriotic, optimistic aspiration. However, since 1800, the conception of compiling the American dictionary came into reality, and he came to carry out this mission in 1825. The next section will examine two points necessary to interpret *An American Dictionary of the English Language*; that is, Webster's etymological ideas and experience of conversion

in 1808.

2. An Etymologist Experienced Conversion: The Year of 1808

First, what should be kept in mind is that Webster, as an etymologist, had not been able to avoid harsh criticism and underestimation by Laird, Krapp, Murray, and Mencken.[5] To borrow Joseph Friend's words, Webster was "confused the jungle of historical and comparative linguistics" (*Development* 17). According to Rollins, Webster's method of studying etymology and its principles were as follows. "His method was quite simple: walking around his circular table, he examined each of the dictionaries of twenty languages for external similarities. If the number of letters and basic structure of a word in one language was similar to that of another, he assumed that they carried the same meaning or meant something quite similar" (*The Long Journey of Noah Webster* 128). Like his vision of a national language, his study of etymology was the effect of its development in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[6]

[5] As for the twentieth-century reception of Webster as an etymologist, see Rollins, *The Long Journey of Noah Webster* 128–30.

[6] Bivens enumerates the following studies that Webster could share: Edward Lhuyd's *Archaeologia Britannica* (1707), Sir William Jones's address correlating Sanskrit with Latin, Greek, and the Germanic languages to the Royal Asiatic Society of Calcutta (1786), Rasmus Rask's *Investigations on the Origin of the Old Norse or Icelandic Speech* (1818, translated in 1830), Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Grammatik, 2nd ed*. (1822, untranslated in 1843), Karl Verner's "An exception to the first sound shift" (1875) (2–3).

But, Laid claims that in comparison to contemporary American etymologists such as Thomas Jefferson, Webster, as an etymologist, could not avoid being less qualified (3–15). And yet, Rollins astutely points out, the reason why Webster's etymology is different from other etymologists is that he puts his principle in a belief in the Bible (*The Long Journey of Noah Webster* 130). According to Rollins, Webster had concluded his etymology by 1809, and since then, he persistently spent about ten more years collecting and compiling a number of words appropriate for his etymological conclusion ("Words as Social Control" 422).

What brought his etymological conclusion and drove him to keep up with such a long-term mission? It was likely his experience of conversion in 1808. In his letter to Thomas Dawes on December 20, 1808, Webster describes the moment as follows: "My mind was suddenly arrested, without any previous circumstance of the time to draw it to this subject and as it were fastened to the awakening and upon my own conduct." Then, he "closed my books, yielded to the influence, which could not be resisted or mistaken, and was led by a spontaneous impulse to repentance, prayer, and entire submission and surrender of myself to my maker and redeemer"; he also explains the sense of submission that followed as "a spontaneous impulse to repentance, prayer, and

entire submission and surrender of myself" was no less than "cheerful" and brought about "peace of mind, which the world can neither give nor take away" (Webster, "Letter to Thomas Dawes, on December 20th, 1808" 45).

What matters more is Webster's selection of the biblical text when he states that, "I now began to understand and relish many parts of the scriptures, which before appeared mysterious and unintelligible, or repugnant to my natural pride" (46). He goes on to say:

> For instance, I was remarkably struck with the 26th verse of John, 14th, 'But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, *he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you*'—a passage which I had often read without realizing its import—in short my view of the scriptures, of religion, of the whole Christian scheme of salvation, and of God's moral government, are very much changed, and my heart yields with delight and confidence to whatever appears to be the divine will. (Webster, "Letter to Thomas Dawes, on December 20th, 1808" 46; italics original and an underline added)

Why does Webster choose the above text? The reason for this must have lied in the term "remembrance." The reason for attracting Webster is because the italicized sentence problematizes not only the fact that "you" shall learn and gain "all things," but rather the awareness of "your remembrance" *per se*. Unfortunately, Webster does not recount specifically here what he "began to understand and relish": however, if "remembrance" was one of the significant elements to catch Webster's attention when rereading this part of the scripture, this letter has the possibility of inscribing the moment when he recognized himself as a remembrancer.

Moreover, his etymological conclusion is found in the letter written on July 25, 1809. What matters here is that this letter's correspondent is the same as the above letter describing the conversion experience: Thomas Dowes. Thus, Webster's narration of his experience of conversion and the writing of his etymological conclusion are connected. In addition, this experience of conversion must have functioned as an indispensable element for his compilation of a dictionary. Significantly, in this letter, Webster states: "I have accumulated such a mass of materials for a dictionary, materials which no other person could use to advantages, that I think it my duty, as it is my pleasure, to prosecute the work; provided I have health to sustain the labor, and property to defray the

expenses, of the compilation" (Webster, "Letter to Dawes, on July 25th, 1809" 69). Hence, this letter discloses his sense of "duty" toward a lexicographical mission.

As a result of about twenty years of dedication, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* eventually reached completion. The last section will reconsider the significance of the fact that this epic dictionary partly consists of the words of the Connecticut Wits.

3. Reading Webster's *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828)

As previously noted, the first edition of *An American Dictionary of the English Language* quotes the words of the Connecticut Wits as part of example sentences. Featuring Dwight, Trumbull, Humphreys, Barlow, and Hopkins, a diagram presents 1) the number of quotations, 2) examples of the entries, 3) meanings of the entry words, and 4) example sentences.

First, the number of quotations reveals Webster's attitude toward each member of the Connecticut Wits. The number of quotations in the case of Humphreys and Hopkins is limited to just two, while Trumbull is 18, Dwight is 21, and Barlow reaches 43. The number is explicitly biased. As already mentioned, Webster was broken up with

Barlow in the 1790s; nonetheless, what the amount of the number of quotations discloses is the fact that Webster's attachment to Barlow had not necessarily been lost. In addition, the fact that each entry captures each poet's essence deserves attention. For instance, the entries that quote Dwight's sentence are "heaven," "riot," "virtue," and "wretchedness," which closely relate to religion and morality, and, by doing so, deliberately illustrate the figure of Dwight as a poet, a theologist, and the 8th president of Yale College. Trumbull's third entry, "truant," and its example sentence, "While *truant* Jove, in infant pride, / Play'd barefoot on Olympus' side" (italics original), the description "*truant* Jove," in particular, vividly grasps his satirical attitude toward the established cord and mocking manner. Moreover, Humphreys' second entry, "pomp," deserves his characteristics known as "Washington's beloved" and was almost always accompanied with the first president. Its example sentence, "Hearts formed for love, but doom'd in vain to glow / In prison'd *pomp*, and weep in splendid woe" (italics original) appropriately shows his skilled ability as an elegiac poet in the discourse of love, woe, and fraternity.

Furthermore, we must examine whether or not these entry terms are abstract nouns or proper nouns. For instance, Dwight's entries belong to the former in terms of

"heaven," "riot," "virtue," and "wretchedness," while Barlow's entries, such as "Hesperian," "Lautu" (which means "A band of cotton, twisted and worn on the head of the Inca of Peru, as a badge of royalty"), and "Brazilian" are closely connected with a proper noun. Moreover, the reason for these entries dwells in Barlow's *The Columbiad*, as this epic features South America, Manco Capac, and Zamor in Peru, as already discussed in Chapter 6. Thus, it becomes clear not only that Webster was familiar with *The Columbiad*, but also that he highly appreciates Barlow's Pan-American perspective and incorporates it into his own "American dictionary" as an indispensable element.

If, when Webster decides to employ the adjective "American," a patriotic ambition to seek American uniqueness different from the old world, it is quite understandable that he thought it insufficient to quote only from the Bible and English writers. The problem is that, even though one dictionary dealing with one language is motivated by an aspiration to comprehensively grasp the whole of one language, it is highly impossible to carry out in a practical sense. What one can do is collect representative elements that constitute the whole to appropriately put them in order and configure the system. In this sense, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* deserves the name "Noah's Ark," into which the fragmented lines of the Connecticut

Wits that Webster singles out are loaded as representative elements that constitute Noah's Ark. It goes without saying that such a collection could not be carried out without the memory of fraternity in the days of Yale and Hartford. As the last of a remembrance of the age of the Connecticut Wits, Webster lets his American dictionary sail for the world.

Then, "Noah's Ark" traversed the ocean and witnessed the opening of a new world. In 1812, Webster moved to Amherst and participated in the foundation of Amherst College, coming to have a dream to impart education to other countries. Such a vision was intimately connected with the contemporary sentiment as reflected on the second great awakening and the rise of missionaries in the early nineteenth century. Indeed, in the same year, 1812, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the foundation Dwight was involved with as one of the founding fathers, sent its first missionaries. This presumably resonated with John O'Sullivan's slogan "Manifest Destiney," as a flow of missionaries reached the shores of East Asia in the nineteenth century (Kohiyama 139–62). Similarly, Webster's dictionaries also traversed the seas, and one of them arrived in Japan at the end of the Tokugawa regime through the early years of the Meiji era. As Hayakawa and Jacobowitz claim, Meiji intellectuals

such as Hisoka Maejima, Kanzo Uchimura, and Arinori Mori were greatly influenced by Webster's works (Hayakawa 222–33, and 279–89; Jacobowitz 101–10). Among them, Yukichi Fukuzawa also writes about his enthusiasm regarding Webster's dictionary. "Manjiro Nakahama and I purchased Webster's dictionary, respectively; I was so impressed; I felt as if it were an unsurpassed treasure in the world" (477).

Certainly, Webster's later life was full of disappointment, anxiety, paranoia, and despair; yet, it would not be difficult to imagine that as the crystallization of his enthusiasm and aspiration for collection of words, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* captured the attention of Fukuzawa, who similarly had in mind enthusiasm and aspiration in Japan, and emerged as "an unsurpassed treasure" and an indispensable key to open the door for the future. What Webster, as a Connecticut Wit and "the last of a remembrancer" teaches is the fact that, even though this is nothing but one dictionary, its unlimited aspiration irresistibly fascinates people who live in different places and times, and who speak different languages. *An American Dictionary of the English Language* inscribes not only Webster's excitement when he first touched the intellectual tradition of Enlightenment at Yale, his memory of fraternity as cultivated with the ambitious and quite gifted young friends, and his impatience for its

disenchantment, but also his sense of mission toward boundless aspiration. As such, we can see here his American dictionary emerge, another American epic in the age of the Connecticut Wits.

Appendix

Poet (the number of entries)	Entry	Meaning	Quotation
Dwight (21)	HEAVEN	7: The Supreme Power; the Sovereign of heaven; God; as prophets sent by *heaven*.	"Shun the impious profaneness which scoffs at the institution of *heaven*."
	RIOT	To banquet; to live in luxury; to enjoy.	"How base is the ingratitude which forgets the benefactor, while it is *rioting* on the benefit!"
	VIRTUE	3: Moral goodness; the practice of moral duties and the abstaining from vice, or a conformity of life and conversation to the moral law. In this sense, *virtue* may be, and in many instances must be, distinguished from *religion*. The practice of moral duties merely from motives of convenience, or from compulsion, or from regard to reputation, is *virtue*, as distinct from *religion*. The practice of moral duties from sincere love to God and his laws, is virtue and religion.	"*Virtue* is nothing but voluntary obedience to truth."
	WRETCHEDNESS	Extreme misery or unhappiness, either from want or sorrow; as the *wretchedness* of poor mendicants.	"The prodigal brought nothing to his father but his rags and *wretchedness*."
Trumbull (18)	CATCH	9: To receive something passing.	"The swelling sails no more / *Catch* the soft airs and wanton in the sky."

	GLIMMER	2: To shine faintly.	"to give a feeble light, / Mild evening *glimmered* on the lawn."
	TRUANT	Idle; wandering from business; loitering; as a *truant* boy.	"While *truant* Jove, in infant pride, / Play'd barefoot on Olympus' side."
Humphreys (2)	AURELIAN	Like or pertaining to Aurelian.	
	POMP	2: Show of magnificence; parade; splendor.	"Hearts formed for love, but doom'd in vain to glow / In prison'd pomp, and weep in splendid woe."
Barlow (43)	DIVULSION	The act of pulling or plucking away; a rending asunder.	"And dire *divulsions* shook the changing world."
	BRAZILIAN	Pertaining to Brazil; as, *Brazilian* strand.	
	BREEZE	To blow gently; a word common among seamen.	"For now the breathing airs, from ocean born, / *Breeze* up the bay, and lead the lively morn."
	HESPERIAN	An Inhabitant of a western country.	
	LAUTU	A band of cotton, twisted and worn on the head of the Inca of Peru, as a badge of royalty.	
Hopkins (2)	PRECATIVE / PRECATORY	Suppliant; beseeching.	
	FOREDETERMINE	To decree beforehand.	

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