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2001

Articulāte Vol. VI

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Articulāte

a journal of literary and cultural criticism

To pronounce distinctly; to utter, give utterance to; to express in words.
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During the review process, all information identifying the author is removed from the essay and the essays are read as anonymous works of writing. After all submissions have been read, the editorial board meets to discuss and choose the essays to be published. The identities of the authors are not revealed until all decisions have been made.

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Initial submissions should be in hard copy. Those writers selected for publication will be asked to submit an electronic manuscript of their work. Please submit your essay with a cover sheet including your name and Slayter box. The journal accepts submissions at any time during the academic year.

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Nota bene: Cover definition comes from the online edition of the Oxford English Dictionary.
William Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing, ostensibly a romantic comedy about falling in love Renaissance-style, does in fact make much out of its own language. Nowhere do language and wit, or the ability to communicate more heavily into Shakespeare’s characterization than in the lovely Verona of the play. Thus, the topic of wit in the play has received its due attention. So, too, has the topic of gender difference been addressed. These areas—language and gender—seem to be inseparable in Much Ado About Nothing. Many scholars have argued for this connection: Carol Cook makes clear Beatrice’s appropriation of masculine privilege in speech through her use of wit; Michael Friedman suggests that the marriage of Beatrice and Benedick figuratively and literally silences her; Harry Berger Jr. examines the views of Hero and Benedick concerning marriage and how those views are communicated through language. Two conclusions seem to be rather unanimous: one, ability in wit and language is the single key factor in the play which determines the character’s social rank and success within the hierarchy of Verona; and two, language is characterized as a phallic, penetrating force. Thus, Beatrice’s ability in wit—equaled only by Benedick—is in effect an act of appropriation of masculine privilege on her part.

In this essay, I intend to continue this interrogation of language as a signifier of gender difference; however, I use "difference" as indicating "distance"—the distance between the idealized masculine and feminine qualities as expressed in the positionality of Benedick and Beatrice, respectively. The language of the play closely allies Beatrice and Benedick in the opening scenes through common images and, more importantly, as removed from their respective gender codes. What follows in the action of the play is the deception of friends which eventually reveals the true feelings of each actor, leading to the marriage of the two. It is at this point that Cook argues for the affirmation of the "masculine ethos" by Beatrice and that Friedman suggests that Beatrice is "silenced" by marriage. I, however, would like to argue that, just as they are pushed into love by their friends, Beatrice and Benedick are pushed into gender codes by the spectre of marriage.

2 See especially Carol Cook, "The Sign and Semblance of Her Honor': Reading Gender Difference in Much Ado About Nothing," and Michael Friedman, "'Hush'd on Purpose to Grace Harmony': Wives and Silence in Much Ado About Nothing."
Benedick has a "good name" immediately identifies his situation with that of Claudio, who asked about Beatrice and Benedick seems to be taken from their hands. The two,situation with that of Claudio, who asked about Beatrice and Benedick's attempts to mitigate Beatrice's anguish. When Benedick refuses to kill Claudio for Beatrice, her frustration pours forth: "O that I were a man! What bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancor—O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market place" (IV.i.298-302). A few lines later, she explodes once more: "O that I were a man for my sake! or that I had any friend who would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into cursies, valor into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, into the sword from Benedick, the audience does not expect such a switch from anyone in the play. There are many problems with this analysis. For instance, Benedick's masculinity at the end of the play could possibly be characterized as hyper-masculinity; yet, it is not a masculinity that seems to be encouraged by the majority of the play. Rather, it is clearly a masculinity that is dictated by Beatrice. As for Beatrice, the question of whether she is silenced—as Michael Friedman claims—or not by marriage looms (351). And what, if any, role does the presence of deception figure into the play? Would Beatrice and Benedick be forced into new, uncomfortable gender roles if they had come to love on their own terms? Regardless of the answer to these questions, the gender role tension that occurs when Beatrice and Benedick are coupled remains.

Carol Cook also notes this tension in Beatrice, but reads this scene as key to understanding how the "masculine ethos" of Verona is affirmed by Beatrice's outburst. Cook calls the outburst an expression of "dogged, brutal, irrational masculinity which 'echoes the masculine revenge ethic voiced earlier" (196). I agree that Beatrice does, in fact, still appropriate male privilege by virtue of opposition to masculinity; there is no world elsewhere in this play—even their irony cannot create one, for it participates in the assumptions that shape Messina. (200)

Perhaps—but certainly Shakespeare, in allowing this gender tension to surface with the advent of marriage, challenges readers to question the assumptions which shape his or her world.
Although the Victorian women Anne C. Rose researched and included in her book, *Victorian America and the Civil War*, "were unusually affluent and accomplished," Rose remarked with surprise that so much of their work "was unpaid, and repetitive by virtue of rendering service rather than progressively in the sense of forwarding personal and public advancement" (70). This statement contradicts the assumption of many scholars that the Civil War afforded women the opportunity to leap "from their sphere" and become more integrated into the public, and typically male, realm (Massey 3). This notion of a more fully integrated public sphere coincides with the purported weakening of class and gender stratification, which many attributed to the increase of industrialization, as well as to other effects of the war. However, although northern women's participation in the public sphere increased during the Civil War, their participation was in many cases only an extension of their domestic ideologies, and therefore women were subject to the same regulations and restrictions of the domestic sphere.

Rather than view women's activities and involvement in the United States Sanitary Commission as proto-feminist labor (as the majority of that labor was still unpaid), several of the authors represented in this essay view these efforts as merely extensions of their antebellum organizations, which were usually rooted in evangelical societies. While the majority of northern women were content to knit socks for local women's groups or work as volunteer female superintendents at Sanitary Commission hospitals, members of the Woman's National Loyal League, urged for more political involvement on behalf of women. These women rejected the Sanitary Commission's call for patriotic sacrifice and hoped to use the war as a springboard for the advancement of women's rights. The dispassionate and ideological positions of the war, middle class northern women, made manifest by their involvement in these two very different patriotic organizations, the United States Sanitary Commission and the Woman's National Loyal League, signal the extent to which the war served as a catalyst for the total war of the war was not a total homogenizing or unifying force among them.

I. "Darling Is Ideal" - Separate Sphere Ideology and Women's Notions of Domestic Patriotism

Michael Pernam explained that "women's ability to assume new and burdensome responsibilities as breadwinners, "household" was vital to the war effort. "When they did this," Pernam continued, "women were stepping outside the 'woman's sphere' to which nineteenth-century men had consented them" (246). During the reign of Victoria, 1837-1901, both American and British cultures espoused another sphere, which described domestic life as a sacred place, full of pure, womanly virtue. This separation of the public (work) and the private (home) spheres emphasized the purifying influence of the home, as sanctified by women, on men who became subject to the corruption of business and industry. While industrialization took men away from the home, "women began to reign supreme over the day-to-day activities of the family" (Venet 3).

In a diary entry from January 1862, Caroline Richards, a recent graduate of a small girls' seminary in New York remarked that "It is wonderful that young men who have brilliant prospects before them at home, will offer themselves upon the altar of their country" (139). While this remark speaks volumes about the sacrificial language of war and the indoctrination of sacrifice into a national and homogenous ideal, the remarkable aspect of this diary lies in the juxtaposition of ideas. For instance, the next sentence contains "Carrie's" description of her new patriotic stationary, with all the colors of the flag. This juxtaposition suggests women like Carrie viewed their own patriotism, this case in the form of stationary, as parallel to the male sacrifice.

In many ways, Caroline Cowles Richards's diary is representative of what it proclaims to describe: "village life in America." As a girl of twenty, Carrie enjoyed attending prayer meetings, and other community activities, but was more interested in the social aspects of these functions than anything else. While her diary is full of large events such as dedications of public buildings, dedication and both of Lincoln's Inaugural addresses, it is also full of Mrs. Grundy, the infamously caricatured upright of Victorian restraint and propriety. Richards's diary is a lament for a "back room" society, as she is with local events and gossip— at times the two become indistinguishable.

While this diary emphasizes seemingly private events, it is important because, like the period, it records the emphasis women placed on the sanctity of the home. The diaries of Samuel and Rachel Cormanys also emphasized this sanctity. In contrast to Richards's diary, however, the Cormanys' stake in the war became more central due to Samuel's enlistment.

The diaries began during the courtship of Samuel and Rachel while at Otterbein and culminated with Samuel's return at the end of the Civil War, though perhaps the most interesting roles these diaries were describing their home. Within five days' worth of entries, Samuel only refers to Rachel by name once; otherwise she is "Darling" (124-5). In their entries, both Comanys emphasize the spiritual link of their marriage, which is a thread that runs throughout the entire diary, as devotion to spiritual growth and harmony. Samuel represents Rachel as "darling," and writes elites into the "system of marriage," while she in turn "commence the bonnet and dressmaking" of their marital "business" (135). Interestingly, Samuel works with his brother-in-law in the front of the store while Rachel and Lydia work hidden away and unseen in the private realm. After Samuel enlist in 1862, Rachel is rather more even completely the language of confinement.

During his wartime involvement, Rachel does not enter the public sphere, but continues sewing for others, in the form of stationary, as parallel to the male sacrifice. For instance, several of these societies eventually fed into the channel of the Sanitary Commission, "nourished the self-sacrifice of the army," or rather, the kind of organized patriotism practiced by the Sanitary Commission, "the Sanitary Commission became the amalgamation of local patriotism, through which beneficence" flowed into the army, and other members of the Sanitary Commission were concerned, this self-sacrificing (and centralizing) patriotism was admired for women's participation in the national "beneficence" received nationally by the Commission as well as their hesitations about doing so.

Women's participation in aid, or charity work, was not a phenomenon specific to the Civil War. As Elizabeth Cady Stanton noted, "women... were accustomed to doing charitable work. Before the war they had participated widely in religious rituals, in Bible and track societies, in charity fund-raising on behalf of orphaned children and "domestic agitation," all of which were root to virtuous ideas of domestic femininity (Venet 101). Mary Livermore described her time as a leader of the Commission as a "variety of experience not often gained by a woman" (8). Patriotism, and specifically the kinds of organized patriotism practiced by the Sanitary Commission, "nourished the self-sacrifice of the army, and stimulated the collection of "Federal supplies and to brave the horrors and hardships of hospital life" (Livermore 109). As far as Mary Livermore and other female leaders concerned, this self-sacrificing (and centralizing) patriotism was preferred for women. As "the great channel, through which beneficence" flowed into the army, the Commission offered "equal opportunities for the lai's" aid societies and centralized the domestic work of knitting socks, sewing uniforms, etc. Much of this "beneficence" received nationally by the Commission was in fact unpaid, domestic labor.
In her memoir, Livermore argued that through this benevolence and self-sacrifice Northern women experienced, "the letters of cast and conventionalism [broke] its spell on me. Neither a politician, a priest, a partisan, a radical, Protestant and Catholic, and scraped lint, and rolled bandages, or made garments for the poorly clad soldiery" (111). Women who contributed their unpaid labor, all of which could be done in the privacy of their homes, or in the society of other "ladies," were truly patriotic. Livermore's statement does support the idea that they were truly a homogenized wartime experience, but also that it provided women with valuable experiences which they were able to exercise later on, towards the goal of enfranchisement. However, Livermore wrote her memoir in 1889, nineteen years after the 1870 appearance of the Fifteenth Amendment, which granted women the right to vote. Considering her retrospective lens, it is difficult to determine how deeply Livermore considered women's experiences at the Sanitary Commission as relevant to the enfranchisement movement.

Livermore linked the initial lack of male organization in the army and on the battlefield with the lack of women's organization in relief aid. The local and regional women's Relief Societies were directly connected to the Sanitary Commission and eventually became the "out of this chaos of individual benevolence and abounding patriotism" that the Sanitary Commission "finally emerged, with its carefully elaborated plans and marvelous system" (122). Women's patriotism and the women's sphere as complimentary and parallel to the male patriotism and the public sphere.

Yet, Livermore all but condemns the thousands of unknown women who disguised themselves as men in order to face combat during the war. She condescended a few notable exceptions such as Mrs. Katie Brownwell, who accompanied her husband to the Rhode Island Regiment into battle. When Mrs. Brownwell's husband was pronounced physically unfit for further service and discharged, she also sought a discharge and required with him to private life and domestic duty" (119). Thus, it was permissible for women to accompany their husbands to battle in order to serve as caretaker, though over all it was far better to act as a "ministering angel" and heal a sick one (120).

III. Ministering Angels—Breaking or Enforcing Boundaries?

In Louisa Mary Acott's (a former Civil War nurse) short story, "The Brothers," the role of the Northern Civil War nurse is nebulously defined. The short story opens with Miss Dane's chores as a seamstress, though we learn she is actually already a chauvinist for a dead soldier. Yet because of her abolitionist convictions, she views taking charge of a crazy rebel prisoner as pernicious because, as she tells the reader, "I am an aboli-

1 The above sentences are quoted within the text from Documents of the United States Sanitary Commission.

2 Massey and Ross both describe women nurses who regarded their situation as one requiring special stimulus. Also, Cornelia Hancock writes in a letter to her niece that "I am doing all a woman can do to help the war along, and, therefore I feel no responsibility [about not being able to read the newspapers]. If people take an interest in me because I am a heroine, it is a great mistake for I feel like anything but a heroine" (qtd. Ross 103). While statements such as these emphasize the very little these 98). Blackwell and Child's attempt to get out hesitation to the presentation of a challenge. Like its advance notices. Like the men also, she met with the reality head-on, without a whimper, and did her competent best to cope with it. (4)

According to Catton, then, Cornelia experienced a largely male reaction to the war; it could be assumed also that her response to the battlefield would be a largely "male" one, active, aggressive and un-flinch-

3 We also reveal the concern others felt about women's virtue. Therefore, while these women, according to Mary Livermore, learned to disregard class and creed resulting from the development of a shared channel for the patriotism of all women, women aboard this transport hospital did not wash their faces or that of the men they cared for. While not all hospitals provided such easy understand-

4 The sentences are quoted within the text from Documents of the United States Sanitary Commission.
works involving middle and upper-middle-class, re-
finned women in the war effort. These women experi-
enced the war differently than women laundresses or
cooks who took their orders from the Sanitary Com-
mission. During the Civil War, 5,600 women acted as
"Nurses" in Union hospitals, all of who were white
members of the middle class. However, according to
Elizabeth Leonard, 10,000 women worked in union
hospitals, two thirds of whom were working-class
white and black women (261). These working-class
women took the "rules that required contact with the
boily functions of strangers," which were deemed too
indecorous for the white "nurses" (Leonard 261). While superintendents such as Rebecca
Usher of Maine simply became acquainted with and
provided[s] sisterly or maternal companionship to
the men that surrounded them] the "other women"
served as cooks or laundresses, standing "there in the
steam all the time," doing the grueling menial labor.
Usher, as a member of the middle-class remained sepa-
rate even from the supervision of such work, as she
had no desire to stand with women in the steam
"arranging[ing] the work and seeing[ing] that it goes on well"
(259-258).

IV. Tempering the Ministering Angel of Mercy with the
Angel of Justice

Although this can only be a very limited discus-
sion of the radical women's movement as it continued
throughout the Civil War, it is important to note that
the goals of women's rights advocates such as Susan
B. Anthony and Elizabeth Leonard were almost in
direct opposition to those of Mary Livermore and
the Sanitary Commission. In May 1863, Stanton, An-
thony and several other radical women's enfranchise-
ment advocates gathered in New York City to form the
Woman's National Loyal League, the first national
women's network. The organization, as Stanton and
Anthony envisioned, "would not call upon women
to prove their readiness for enfranchisement by patriotically supporting the war
effort, by becoming informed on political questions,
and by exercising their political right of petition on
behalf of the slave (Venet 116)." The issue of slavery
had an extremely broad moral appeal to women, how-
ever, the important aim of the petition, for Stanton, was
to prove women as responsible, socially competent citi-
zens. Although the ratification of the Fourteenth
Amendment passed without a clause ensuring the
enfranchisement of women, the emergence of this type
of political activism and awareness on the part of edu-
cated women not only foreshadowed women's contin-
ued involvement in the public sphere, but also illus-
trates the variety of aims with which women became
involved in the war.

V. Conclusion

Northern women during the Civil War experi-
enced the actual horrors of war much more remotely
than did women of the South. Their wartime experi-
ences reinforced the structures of the antebellum pe-
riod (local and regional aid and relief societies) while
nationalizing that experience at the same time through
large amalgamations such as the United States Sanitary
Commission. While this organization served as a na-
tionalizing force, it is important to realize that it pre-
vented the expression of political activism and aware-
ness on the part of educated women. The wartime ex-
periences of unifying experience for white middle-class women
as Mary Livermore described, though, it appeared that
the war polarized women, as represented by those
women who joined the Woman's National Loyal
League. These women used patriotism as a springboard
for political activism for women's enfranchisement;
it they became increasingly active and disruptive of gen-
derer boundaries after the Fourteenth Amendment's fail-
ture to incorporate women. While Northern women's
contributions to the war were at all valid, it is impor-
tant to understand the complexity of their range of po-
sitions and experiences in order to avoid generalizing
them into a unified entity.

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Introduction

A large part of the discussion about socially engaged Buddhism has always involved the question of how valid it is as an idea in the first place. Scholars have hotly debated both the place of social engagement as a broad idea in Buddhism, as well as the place of certain concepts of social engagement. The field of Buddhism studies has found itself wondering such things as whether or not there is room for gay dharma in Buddhism, or whether there are secular humanist interests around which Buddhism is being callously accommodated. Regardless of the debate, socially engaged Buddhism has been accepted by Buddhologists as a concept to be explored with some academic rigor. Scholars ask questions of certain Buddhist practitioners and organizations, such as "Can we consider this person or group socially engaged?" Soka Gakkai USA, the American branch of Soka Gakkai International, the Nichiren Buddhist group that has its home base in Japan and is one of the largest Buddhist organizations in the world, has strangled managed to avoid this type of scrutiny. Is Soka Gakkai USA what scholars would consider to be a socially engaged Buddhist presence? To answer this question, we must first establish both a history of Soka Gakkai USA and a working definition of socially engaged Buddhism.

A Brief History of Soka Gakkai USA

Soka Gakkai USA is a wing of Soka Gakkai International, the world's largest Buddhist organization, which is affiliated with the Nichiren lineage of Buddhism in Japan. The Nichiren lineage began in Japan during the Kamakura period, which saw many changes in the Buddhist tradition in Japan. In fact as Daisetz Suzuki put it, "We are the spirit of the historical life of the Japanese to be written, I think its center would have to be placed in the Kamakura period" (75). Nichiren (1222-1282) was a student of the Tendai school of Buddhism in Japan. In fact to Daisetz Suzuki it put it, "We are the spirit of the historical life of the Japanese to be written, I think its center would have to be placed in the Kamakura period" (75). Nichiren (1222-1282) was a student of the Tendai school of Buddhism in Japan.

Engaged Buddhism

It is probably correct to state that socially engaged Buddhism as a practice has existed since the time of the Buddha himself, but as a term, "engaged Buddhism" was first used in the late 1960s by the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh (Queen 6). It was the title of a volume he wrote shortly after founding the Vietnamese Buddhist university of Van Van (Hunt-Perry and Fine 38). Thich Nhat Hanh only exceptionally articulated ideas that had been on the tips of the tongues of many Buddhists and had been seen in practice for centuries (particularly in his home country). Socially engaged Buddhism, as described by Thich Nhat Hanh and others who have followed in his example, embraces a Buddhism that extends out from the meditation cushion into the world of social needs andills around the practitioner. But rather than viewing this participation in the world as a task or event, or separate from Buddhist practice, socially engaged Buddhist theory sees this effort as ideal, right practice. Therefore, socially engaged Buddhism is about Buddhists investing themselves in the world in order to help it as they can. In other words, realizing and practicing Buddhist compassion. The scholar of engaged Buddhism, Christopher S. Queen, outlines three main components to socially engaged Buddhism that he sees as common to all the different types of activities and attitudes that he would describe as "socially engaged Buddhism": awareness, identification, and action (6-7). What is meant by awareness is what is discussed in much Buddhist literature as "mindfulness": "the essence of a buddha, an 'Awakened One', whose deep wisdom comes from seeing the true constituents and interdependence of oneself and the world" (6). The second component of socially engaged Buddhism that Queen describes is identification, which he understands as a sense of personal connection with all other beings and their situations. This connection only comes with serious contemplation of "oneness" with others, not simply conceptualizing this notion. "First becoming aware of others by seeing, hearing, thinking, and acknowledging their experience, one then has 'compassion', 'sympathy', a feeling or fellow-feeling that, unlike pity, dissolves the boundary between oneself and the other," he writes (6). Lastly, Queen identifies action that somehow applies the knowledge that comes with awareness and identification as a key component to socially engaged Buddhism (6-7).

Soka Gakkai Buddhism

Soka Gakkai International, and its branch in the United States of America, were first considered socially engaged, as defined by the organization's various national groups. The following section will seek to help demonstrate the truth in this speculation, which is the prime focus of this research paper.

Soka Gakkai Social Engagement in Japan

The primary contribution of Soka Gakkai on the international level, but also on a smaller national level in a way, would be the creation of the Soka Gakkai-affiliated political party known in Japan as Komeito. As a result, the primary contribution to social engagement could be as noticeable and potentially affecting as an entirely new political party. Komeito's birth date in Japan is 1964, not long after Ikeeda first occupied the role of president of Soka Gakkai USA (Metraz 17). A radical reform party with interests in addressing issues of social justice, Komeito (which was also known as the "Clean Government Party"), not only Americanization of Buddhist ideas, but also a growing concern amongst a group of individuals affiliated with a particular movement, in this case a religious movement. But this ideological base proved to be a factor in the party's ultimate undoing as well.

Queen himself has edited two books on socially engaged Buddhism, Engaged Buddhism: Liberation Movements in Asia (Albany: SUNY P, 1996) with Sallie B. King, and Engaged Buddhism in the West (Boston: Wisdom, 2000). The fact that Queen mentions these two substantial books and numerous journal articles on socially engaged Buddhism will give you some idea of how wide-ranging socially engaged Buddhist practice is.

This would seem to be an appropriate way to view the TheraVada Buddhism's relationship with social engagement, as well, as it is often misunderstood as being all about complete withdrawal from everything and denying all parts of life.  

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18

Soka Gakkai in Japan, are broad-based and varied. Hammond and Machacek iterate this point in their book, writing: Soka Gakkai has diversified its involvement in Japa

nese society, founding a university [Soka Univer

sity in Japan], art museum, a concert association [The Min-On Concert Association], publishing empire, and elementary and secondary schools based on the educational theory of Makiguchi [the Soka School of Education]

Their work in Japan has been creative in seeking both to engage itself in society and to engage the soci

ety in it. In addition to its contributions to the fields of politics and education, Soka Gakkai International has also established summits and seminars dedicated to discussing issues of global peace processes, Buddhism, social justice, and environmentalist ethics. In fact, the most recent series of seminars, begun in January of this year, was concerned with the need for a universal en

vironmental ethic ("Need for Universal Environmen
tal Ethic Stressed at Buddhist-Sponsored Seminars Across Asia") 1. For Soka Gakkai International, establishing educational centers—whether they be formal schools, educational reform organizations, or a museum or artsistic series—are integral to their work of contributing to the greater good.

Soka Gakkai USA does not create its own socially en

gaged programming and then employ Soka Gakkai Buddhists to put it all into place. Social engagement within Soka Gakkai USA is not clearly apparent, but suggested in services in makes available and advocates.

Soka Gakkai International's social engagement is primarily focused on affecting change through such as politics, education, and arts and entertainment. But the organization has made sure to be active in both ser

vice work and international relief efforts. Individual branches throughout Japan (and also the world) are active in various community service and outreach projects. International work is also a very important part of the organization's efforts. They are active in dialing between the United Nations, regularly submitting proposals for peace and suggestions for actions that would provide for the security of those without it. The Soka Gakkai Youth Peace Congress has also been active in efforts to help refugees displaced from such areas as, most recently, Kosovo ("Support the World’s Refugees in 1999") 11. It would seem that Soka Gakkai International, despite its reputation as an organization promoting individual empowerment, is not only socially engaged, but also so sort of model of engaged Buddhism: for every type of problem or social ill, Soka Gakkai seems to of

fer a response. As of yet, no issues has appeared to be too daunting for it, and no idea too ambitious.

Social Engagement in Soka Gakkai USA

So now that we have some understanding of the impetuses behind the very early socially engaged ac

tions of Soka Gakkai, as well as the group's current projects conducted as an international entity, we can begin an investigation into Soka Gakkai USA's own socially engaged actions with some insight into the organization's history of social engagement. The United States, however, provides some interesting new challenges and possibilities as the world's proverbial "melting pot." For instance, the various Zen and Tibetan traditions in this country have come from these traditions. Chappell points out "the recent book Complete Guide to Buddhism America lists over one thousand centers and meditation groups, but you want if you just chant for it, especially material endorsementsmalloc..." 5 (926)

Soka Gakkai USA has "attracted a greater diversity of races and classes of people in its first three decades than any other Bud

dhism, at the moment, seems to be a phenomenon as Thich Nhat Hanh, the Zen Peacemaker Or

Chappell writes, "Although the Santa Monica national social structures, it encourages social engagement for creating harmony among different peoples, cultures, and religions (3).

The threefold purpose of the Boston Research Center (BRC) is explicitly aimed at social transformation, writes Chappell (214).

Conclusion

Looking at all of this work in light of Queen's outreach to children, it is possible to speculate that socially engaged Buddhism, we should again ask if Soka Gakkai USA can be considered engaged. In terms of perpetuating awareness, identification, and action in its followers, Soka Gakkai USA seems to have done a fine job. The organization did start out as an educational reform group, so teaching should be a strong suit for them and in communicating the ideas about Buddhism and concepts of service, the organizers have been careful to keep their social engagement decidedly "Buddhist." As Hammond and Machacek wrote about Soka Gakkai, "The ascetic nature of Nichiren Buddhism, or the im-

pulse to reform social conditions in light of religious convictions, is the driving force behind Soka Gakkai activities" (14).

In conclusion, we again return to the original question: Is Soka Gakkai USA socially engaged? What would consider socially engaged Buddhism? The an

swer to this question would seem to be a very obvious yes, despite the fact that not exactly having a reputation for being such as Soka Gakkai (or Soka Gakkai International, for that matter) is certainly not mentioned in the same breath by scholars of socially engaged Bud

dhism as those of Mahayana. As His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet, Tulku Serawasa, Maha Ghosananda, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship. And yet, it seems to be doing as well if not in more cases, some of these individual and organizations. The reason for its rela

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Another noteworthy accomplishment by Soka Gakkai in the United States is the establishment of the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century. The Cen

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cording to their literature, the BRC has three objectives: 1) To further the development of open, continu

uous discussion on model of model of social justice, 2) to participate in the global movement among concerned citizens, scientists, and other intellectual leaders to evolve a broad consensus in favor of life-affirming human values; and 3) to develop a philosophical and practical basis for creating harmony among different peoples, cultures, and religions.

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order to recruit them, to being as specific as "Was [Ikeda] hospitalized [in September of 1996] to avoid a sexual harassment charge?" ("Incidents Archive" 1).

In many ways, the case could be made just as easily that Soka Gakkai International and USA have brought much of this criticism upon themselves. It may or may not be the case that Soka Gakkai has been unfairly marginalized by the upper echelon of Buddhist America. But these types of issues, which play into determining the reasons behind why the efforts of Soka Gakkai go unchecked, and are striking, really necessitate a paper of their own. In the end, in this paper I just want to answer a simple question; the rest is a task for either expansion or an entirely separate work.

And so our simple question has been answered in the affirmative. Soka Gakkai USA functions as a socially engaged Buddhist force in this country, for better or for worse. Although there are concerns raised above about the validity of the organization’s commitment to Buddhism—even Nichiren’s teachings of it—Soka Gakkai USA at least on the surface of its specifically socially engaged work and programs harvests a commitment to the types of ideas that socially engaged Buddhist philosophy itself is founded on. As Queen shrewdly observed in regards to the issue of similarities between Nichiren’s social philosophy and engaged Buddhist dogma:

We learn of the Nichiren Buddhist doctrine of esho funi, “the oneness of self and the world,” and healing (or wholing) of mind, body, self, and society that engaged Buddhists have discovered in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction programs and the Gay Buddhist Fellowship in San Francisco. (6)

Queen here likens the attitude of Nichiren Buddhists with that of some of the most creative and radical engaged, “new” Buddhist practitioners and programmers. That attitude has carried over into the Nichiren sect’s contemporary, politically and socially progressive establishment, Soka Gakkai International. Its national affiliate, Soka Gakkai USA, in seeking to perpetuate the ideals of the larger entity, has not only contributed significantly to the remarkable history of Buddhism’s transmission to America by attracting the widest range of followers, but also by establishing itself as an organization with strikingly ambitious practices of social engagement. Despite its present lack of lip service, anyone involved in engaged Buddhist studies would do well to take note of the extraordinary work of Soka Gakkai USA.
The femme fatale, a constant fixture in the film noir genre, underwent a serious revision in Roman Polanski's Chinatown (1974) that signaled a new, perhaps more pessimistic world view emerging from this particular genre. In addition, the gritty realism of this emerging shift in film noir shaped the view of women by portraying female characters more truthfully on the screen. Rather than being the cunning, carelessly cruel femme fatale that became so familiar in an earlier time, thanks to Double Indemnity (1944) and The Maltese Falcon (1941), Faye Dunaway's Evelyn Mulwray is a vic- tim—motivated in her actions and able to elicit sympa thy from viewers. However, instead of restoring some semblance of order in seeing Evelyn Mulwray succeed, Polanski does not allow any type of justice to prevail in his movie—no matter how small or insignif icant. As we walk away from Chinatown, we realize that justice has no place in a world where patriarchy is insurmountable at best—and hideously corrupt at worst.

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to stop Evelyn from wounding her father or the hot-headed cop from shooting Evelyn in the head or Noah Cross from repossessing his daughter/granddaughter, with who knows what intentions. "Oh Lord, Lord," wails Cross as he solicitously but vainly tries to cover Katharine's eyes from looking at her blooded mother. (53)

Near the end of the movie, we see Jake going against the inanity of the law to protect Evelyn and Katharine from their father. Jake, by this time, knows that Evelyn is a victim worth saving just as we do, and it takes precedence over solving the case of Hollow's death or exposing the fraud of the water company.

The last scene ensues with pure chaos, resulting in several shots fired—one by Evelyn that hits Noah, and one by the police officer that accidentally hits Evelyn. Katharine screams uncontrollably, blood ripples down Evelyn's face and clothing, and Jake is banished from the crime scene. "As little as possible," Jake mumbles to the police, meaning perhaps that this or exposing the fraud of the water company.

The fact that the corruption of teenage girls is central to Chinatown is interesting, seeing as how Polanski himself was caught in a scandal involving a teenage girl and was rumored to have been involved with several others. It is contradictory, in a way, that Chinatown itself is associated with debauchery and loss of innocence, when Polanski himself lived these damaging ideas. Of the teenage girls that he had known, Polanski said, "like so many girls of their age, they had untapped reserves of intelligence and imagination. They weren't using their bodies to further their careers [. . .] they didn't want to hear about distribution rights or film finance—not even about the Manson murders. And they were more beautiful [. . .] than they would ever be again" (qtd. in Lindberg, 64). Now considered a somewhat sympathetic person suffering from a mental illness, Polanski's intimate knowledge of the dark secrets of degeneration was probably an asset in directing Chinatown. While Polanski's life is certainly nothing to admire, it contains plain authority when speaking about nihilism, corruption and the gravity of lost innocence. Chinatown may be how the world appeared from Polanski's point of view—a world where brutal murder can happen in one's home, a world where sexual predators are as familiar as one's own self.

How much does Chinatown reflect Polanski's world view? The nihilism and pessimism, in part, can certainly be credited to the loss of his wife to the Manson family. Polanski gives the sense of being a helpless watcher in his movies, as what Lindberg calls, "a peeper at life through keyholes" (61). In addition, "the amorality" of his movies combines with the subjective viewpoint of the camera, in this reading, to put the audience as well in the position of a peeper" (61). The fact that the corruption of teenage girls is central to Chinatown is interesting, seeing as how Polanski himself was caught in a scandal involving a teenage girl and was rumored to have been involved with several others. It is contradictory, in a way, that Chinatown itself is associated with debauchery and loss of innocence, when Polanski himself lived these damaging ideas. Of the teenage girls that he had known, Polanski said, "like so many girls of their age, they had untapped reserves of intelligence and imagination. They weren't using their bodies to further their careers [. . .] they didn't want to hear about distribution rights or film finance—not even about the Manson murders. And they were more beautiful [. . .] than they would ever be again" (qtd. in Lindberg, 64).

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The clear notion of a traditional femme fatale is absent from Chinatown because Polanski knew that the femme fatale was a false construction. And because Chinatown is extremely realistic and with no favorable outcome, having a multifaceted leading female character is extremely important to the credibility of the motion picture. However, the world in which this realistic woman exists is cruel and without justice or an emerging truth. Though the portrayal of women seems more favorable in this film, the portrayal of the world in general is increasingly pessimistic, deterministic and hopeless. This encroaching form of despair claims not only women, but also men like J.J. Gittes, and all others who have a need to restore equilibrium in their society.
Contradiction Through Opposition: The Microcosm in Capodistria's Resurrected Self

Philip D. Miller  '01

Author's Note: The Alexandria Quartet is a series of four novels (Justine, Balthazar, Mountolive, and Clea) by Lawrence Durrell set in pre-World War II Alexandria, Egypt. This paper is part of a series in which Darley, Clea, and Balthazar visit the gravesite of Capodistria on the anniversary of his birthday. Darley, the narrator, and himself a Durrellist as part of the larger structure of the quartet. The introduction of the letter is thus marked by the absurdity of the place itself: Darley's lover, reads from a letter sent to Balthazar, their friend, a doctor and practitioner of Cabalism, by none other than Capodistria (Da Capo) himself. The first novel, Justine, concluded with the "accidental" death of Capodistria; we come to learn, however, gradually, that Capodistria is, in fact, fully alive, his "post-dead" whereabouts being reported in his letter. In the essay, I investigate how this seemingly absurd set of circumstances (and details revealed in Capodistria's letter) exist as part of the larger structure of the Quartet, bringing to light the elements of philosophical opposition that underlie Durrell's work.

Capodistria...how does he fit it? He is more of a goblin than a man, you would think.

—Justine, 33.

In somewhat a strange sense, Capodistria's letter to Balthazar in Book III of Clea encapsulates elements of contradiction pervasive in the Alexandria Quartet. ("Strange" because the letter seems so "out of place" within the narrative of Clea.) The reader is actually taken aback by the letter itself—despite Balthazar's warning about its "fantastic" contents. In presenting the letter, it seems as though Durrell has taken us completely out of the world of Alexandria to create a novel (from which it seems so removed), in that it is perfectly suited to the eye of someone endlessly shuffling through an old mirror. The picture he draws for us of the "truth" articulated by Balthazar in the second book of the Quartet bearing his name: "Truth...is what most contradicts itself in time" (Balthazar 23). The truth of Capodistria's death is, prima facie, contradicted; Balthazar's age and infirmity are contradicted by Mnemjan's "ministrations" (Justine 17). Thus it is appropriate that Capodistria's letter reveals this connection from the present does not allow us to capture the story would be were it not for the contradictions revealed! The dichotomy between truth and (the possibility of) death, which Capodistria confronts his "new self": he writes that which he would have taken earlier. Durrell makes explicit, then, another tension, of the truth with which Capodistria confronts his "new self": he writes to Balthazar that in his previous correspondence he had evaded a substantive account of his new life—yet we wonder the extent to which he now reveals the "truth." His sense of the morally good and evil has contradicted itself in time to an effort in order to overcome this dichotomy: he approaches his new "self," however, as if he were stumbling into a mirror. The picture he draws for Balthazar is of the necessary mirror-image, the necessity of his "resurrected life" in contradiction to his old, dead self. The contradiction is thus revealed, yet the tension remains: the truth of Da Capo's past, his death, has been overturned, but contradiction (between light/ dark, good/evil)—despite his claim to the contrary—persists in his experience.

Capodistria proceeds to depict the "defrocked Italian monk" with whom he makes acquaintance, and his project of alchemy, concerned with "increasing man's interior hold on himself" (Balthazar 28). The mirror-reflection is, itself, amoral. We cannot ascertain the truth that was from the situation that is.

Capodistria writes: "I did not know then that my path was not the path of Light but of Darkness. I would have had more chance if it morally and ethically evil at the time. Now I recognise the path I am treading to be the image of man!" (Balthazar 23). The mirror-reflection is, itself, amoral. We cannot ascend the truth that was from the situation that is.

Capodistria writes: "I have the express authority of Capodistria himself" [Balthazar explained]. "Indeed he himself always pays for the flowers every year"—(Clea 197). The introduc-
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A study of the Cabal is done in secret: a practice of Dark-voted to the explication of such dichotomies. Most existently, perhaps, hidden from the Light, while itself de-plicitly, this reference legitimates the “Black Magic” practiced by Capodistria as the Dark side of religious practices “in the air.”

exists necessarily to keep “acceptable” religious prac-
tices “in the air.”

189). The suggestion here of essentialism (Clea-problematic any project that seeks to investigate contradiction already present in the Quartet is made? This complication is made evident by Capodistria herself: “And so, my dear friend, I have chosen the Dark Path towards my own light. I know now that I must follow it wherever it leads!” (Clea 204). At the same time, Capodistria purports to choose his path toward the Dark (which leads to his own “light”), while acknowledging that he must follow this path wherever it leads. In the same way, the subjects of Durrell’s Quartet choose their own paths, though confined by the city itself and the necessity of contradiction in time.

I have only been able to hint at some of the ways in which Capodistria’s letter is a microcosm of the Quar-
tet itself (consider also, e.g., the role of the war as it relates to the Baron’s project—his suspected spying— and the experience of war in Alexandria, or the “sta-
tory” of each homunculus and parallel relations to the “real” characters); most fundamentally, however, it points to the tensions in diametric oppositions that underlie the four novels. Near the conclusion of Justine, Darley writes: “Somewhere in the heart of experience there is an order and a coherence which we might sur-
prise if we were attentive enough, loving enough, or patient enough. Will there be time?” (221). In the heart of the final novel, Durrell gives us a clue to interpret-
ing the whole. The letter from Capodistria does not reveal a basic order or coherence, but rather a prima-
tive tension that shapes the Quartet. In its strangeness, its absurdity, its break from “traditional” narrative, the story makes explicit relations that exist throughout the novels, encapsulated here, appropriately, in a story which is, itself, so ripe with contradiction. Only through overturning expectations of normacy in narrative is Durrell able to convey precisely that: the Alexandria Quartet confronts contradiction and reveals how dia-
metric oppositions, overturned in time, shape our ex-
perience.

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