CHAPTER-ONE

Herman Melville as a Short Story Writer

Herman Melville (1819-91) is an American short story writer. When he was twelve years old, his merchant father died bankrupt. The tragedy plunged young Herman from the comfortable, patrician world of his Melville and Gansevoort ancestors into the precarious, drudging world of the sailors, clerks, farmlabours, factory workers, paupers, and slaves, who would subsequently people his fiction. His unique perspective on his society derives from his experience of living at the intersection of these opposing worlds.

Using his adventure in the South Pacific as materials for his novels, Melville started a new career as a writer and established himself as a popular writer with two successful novels: *Typee* (1846) and *Omoo* (1847), both set in the Pacific Island. Exposed to brutle working conditions alongside men of all races, Melville learned to identify with slaves and to draw analogies between different forms of oppressions. Confronted in the Marquesas, Thiti, and Hawai with warships training their guns on naked islands, and with rapacious hordes of enlightened individuals rushing to seize the depopulated land from natives reduced to starving interloper(s) in their own country, Melville came to view the white civilized man as the most ferocious animal on the earth. Above all, a sojourn among one of the peoples of his society denigrated as savage taught Melville to question his deepest cultural assumption. He also discovered that these reputed cannibals deal more kindly with each other, and are more humane than many self-professed Christians. Although he choose to escape after four weeks of indulgent captivity, he would never again take for granted either the superiority of White Christian civilization or the benefit of imposing it on others. Instead he began re-examining his own society through the eyes of savage. During his stay of eighteen months there, he escaped and spent several weeks roaming around Thiti and nearby Eimeos before shipping abroad the whaler Charles and Henry.

The new technique Melville developed of fusing facts and symbols reached fruition in his most powerful and original work, *Moby Dick* (1851). He violated his public's literary tastes and offended its religious and political sensibilities. He depicted the victim of capitalism and slavery no longer through the eyes of an obtuse observer repressing the class of ‘gentlemen’ who smug prosperity rested on the extorted labor of the workers they dehumanized. During 1850 and 1853, he published fifteen sketches and stories and a serialized historical novel. For most of his stories, he used the conventional form of old fashioned tales mostly set in remote times and places based on his sailing. Melville used extremely complex, paradoxical, unexplainable, and uncontrollable symbols in his works.

When Melville's wife left him in 1867, fearing that he had gone insane and their eldest son Malcolm committed suicide at the age of thirteen, it drew the decay of trauma in his life. Milville's personal crisis converged with the national crisis of the civil war. Disillusioned and bitter, Melville turned away from writing fiction during the later part of his life. He died in 1891, unnoticed and unappreciated. In 1920 his work was rediscovered by scholars and he finally received the recognition he deserved.

Interplay of Speech and Silence in “Bartleby the Scrivener” and “Benito Cereno”

The linguistic counterpart of the thematic concerns--loss, poverty, loneliness, or defeat--is the withdrawal of the Milvillian protagonists from speech in his texts “Bartleby the Screvener” and “Beneto Cereno.” Those characters who do speak are evil or misguided; the diminished protagonists, unable to express and communicate their private quests, wind down to silence. In the both texts speech moves toward silence because experience is too horrific or incomprehensible to find expression in words or because the bad faith of speakers makes communication impossible. Melville's fictions become dominated by deceptive speakers where truth is voiceless. The texts reveal versions of a structure in which an interpreter -narrator or character- speaks a language inadequate to the situation he observes. Since both the language and understanding are limited in the observer, the various protagonists suffer the frustration that fails to communicate entails, an inability to use language that leads inexorably to silence-often the silence of death. The purest form of silence as a response to horrific experience-- that of the Bartleby in “Bartleby the Scrivener”-- is affirmed individually and collectively by the narrator.

Herman Melville’s “Benito Cereno” is a story about a Spanish slave ship taken captive, and the unfortunate American whaling ship that discovers them. The American Captain, Amasa Delano, and his crew cross paths with the Spanish slave ship, the San Dominic in the bay off the coast of the island of Santa Maria. Captain Delano is immediately astonished at the disrepair of the San Dominic, and especially at the poor health and mental condition of her captain, Benito Cereno. Captain Delano’s emotional reactions to what he witnesses while aboard the San Dominic; curiosity, anxiety, and suspicion are excellently described by Melville. Throughout his stay on the San Dominic, Delano is constantly worried that Cereno is planning to attack him, and the liberty the slaves seem to enjoy concerns him as well.

Ironically, in “Benito Cereno” the language of Captain Amasa Delano is no more equal to the reality of the situation aboard the San Dominick than it was to the contrived performance he first takes for the truth. Similarly, the archenemies Babo and Benito Cereno are assimilated to one linguistic standard, first in deceptive speaking and then in a lack of speech. All three characters, representing widely differing degrees of perception, are imprisoned within a language that categories behavior according to rigid social hierarchies and corresponding behavioral expectations that are not borne out by the events of the narrative. The unconscious commitment to the conventional ways of assessing experience reified in this language causes Denalo to disregard the evidence of his own eyes and to ignore the promptings of intuition. Time and again familiar labels reassuringly transform his unsettling observations and nebulous anxieties into stereotypes. If, for example, the Spanish captain behaves in an inexplicable manner, it is because “Spaniards are all an odd set, the very word Spaniard has a curious, conspirator, and ‘Guy-Fawkish’ twangs to it” (94).

Although Benito Cereno knows that the black stereotypes that please Denalo are an elaborate pretense-a fiction, he is himself the victim of the same stereotypes and consequently unable to survive the shock of their destruction. The reality of “the negro” reduces Cereno to silence and death, for there are no words square his experience with society's official doctrines of black tractability and inferiority. Denalo is similarly unwilling to probe the comfortable stereotypes of his culture and the convenient labels assigned to them.

Babo, on the other hand, has the full truth of the situation since he is the author of the slave revolt and the deception perpetrated upon Delano. Yet, while he enacts this subversive fiction, he can only express it in distorted forms of the oppressor's language the oath he requires of the Spaniards,t he formulas of servility to Cereno for Denalo's benefit, and finally silence. Where the motif of Babo's 'voiceless end'-- whether the impotence of words to create the world he wanted, or a disdain for self-justification--it would be futile for him to plead the injustice of slavery to the tribunal which judges him without allowing him to testify.

Melville has constructed a fiction in which almost all language, including his own, is calculatedly deceptive or tragically inadequate. In its successive interpretations of a single structure of events the narrative form is similar to the rhetorical figure of syllepsis, since the false interpretation precedes the true, the narrative misleads the reader as the black rebels of the San Dominic mislead Delano. The “Deposition,” society's official version of the episode, is merely a surface chronicle whose limitations are emphasized by the authorial voice's refusal to say more and by the subjective mode of the predictive clause: “If the 'Deposition' have served as the key to fit into the lock of the complications which predicts it, then, as a vault whose door has been flung back, the San Dominic's hull lies open today” (138). The apparent tidiness of this structure is so markedly undercut by irony and ambiguity that the image of the “vault” whose door has been “flung back" mocks the idea of resolution it symbolizes. One world of false appearance has been exploded, others endure. Since neither Cereno nor Babo speaks at the end, the authorial assertion of truthful revelation is no more than a perfunctory gesture of closure, akin to Delano's offering of platitudes to assuage Cereno's anguish.

The most famous of Piazza Tales, "Bartleby," deserves the closest attention as the most conscious rejection of speech on the part of a protagonist and the collection's most profound treatment of the issues on the part of Melville. It shares with "Beneto Cereno" the same dynamically paired figures--imperceptive observer and enigmatic protagonist--the same form of pat closure without genuine resolution, and the same dialectical moment between a constricting language and silence. It offers, however, a more dramatic confrontation between the collective idiom and a dissenting individual voice as well as a more meaningful connection to the two major novels preceding it. "Bartleby" develops the same pattern of defiance, isolation, and death found in Ahab and Pierre, but its treatment of these structural and thematic paradigms is notably austere, its world circumscribed. In the progression from Ahab to Pierre and on to Bartleby the quest for meaning becomes increasingly less specific from action (hunting and killing the whale), to knowledge (the secret of Isabel's parentage), to nameless malaise. The engagement with the universe becomes correspondingly less creative and active. Where Ahab and Pierre are forceful and energetic figures, Bartleby has neither personal charisma nor worldly authority, he resists passively. In each text the world remains mysterious.

If Bartleby himself is mysterious, the nature of his environment is not for a menial worker like a scrivener the business world is dehumanizing, coercive, and exploitative--a portrait all the more arresting because it is filtered through the unperceptive and self-satisfied language of the lawyer. The lawyer's iconic figure is John Jacob Astor, an embodiment of capitalistic ideology, notorious for his exclusive devotion to moneymaking. As adopted by the lawyer, this ideology produces a complacent and self-validating speech that assimilates all potentially threatening phenomena. Recounting his visit to Bartleby in prison, the lawyer remarks, “I went to the Tombs, or to speak more properly, the Halls of Justice” (51). The lawyer thus substitutes a positive and socially acceptable term for one that is pejorative and social, although, in Bartleby's case, designation of tomb is more accurate than hall of justice. Since the logic of money-making demands that Bartleby be fired when he first refuses to carry out an order, the lawyer must find a means of rationalizing his treatment of his employee without forfeiting his claim to the prudence and method of Astorian commendation. He does so by reclassifying the relationship, transferring it from the realm of business, where profit must be monetary, to that of charity, where it is allowed to be intangible. Bartleby can now be redefined as one whose behavior is beyond his control, like a physical illness rather than an intentional offense, and he can therefore be indulged in much the same manner as Nippers and Turkey.

Rather than supporting the charitably drawn self-portrait of his narrative, the lawyer's actual speech is openly domineering. He ordinarily addresses Bartleby in peremptory commands-- “Bartleby! Quick, I am waiting” (25)--and abandons the imperative only when Bartleby has ignored his orders so consistently that its futility is palpable. Bartleby’s reply to his employer, “I would prefer not to, “is so unthinkable when the lawyer first hears it that the phrase must be repeated and pondered before he understands what is being said. Then his highly charged and biased language-- "browbeaten," "unprecedented," "violently unreasonable," "stranger," "faltering"-- transforms Bartleby's mildly voiced pronouncement into an almost physical assault (260). Here and on other crucial occasions group support reaffirms business values for the lawyer although his dependent clerks are hardly the "disinterested persons" (26) he describes them as Locked into the rhetoric of business, which confers no value on a worker's preference and regards any manifestation of personality as counter-productive, they are equally unable to understand Bartleby. Neither master nor man can afford to hear Bartleby's utterance as rational or tenable.

Bartleby faces the blank wall shoved near to him, but unlike Ahab he does not articulate an inflated romantic vision of it. Since he disregards basic conventions of social discourse, never initiating speech or responding more than minimally, one of his preferences appears to be silence. This reluctance to participate in verbal exchange, reinforced by his refusal to look at his employer, may well be predicated upon Bartleby's realization that in his linguistic context responsible or truthful speech can have no place. The impossibility of communicating these characters' visions of reality is due to in part to the complex and elusive nature of world, which resists formulation in language, and in part to the coercive nature of society, which prescribes collective views that fail to account completely for individual experience. These barriers to expression and understanding lead to a verbal impotence accompanied by some form of withdrawal from community.

Melville had always created powerful emblematic images, and in the Tales, as protagonists fall silent, such pictures have more authority than verbal exchange. The communication that takes place flows around rather than through language. In "Bartleby" it is the speech of things--the simple articles of Bartleby's housekeeping--that produces an onrush of fraternal feeling in the lawyer whereas talking to Bartleby simply underscores the gulf between them. In “Beneto Cereno” Captain Delano's most valid flash of insight is provoked by the tableau of Babo bending over Cereno in the ritual of shaving, "nor, as he saw the two thus postured, could he resist the vagary, that in the black he saw a headsman, and in the white a man at the block" (101). Cereno's broken spirit and Babo's defiance are revealed more vividly by means other than speaking.

If those who might articulate mysterious--including the author--are silent other speakers in the Tales, notably the lawyer and Captain Delano, use a language whose commitment to simplistic labels and reductive explanations makes their speech inadequate and falsifying. Such language reflects (and perpetuates) a comfortable status in which slaves and scriveners do not challenge their lot and the mysteries of the universe go unexamined. Other speakers like Babo pretending to be a solicitous servant, the lighting rod man, and the "mechanician" Bannadonna, make use of this same language but pervert it to their own deceptive or egoistic ends.

CHAPTER-TWO

Melville's Focus on the Voiceless Characters

Melville thinks that speechlessness is also a kind of protest against power. To portray dissatisfaction, frustration, and depression, Melville creates voiceless characters in his texts. Most of the characters speak insufficient and they repeat the same sentences. Furthermore, they leave a gap, that is, silence. Yet, we know that only a happy man can speak, there comes no voice from the enslaved.

There is a brutal and pitiless irony in the lawyer's suggestion in Herman Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener" that the unhappy clerk think of becoming a bar-tender instead of a copyist. In the context of the story, the term is a pun which recalls Bartleby's present job as copier of legal documents even in suggesting the apparently quite different position of tavern-keeper. Moreover, both menial occupations are essentially means of protecting and supporting a social system which acts arbitrarily and inhumanely, since both law and alcohol are "Poor Man's Plaster"(the term is from Jimmy Rose), as Melville suggests by the examples of the two other characters, Nippers and Turkey. The younger clerk has dubious ambitions for his own career in law, and the older barely hides his dishonest in working drunk half the time.

It is clear that all of the lawyer's clerks are disgruntled employees or, at least, anxious for better work and more prosperous life. No one actually complains directly about wages or the workload, for the clerk’s dissatisfaction is greater than mere economic issues, as shown in Bartleby's steady refusal of all favors to simplify or change his labor. His human worth is surely the greater issue, and finding a position for him in society is fundamentally a moral concern.

Bartleby's revolt is certainly more obviously antagonistic than anything else the lawyer has to contend with, but the other adults in his office have their own more mild and tolerable means of showing dissatisfaction with their work, one in illusions of a grand future career in law and pose no threat to the social system or office authority because their resentment is diverted harmlessly. Bartleby is the only one in the office who obviously will take no encouragement from the lawyer and the society for which he stands. In literal and figurative ways, he has the clearest perception of the nature of his life. He "never drank beer like Turkey" or any other stimulant, Turkey himself suggests that Bartleby would be more tractable if he took "a quart of good ale every day" (24).

It is clear in context that the lawyer is suggesting progressively more unrealistic options, considering Bartleby's declining activity and antisocial silence. It is quite possible that the lawyer speaks sarcastically; he acknowledges that Bartleby "inspired" and angered him. The lawyer's personal protection and at least adequate food in prison is genuine. Bartleby's final judgment of the narrator, tinged by self-pity and perhaps paranoia, is quite severe. "I know you and I want nothing to say to you" (43), Bartleby observes blaming the lawyer personally, entirely, for his imprisonment or, what is wore at this point, asserting that the lawyer is not capable of offering real solace. Repeatedly the clerk "prefers not to" carry out the lawyer's orders to verify accuracy of copy and to perform simple errands. Verbally this is not outright refusal, but it amounts to that and, after receiving clarification from Bartleby, the lawyer understands it as such. After discovering Bartleby living night and day in his (the lawyer's) office, and after hearing his decision to give up copying for good, the lawyer dismisses him, in addition to salary owed, twenty dollars.

Melville must have written this with a strong sense of irony, since self interest cannot prompt men to charity. Nor is charity a prudent principle. The new occupant of the office vacated by the lawyer visits him to complain about Bartleby, saying "you are responsible for the man," and the lawyer replies, "I’m very sorry, sir . . . but, really, the man you allude to is nothing to me responsible for him." I certainly cannot inform you. I know nothing about him.

Subsequently the lawyer is confronted by the landlord and tenants of his former building complaining that, ejected from the office; Bartleby now haunts the stairway by day and sleeps in the entrance at night. To this, the lawyer persists; Bartleby is "nothing to me" (665). Bartleby symbolizes for him all those who have suffered, who are suffering, and who will suffer by the lawyer's participation in a system that allows the sort of expulsion he insists on sparing Bartleby.

It can be assumed that if there is an objective reason for his "passive resistance" (646). It is Bartleby's reaction to the lawyer's attitude or behavior towards him or to the conditions of his employment. But the reason may lie, instead, in the nature of the documents Bartleby is copying. He first refuses to review the copy done by another while himself copying "four lengthy documents, being duplicates of a week's testimony'-in "an important suit," the lawyer says-"taken before me in my High Court of Chancery" (644).

Bartleby may be declining further complicity in the suffering of those losing homes and property. Behind such a reaction may lie a Christian belief held by Bartleby, which is hinted at in the text .We might be sure his refusal is an act of conscience if he had replied above 'indignantly' rather than indifferently'. Nevertheless, his refusal to copy may be the only act of love which he is capable, based on a moral disapproval that underlies his implied harsh judgment of the lawyer: "I know you . . . and I want nothing to say to you" (669).

Though appealing, the possibility of such moral clarity is undermined by Bartleby's evident lunacy. His subsequent refusal to leave the lawyer's office, and, once the lawyer leaves, his refusal to leave the building; and, finally, his refusal to go on living. Nevertheless, Bartleby's initial refusals may be acts of conscience. If so, Bartleby is the frailest of moral heroes, a pathetic Gandhi who cannot, or will not name what he objects to, so that his protest is ineffectual-or it has been, at least, till now. Marxist critics have argued that "Bartleby" offers a portrait of the increasing alienation of labor in the rationalized capitalist economy that took shape in the mid-nineteenth-century United States.

Moreover, criticism of "Bartleby" has rarely explored Melville's interest or involvement in current social conflicts and political discourses. I shall argue that a familiarity with mid-nineteenth-century class struggle in New York and with the contemporaneous discourse about these struggles is indispensable to a complete understanding of "Bartleby."

In the early 1840s, the New York labor movement was relatively quiescent. By mid-decade, however, there was a labor resurgence: “a burst of strikes hit the city's bookbinding, upholstering, shoemaking, and tailoring shops; at the peak of what turned out to be a successful five-week strike, the tailors mounted a torchlight procession two thousands strong, led by two musical bands and men carrying the republican banners of old.

A representative of the striking tailors, for example, proclaimed that the worker’s goal must be "to prevent the growth of an unwholesome aristocracy, whose only aim is to acquire wealth by robbery of the toiling masses; to place themselves in a position to successfully combat capital: to bring labor up to its proper elevation and take that position. To be sure, "Bartleby" is not precisely a story about labor unrest. Turkey and Nippers, while driven to alcoholism and ulcers by low wages and psychologically debilitating work, do not possess the "divine fire" of rebellion.

Bartleby hardly exceeds proletarian class consciousness or "leaps forth" Whiteman-style against his employer. "Bartleby" addresses not only the market in labor but also that in land, not only exploitation but also homelessness. Its portrait of alienation is devastatingly complete.

Throughout the first segment of Melville's Beneto Cereno, we are as mystified about what is taking place aboard the Spanish cargo ship the San Dominick as is the American captain Amasa Delano, whose dominant perspective we are forced to follow. It is only later, in the legal deposition that constitutes the second segment of the narrative, that we finally discover the "true history of the San Dominic's voyage" (103).

The questioning of Denalo's superior status is implied throughout by the narrator's inclination to use negatives to define the American captain. That Denalo is "singularly undistrustful" (47), "not unbewildered" (75), "not uninfluenced,"(80) and "not unpleased" (82) seems to point to a systematic attempt on Melville's part to ironically undo Denalo's sense of self identity. Denalo tries to deny the facts to which the images before him plainly attest: that the master's identity is inextricably bound up with that of the slave's, that "self" can be understood only in terms of otherness, it's "not-self". Thus, the image of the incapacitated Cereno leaning on the slave Babomirrors exactly the status of Denalo's relationship to Others, a relationship of interdependency that would make the identity of master and slave, of self and other, no more easily discernible than that suggested by the ambiguous symbol carved on the ship's stern-piece.

The social hierarchy exists among the blacks is suggested by the fact that there are, within the workers, who are commanded to do much of the killing; the old, venerable oakum-pickers; the ex-king Atufal; and the literate "ruler" Babo. The black women, more ambiguously situated, are relegated to domestic roles-caring for the young and singing songs-yet they also actively participate in the rebellion. Displaying the same kind of racial and cultural bias that Denalo clearly exhibits, Cereno's deposition invariably characterizes the African as heartless murderers and the Spanish slave-drivers as virtuous Christianity. If Babo remains "voiceless," he is so not only because of he has resigned himself to being captured and thus feels there is no use in talking if he can no longer "do deeds" (116), but because, more importantly, he has already been struck silent by another's discourse-a discourse that speaks for Babo and that, finally, imposes upon him a "legal identity."

Beneto Cereno places Melville's tale convincingly within the context of the debate over slavery and the fear of slave rebellion in the American 1850s. Melville's tale seems to corroborate the opinion that the ethnic diversity of African slaves, instead of preventing communication, forced the slaves to adopt European speech in order to obtain common linguistic understanding. The "some others" identified in the deposition as the African "who were constantly on the watch, and likewise understood the Spanish" (110) seem to be more numerous than the four oakum-pickers and six hatchet-polishers.

The figurative language of the tale plays a central part. The particular correlation of muteness and blackness that dominates the description of Babo--for example the African’s "dusky comment of silence" during the shaving scene(87), or his "voiceless end" and burnt body at the end of the tale (116)--is identical to the imagery associated with Beneto Cereno. Beneto Cereno reverses the notion that Babo is a shadowy presence of silence by revealing how the African’s brain spear heads an active linguistic presence that engineers the overthrow of a colonial power, Melville's tale also silences Beneto Cereno's dominant white discourse, and casts the whiteness of the Spaniard into shadowy darkness. Delano's dullness contains an odd variety of irony in Melville's story.

That Babo and his cohorts are able to hoodwink the "superior" white captain while masquerading as slaves ton their victims presents an irony of a special kind. The American’s sneering attitude toward African mentality insures his failure to perceive correctly the situation aboard the San Dominic. Beneto Cereno is "about" the failure of political speech-as a critical issue in Melville's American, as a challenge to his “great ‘Art of Telling the Truth.’” Denalo mistakes his friend for a villain; Babo struggles silently; and Cereno emerges from his "speechless faint," "half-choked,” and croaking “husky words, incoherent to all but the Portuguese” (99).

In Beneto Cereno, Melville predicts that language will not solve sectional conflict, that whether mistranslated, ignored, or suppressed, words will eventually end in deed, the dark prophecy of Babo's demise. More than most of his peers, Melville implicates both North and South in sectional misprision. When Don Benito claims to "know nothing" of rebellion (89), we might recall the conspiratorial silences of Northern political discourse. Melville raises the issue of slavery and free speech, but his over abundance of political types forces us beyond antebellum concerns toward more dreary failures of political speech. In Beneto Cereno, Melville does challenge race relations by inverting color supremacy, but class consciousness remains largely inchoate, even if Melville bemoans the ambivalence of antislavery and labor reform. End may point to the fact that African-Americans were not free to speak. Silence does not end the tale, speech is more profitably practiced and some truth is not literary beyond words. The nigger has terrible capacities for revenge and hatred, and which ought to convince the skeptic that he is a man, not a baboon.

The still lively disagreement over the dark, parabolic tale of *Beneto Cereno* is occasioned by the still vexing interpretive problem it poses--the problem that is, of how to read and evaluate Herman Melville's judgment of Babo, the leader of the slave revolt on board the Spanish slave transport the *San Dominic*. It is important that Melville's tale of slave revolt adapts and expands an incident recounted in an narrative by Amasa Delano, an American captain perhaps the most powerfully persistent but almost certainly mistaken view of Babo's role in the story is that he is an entirely positive image of a revolutionary conspirator, an African Spartacus, who heroically instigates and leads a ruthlessly violent but just rebellion. The conclusion traditionally drawn from this judgment is that Melville endorses slave insurrection. Melville has raised the historical problem of the apparent incommensurability of revolutionary means and ends, a problem at the heart of the antebellum debate over slavery and at the heart of the story. In all cases, there is an awareness of a boundary having been crossed without a satisfactory articulated acknowledgment of how “white America’s nemesis” has encroached upon that limit-without, that is taking us much beyond the terrible violence that Babo initiates, and which by itself is insufficient to account for Cereno's spiritual collapse. The story, then, concurs with antislavery polemic which, besides emphasizing the devastating effects of slavery on the enslaved, emphasizes how it morally devastates masters.

Melville believes that because "there comes no *voice* from the slave, “here is the motive behind Babo's pointed refusal to speak after he is captured, all the while that his 'aspect seemed to say, since I cannot do deeds, I will not speak words” (BC, 116). Melville recovers and reconstitutes the basis of the slave's humanity as it might emerge in action behind, on the margins of, and in spite of the points of view in the story that would vigorously suppress or deny it. In doing so, he offers a profoundly wrought realization and extension of the hypothesis that the slave "has terrible capacities for revenge and hatred “sufficient” to convince the skeptic that he is a man. There are the women whom Delano comically misrepresents as maternal animals, who, unsophiscated as leopardesses" and "loving as doves,” are nevertheless "ready to die for their infants or to fight for them” in ways he cannot conceive (BC 73). Here, the otherwise inert legalese of deposition (and certainly the inertness of Melville's source) is suddenly and powerfully alive.

At best, this is a prudential display of violence meant to guarantee the slaves their freedom, serving that end, as Michel Foucault observes, as a 'policy of terror”. But at worst it serves equally 'to make everyone aware, through the body of the criminal," of "the unrestrained presence of the sovereign.” The public execution does not re-establish justice; it reactivates power. The atrocious excess of violence in the execution is not a "demonstration of why the laws are being enforced, but rather who its enemies.The sovereign triumphs were "over those whom he had reduced to dust and thrown to the winds.” Thus, the law pursues "the body beyond possible pain." To Cereno's repeated inquiries about Aranda's remains, Babo answers nothing till the fourth day.

The victim of might is a thing which aspires every moment to become a man, a woman, and never at any moment succeeds. This is a death drawn out the length of a life, a life that death has frozen long before extinguishing it. Frederick Douglass says that slaves are "the silent dead". The silenced Cereno is trapped behind a public surface. With all the terrible pressures of his unvoiced fear -and grief, for Aranda was his dear friend-Cereno is made to appear exactly what he is not. An exact equilibrium between acceptance and refusal would seem to imply the perfect silence of paralysis, but with Cereno we see something more familiar but dreadful. On the one hand, Cereno will sink into cadaverous sullenness, indifference, apathy, a "dreary pitilessness" "muteness" "vacancy", "motionlessness," and "remotness.” On the other hand, we see his desperate, unvoiced alertness rising toward the surface of expression but diffused as hectic.

Melville had the imaginative courage to countenance another kind of impasse latent in antebellum America-an America that is in the shadow of the Fugitive Slave Law and the constitutional protection of slavery and an America haunted by the historical precedents of insurrection: San Domingo, Denmark Vesey. The story presents two equally weighted appeals: on the one hand, the appalling relief provided by the rule of law in the form of a restored civil order which is the restoration of tyranny: on the other hand the appeal of an insurrection justly motivated but dreadfully and tragically implicated in the tyranny it resists.

Indeed, we cannot understand Bartleby's refusal as a refusal simply of work, for when the lawyer offers to find Bartleby other employment, Bartleby rejects his ideas not on the grounds that he does not want to work but, rather, that the work the lawyer proposes is unsuitable to him. When asked if he would like to be a bartender, Bartleby replies: "I would not like it at all; though, as I said before, I am not particular." Asked by the lawyer about being a bill collector, he hones his objection: "No, I would prefer to be doing something else" (41). Bartleby's resistance is thus not a resistance to work per se—for he would prefer to do "something else," a something that is, presumably, works—but a resistance, if we can take his other refusals as evidence, to entering into the economy, into circulation.” As Ann Smock notes,

> [I]f *to prefer* means to incline toward one thing rather than another... it also means to pay one among a number of creditors before, or even to the exclusion of, all others. *Preference* means the act of so quitting a particular debt first, or the right to receive what is owed you before any

> other creditor does. The OED gives a definition of *to prefer*, in addition to its more commonplace one, as "To give preference to as a creditor" (7b), a definition in working use in England until at least 1885. ("Quiet," 71)

This double meaning of "to prefer" means that at those moments when Bartleby fashions himself as most outside circuits of exchange he is also squarely within them. Smock points specifically to Nipper's use of the term to illustrate this usage in the text: "Nippers exclaims ... 'I'd prefer *him* [Bartleby]! I'd give him *his* preferences!" (72). Nippers would pay Bartleby, straight away, everything he has coming to him.

CHAPTER-THREE

Society's Role in Looting and Giving Voice

According to Foucault, people speak of the ideas they want: they produce speeches; write books and newspaper; deliver messages that they wish. This process Foucault calls is discourse formation, and whatever is produced is the discourse. So, a discourse for Foucault is the language in relation to society. Once discourse is created, knowledge about some aspect of life is provided. This knowledge helps create truth. Thus, truth is created and such truth is neither true nor false. According to Foucault, power is something that is accepted in society and that acceptance is the outcome of constructed truth. We construct the truth and speak about the things in the same light. Truths are constructed and power is created. Along with power, the resistance is necessary. It is necessary because just as our body has a shadow in sunlight, power always needs resistance. Power works through language. Power is pervasive in all social body. Power is the "multiplicity of force of relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their organization.” Traditional notion of power was monolithic, hierarchical and clearly visible. But the power that works in society unlike truths. The new method of power is not ensured by right but by technique; not by law but by normalization; and not by punishment but by control is possible because of language. We have been enslaved by history and related matters. One who tries to resist power should refuse who he is.

Without the idea of the voiceless, unrepresented, vulnerable people out of doors, in whose name revolutionary violence was justified, there could not have been a democratic revolution. If the American citizen is empowered by the first amendment's guarantee of speech, he or she is also, we must remember, the heir of the sovereignty guaranteed by the so-called people's inability to speak is as much part of the democratic citizen's political power as his or her constitutionally guaranteed to speak as much as he or she wants. The successful citizen of the American Revolution continues to be in debt to the African slave, whose righteousness, written on his or her very body, reassured white Americans at every moment that their revolutionary righteousness would not immediately expose them to the vulnerability that comes with natural innocence.

African slaves helped Americans to manage the disturbing suggestion, crucial to revolutionary ideology, that political decisions made by one body for another always had the capacity to turn the object of those decisions into a slave. Revolutionary ideology, an ideology intimately bound up with ideology of the rights of man, produced the specter of the rightness person, both as that which grounds democratic politics in an extra political legitimacy and as that which is produced whenever sovereign political authority is exercised. It was not the slavery that England had tried to impose that the African slaved helped to keep at bay; it was the slavery that revolutionary ideology structured into the structure of democratic citizenship.

Melville’s story performs the breakdown of those discourses that structure the world around knowing civilized Western subjects of freedom, on the one hand, and vulnerable "third world" victims in need of protection and the extension of Western rights on the other. The subject empowered by free speech is simultaneously the subject in debt to the speechlessness of the subject of the rights of man, than Babo's head.

These cross-identifications that refuse to establish permanent and immovable borders between the American citizen and African slave, between voicelessness and freedom, between 1799and 2003, combine to produce the narrative of Beneto Cereno. Capitalism, Marxism tells us, thrives on exploiting its labors. Simply put, capitalists grow rich and shareholders do well because the labors that work for them and actually produce goods (including service) get less-and often a good deal less-for their efforts than their labor is actually worth. Labors have known this for a long time and have organized themselves in labor unions to get fairer deals. What they do not know, however, is how capitalism alienates them from themselves by seeing them in terms of production -as production units, as objects rather than human beings. Capitalism turns people into things, it reifies them.

The capitalist mode of production generates a view of the world-focus on profit-in which ultimately all of us function as objects and become alienated from ourselves. The American Marxist critic Fredric Jameson suggested not too long ago that we now all unknowingly suffer from a “waning of effect' -the loss of genuine emotion-because of the complete dominance of the capitalist model in our contemporary world (Jameson 60).

This leads inevitably to the question of how it is possible that we can so blind to the real state of affairs around us and so terribly delude ourselves. It also leads to the question of how it is possible that apparently some people are not deluded. The answer given to this second question by one important movement within Marxism-so-called 'Western" Marxism is that we always have a certain margin of freedom. To put that in the terms usually employed in the debates over issues such as freedom of action and thought. For Marxism the basis of any society is its economic organization, which then gives rise to certain social relations-for instance, the class relations between capitalists and workers in nineteenth-century capitalist economics. This socio-economic base then conditions the cultural super structure. However, there are forces at work that prevent us from seeing this. For Marxist, ideology is not so much a set of beliefs or assumptions that we are aware of, but it is that which makes us believe that the way of seeing ourselves and the world is natural .In so doing, ideology distorts reality in one way or another and falsely presents as natural and harmonious what is artificial and contradictory-the class difference that we find under capitalism, for instance. If we succumb to ideology we live in an illusionary world, in what Marxism has often been described as a state of false consciousness. As we see later, the idea that we are blind to our own condition is in more than one way still vitally important.

In context, the lawyer's "safe" life and business refer to personal self worth and social security, with emphasis on the latter. Indeed, the lawyer's failings as a human being are in part a matter of naiveté, or perhaps willful inability to see that Wall Street merely uses people, like Bartleby and himself, as kinds of industrial machines. In this sense too the lawyer is "safe" from recognizing the essential inhumanity of his own empty life. For, in underworld slang, a "safe" man is one who typically turns his back to criminal doing, whether it is petty crime or large-scale corruption. He is the opposite of a "stool pigeon." The lawyer is a kind of accessory to and instrument of a society that is essentially corrupt because it places no value on individuals who can not or will not fit into the social system. The lawyer always plays by the rules and takes pride in his scrupulous honesty: for instance paying Bartleby all he owes in wages and a severance pay too. Language itself is an important part of the lawyer's "politic" nature, perhaps the most important part. He is not a criminal lawyer, yet his professional status and familiarity with the operation of the Tombs indicate his competence with the terms and characters of the criminal world, as well as his ability to keep his reputation clean. Ultimately, though the lawyer may yet be safe in his social status, his self-awareness may be awakened by the experience with Bartleby. At least, his personal sense of security and propriety may be threatened, so he can write with some conscious irony, even if he can not act decisively to save himself or Bartleby: "I trembled to think that my contact with the scrivener had already and seriously affected me in a mental way" (27). It is important to recall that Melville's tale of slave revolt adapts and expands an incident recounted in a narrative by Amasa Delano, an American captain.

Although the institution of slavery has excited since classical times and has occurred in many forms in different societies. Columbus' arrival in the Caribbean in 1492 initiated a period of genocide and enslavement of the native Amerindian peoples. On arrival in the Americas, slaves were sold and products such as indigo and sugar were transported back to Europe. The European institutionalization of commercial slavery in the late sixteenth century offered colonizing powers a seemingly endless source of plantation labor, exploited by an ideology of absolute possession in which Africans became objects of European exchange. Commercial slavery was the logical extension both of the need to acquire a cheap labor force for burgeoning planter economics, and of the desire to construct Europe's cultures as 'civilized’ in contrast to the native, the cannibal, and the savage.

CHAPTER-FOUR

Case of Speech and Silence in “Bartleby the Scrivener” and “Benito Cereno”

Bartleby's critique of labor and capitalism is registered through his varied refusals. Of course, Bartleby refuses to do his job as a copyist, but his refusals go far beyond that, taken to their most extreme in his refusal to eat. While haunting the office, Bartleby lives only on ginger nuts. By the end of the story, when Bartleby has been imprisoned in the prophetically named Tombs, the grub-man asks of the lawyer:' His dinner is ready. Won't he dine to-day, either? Or does he live without dinning?" "Lives without dinning", said [the lawyer], and closed the eyes" (45). Gillian Brown diagnoses Bartleby's refusal to eat as anorexia, which she suggests is a 'radical refusal to partake of, and participate in, the world,' concluding that 'anorexia secures the agoraphobic division of self form world, home from market**.** After Bartleby has stopped working altogether, the lawyer tries to remove him from his premises.

Implementing his doctrine of assumptions, the lawyer leaves Bartleby his remaining wages and, unexpectedly, an "odd twenty" to ensure that Bartleby is not "entirely” destitute (33). When Bartleby refuses to take the bait, the lawyer responds: “I’m seriously displeased. I am pained, Bartleby.” I had thought better of you. I had imagined you of such a gentlemanly organization that in any delicate dilemma a slight hint would suffice . . . previous (35). Bartleby's refusal is a refusal to quit, that is, leaving. It is, further, a refusal to accept his wages. He will not quit the office nor will him quit-settle accounts-with the lawyer. Bartleby thus refuses to work, to eat, to leave, and even to handle money, and with each refusal he maintains his motionless, emotionless manner, as if refusing as well both moment and affect. Bartleby refuses every circulation in which he is pushed to participate, and his incredible stillness is both part and product of this repeated refusal. His string of refusal is catalyzed by a very specific demand of his job.

Three days later, the lawyer narrator calls Bartleby to verify word for the accuracy of copied documents with its original. To this simple call Bartleby responds "in a singularly mild, firm voice...'I would prefer not to". It is here that the resistance. Over the first few times Bartleby utters “I would prefer not to “pillar of salts. After about of requests, the lawyer - narrator makes the following judgment: “It would seem to me that while I had been addressing him, he carefully revolved every statement that I made; fully compared the meaning; could not gainsay the irresistible conclusion.” As scrivener, Bartleby should have submitted without resistance. Yet the request is resisted with the response “I would prefer not to.” It should be noted here that Bartleby continues his work as scrivener. But no thing other than copying is carried out: " he was permanently exempt from examining the work done by him "and was never "dispatched on the most trivial errand of any sort ". The lawyer - narrator enlists the support of Turkey and Nippers and, despite their opposed moods, they are united. In the face of Bartleby's resistance, then remains the balance that was introduced before the original employment.

The tension of Bartleby's "passive resistance" a passivity that somehow “irritates "the lawyer - narrator, continues throughout the narrative. Later on, in the text he is described as "unaccountable" and “immovable" (62).The reminder of the narrative serves for the most part to demonstrate the "fixed fact" of Bartleby's response and the conditions by which it is given. The lawyer-narrator asks,” You will not", to which Bartleby clarifies,” I prefer not," this time also misunderstanding (40).

The sea has long been figured as a symbol of freedom, limitlessness, the absence of differentiation; and his "intrepid effort of the soul to keep the open independence of her sea; while the wildest winds of heaven and earth conspire to cast her on the treacherous, slavish shore" (1967, 97). Yet the world of the sailors who inhabited the oceans, "crossing borders in modern machines that were themselves micro-systems of linguistic and political hybridity" (Gilroy,12), was one of rigid hierarchy in which all were mutually complicit, the ranks defining each other and mutually dependent, and ruled by a captain of god-like status. There is natural hierarchy, based on class and capital. Melville based his story of Captain Amasa Delano's discovery of the mutiny on the San Dominick on the real-life. On that ship the slaves overthrew their masters only to reenact their own statement. Melville fictionalized a mutiny that the slaves had fictionalized before him. Denalo's preconceptions are based more fundamentally on class than on race though the distinctions of the perceived natural class hierarchy are unstable. One moment Delano perceives Beneto as a 'low-born adventurer, masquerading as an oceanic grandee" (162), and next moment as "a true offshoot of a true hidalgo Cereno"(163)-all of which is again both true and false, since Beneto is actually an oceanic grandee masquerading as an oceanic grandee. Yet while Denalo can find nothing essential in Don Beneto that denotes class. Beneto utters no sound, and can not be forced too. Having denied a voice at all as a slave, he now has the power to deny his enemies the use of his voice against him and his fellows. Babo is executed, and his head, containing mind once thought "too stupid" but now termed "that hive of subtlety"(Melville 1966,223), is fixed on a pole where it "met, unabashed, the gaze of the whites"(233), and itself gazes to wed the vault where Aranda is buried and monastery to where Beneto Cereno, finally lifeless in fact as well as in spirit, "throne on the bier, did, indeed, follow his leader"(223).

Marxist criticism of "Bartleby", in particular, takes its cue from this sense of the tale as a story of the everyday, casting it as a realistic story, with an emphasis on working life. Bartleby is the "perfect example" of Marx's alienated worker and Melville's story a parable of the heartlessness of capitalism. Bartleby the Scrivener can be studied as a labor politics. It is a complex meditation on the structure and workings of capitalism and of circulation under capitalism. Bartleby's critique of labor and capitalism is registered through his varied refusals. Of course Bartleby refuses to do his job as a copyist, but his refusal to go far beyond that, taken to their most extreme in his refusal to eat.

While haunting the office, Bartleby lives only on ginger nuts. Even, in the prison, he denies to eat. His refusal to eat and speak can be he does not want to participate in this world in any matter, which are made for superior or master. It seems that he wants to protest not by being outside the scene, but being involved in it. Nipper, suffering "Indigestion," blubbers drunkenly: "Prefer not, eh... I' Prefer him, If I were you, sir, I'd Prefer him, I’d give him preference, the stubborn mule ! What is it, sir, Pray that he prefers not to do now?" (50). The lawyer-narrator responds to this outburst with. "I'd prefer that you would withdraw for the present "somehow... I had got into the way of involuntarily using this word 'Prefer' upon all sorts of not exactly suitable occasions." Soon after, Bartleby gives up coping entirely while remaining at the office.

The lawyer-narrator moves to another building on Wall Street, leaving Bartleby behind to "haunt" the building (67). Bartleby is arrested by the landlord of the office and sent, to the Halls of Justice where, literally and figuratively, he goes to waste, and, finally, according to the lawyer-narrator, sleeps with "Kings and counselors" (75). The latter reference to Job 3.14 may present itself as a key for the text however; interpretations have a certain air of megalomania. When visiting Bartleby in tomb, the lawyer-narrator describes his experience in the following way:

“something promoted me to touch him. I left his hand, when a tingling shiver ran up my arm and down any spine to my feet" (75).

Bartleby neither speaks nor acts throughout this somewhat hallucinatory event .The activity of Bartleby and the space in which he appears are characterized through the judgments of the lawyer-narrator. In the end, "after the scrivener's decease Bartlyby is not in fact dead, but is rumored to have been moved to a "Dead Letter Office" where barring any valuables that remain to be pilfered, the letters are burned "on errands of life, these letters speed to death, Ah, Bartleby! Ah, humanity! Bartleby is neither a metaphor for the writer nor the symbol of anything whatsoever" (Deleuze, Essays 68). The strange of this formula resides in its implicating quality, a quality of negativity that places the American writer in the same league as Kafka, Beckett, Kleist, Dostoevsky, and Blanchot.

Bartleby makes no positive claim about what he will do, but merely what he prefers to do. In stating "I would prefer Bartleby simply prefer not do. Bartleby's formula stymies the speed acts that a boss uses to command that a kind friend uses to ask question or a man of faith makes promises. If Bartleby had refused, he could still be seen as a rebel or insurrectionary, and as such would still have a social role" Bartleby does not refuse to do anything. Bartleby says "I will not" his act. "High green folding my sight though not removed him from my voice" (31), right next to a window that" commanded at present no view "of the outside world at all (30). Bartleby as an employee is denied superiority while also being suspended with this denial.

Upon being commanded by his employer the relation between the two being to come apart. Bartleby is no longer defining as a simple negation. The lawyer-narrator notes that Bartleby is neither carnivore nor vegetarian. Again if Bartleby had a positive relation to vegetarianism he would continue to exist in a negative relation with carnivores. Yet, by virtue of being neither, this relation is neither of a simple positively nor a simple negativity. Bartleby is unable to be reasoned with. "Bartleby has invented a new logic of preference, which is enough to undermine the presuppositions of language as a whole." Bartleby has no homeland, no place of rest distinct from his place of (in) activity a workplace in which work finds its limit. "Why do you refuse?" "I would prefer not to." Bartleby never submits, either by negation or affirmation to the logic of either or that governs such question asked by the lawyer-narrator as “Will you or will not quit” (59).

Bartleby stands neither within nor without the law occupying a zone of resistance. Melville’s text unfolds the space of a community that is other in the stronger sense of the world. "The novelist has the eye of a prophet not the gaze of a psychologist " "Bartleby the Scrivner" is reduced to the clinical as soon as one refused to accept that Bartleby is who he presents himself to be and instead says that he must be Christ, Melville's prophetic gaze on the contrary operates at the level of possibility "Biggest problems haunting Melville's oeuvre," is the realization of a "community of celibates " "Bartleby the Scrivner " belies a certain faith, which Deleuze has affirmed elsewhere in the American community must the community of men consist of in order to truth to be possible?” He answers unequivocally:" It require a new community whose members are capable of trust or confidence". "It requires a new community whose members are capable of trust or confidence that is of a belief in themselves in the world and in becoming". For Agamben, Bartleby is the Nothing conceived as" pure, absolute potentiality. . . . To believe that will have power over potentiality, that the passage to actuality is the ambiguity of potentiality. . . . Bartleby precisely undermines the conception of a possibility that has no power its own to exist that relies on an absolute actuality for its decision .Bartleby 'I would prefer not to' is unable to be reduced to "I will not" because the utterance does not refer the affirmation or negation of activity.

The act of writing is the negation of a potential to write of, again, writing is the negation of not-writing. The problems emerge here: if writing is nothing more than non writing then one would always be writing. It is a matter for Agamben first of restoring the sense of Aristotle's conception of potentiality from among other places the ninth book of the "Metaphysics" Bartleby move from his potential the potential to write copy that got him the job in the first place to an actualization of this potential that is the condition for maintaining employment.

But a scrivner does not simply begin with the potential to write but with the potential to not write. A scrivner does not just copy but must also know what not to copy. The notion of potentiality must be confined to the human, and to the individual human. Other living beings are merely potential: "they can only do this or that” " I would prefer not do " To repeat Nippers words: " prefer not eh? ...I'd prefer him if I were you, sir, ...I'd prefer him : I'd give him preference the stubborn mule ! What is it sir, pray, that he prefers not to do now? " "Mr .Nippers ... I'd preference that you withdraw for the present" "I'd prefer that you would withdraw. " The utterance "I would prefer not to" gains its effectiveness in the context of the entire narrative." I would prefer not to "Melville's text actually demonstrates that life cannot be a life, an "immenence of immenence,...complete power, complete bliss" (Deleuze, pure Immanence 27). There is no absolutely indefinite article .It is therefore not possible to claim that "a life is everywhere" contrary to Agamben "Bartleby the Scrivner" does not reveal a life that is simply an indeterminate possibility or zone of indiscernibility constituted between the chaotic life of zone and the ordered and hierarchies bios or mediated life (Agamben, Homo Sacer 2) image of "confidence". Returning to "Bartkeby the Scrivner," it is a matter of acknowledging that even the strange figure of the law-copyist who prefer not to can only make his entry onto the sense by possessing qualifications, reference or qualities (30).

Diane Elson chastises theorists who see value as a theory of labor time, a construction in which value is determined by the amount of labor put into an individual object. Such a notion fails to attend to Marx's insistence on value as a measure of *abstract* social labor. The value of a commodity is not determined by the individual labor manifested in the thing itself but by the amount of labor considered socially necessary to produce the commodity. Perhaps a weaver is able to produce linen in five hours, but the socially necessary labor time to produce the same amount is six hours. The weaver is thus more efficient than the standard.

Yet when that linen goes on the market, it will sell at the six-hour price, not at the five-hour price. Marx's point is that price is determined (though not guaranteed) by the abstract social labor time in the commodity, a figure determined in very small part by the particular labor in the commodity, insofar as it is itself labor and so factored into abstract labor. The correspondence between individual labor and price exists but is difficult to discern, giving rise to the idea that the system itself controls values, rather than the individual labor of the producers.

Marx's insistence on a form of value apart from value itself comes from Hegel. Jairus Banaji notes that in his *Science of Logic*: “Hegel asserts that we must think of a thing as a combination of what he calls essence and form. "Precisely," Hegel writes, "because *form is as essential to essence* as essence to itself, essence must not be grasped and expressed merely as essence .. . but as form also" (quoted in "From the Commodity to Capital: Hegel's Dialectic in Marx's *Capital,"* in *Value,* ed. Elson, 19).

Hegel's formulation suggests that essence understood without form "remains devoid of any form of appearance, hence something purely abstract and hypothetical." Further, if essence is understood without form, there can be no bridge between form and essence, leaving "a world of appearances, divorced from any principle." Hegel's formulation thus allows one to conceptualize both a realm of abstraction and its relationship to the world of appearance, to the material (Banaji, "From the Commodity to Capital, "21).

Derrida critiques Marx in particular by suggesting,

> Marx believes the advent of communism will be a time when we shall be, as Aijaz Ahmad describes it, "free of all social contradictions, [when] the self shall fully coincide with itself, and being and consciousness shall be one and the same" ("Reconciling Derrida: 'Specters of Marx' and Deconstructive Politics," in *Ghostly Demarcations,* ed. Sprinker, 94). Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak critiques Derrida's reading of Marx, charging that Derrida attends only to the Marx before *Grundrisse* and *Capital,* before, that is, Marx had "discovered the secret of industrial capitalism: the creation of surplus value through labor-power as commodity." She further suggests that Derrida portrays "a silly Marx, who thinks use is good and exchange bad, that use-value is 'proper to man.'" Spivak suggests instead that Marx understood that the social *is* spectral—and that communism is not about propriety or a space without spectrality but about using the spectrality of the social to benefit all rather than a select few. "In capital's subject," Spivak explains, "[the ghostliness is] poison; for the social subject, medicine. (*Diacritics* 25)

Gillian Brown, in "The Empire of Agoraphobia," also incisively links agoraphobia with the development of the market economy. Looking at psychological case histories from Melville's time, she notes:

> A preponderance of instances in which growing technological advances, particularly in transportation and communication, are cited is the causes of agoraphobia. In this context," she concludes, "agoraphobia, the anxiety and immobility occasioned by the space and scope of streets, by the appurtenances and avenues of traffic, is an anti-commercial condition—literally, fear of the marketplace. (136)

Brown’s observation upholsters the decadence of labors while outlining some of the major implications of capitalism. In Spivak's reading of *Capital* and of Marx more generally, she suggests: “The dis-equivalence at the heart of capitalism is predicated on the super-adequation of laborers to themselves” (41).

This grammatical construction is ideal for Bartleby, as it allows him to refuse without refusing, to act without acting; his preferences are themselves refusals of any form of action. There are several moments in the text when Bartleby alters his phrase, uttering "I prefer not" instead. He uses this modified phrase only when pushed by the lawyer to answer in some language other than preference. Bartleby thus drops the "would" in order to placate the lawyer, suggesting that "would" indeed functions ,to make Bartleby's response as inactive as possible.

Melville, then, is ill at ease with monolithic narrative, though he is sensitive to readers like Delano and Crutis who expect a connected and totalized tale. It may be too far to suggest that Melville knows what comes after the New Criticism. More surely, we should note that by 1855 few Americans could describe their political scene without dwelling on the more and more prevalent themes of fragmentation, degeneration, and apocalypse. This was especially true after Webster and Clay followed Calhoun to the grave, as bloodshed in Kansas came to prefigure a widely anticipated war, and when the Whig collapse of 1854 prompted cries chaos-confusion. While the organizing conflicts of Jacksonian America centered on tariffs and banks, it was slavery that became decisive enough to server the bonds of Calhoun's union, to dissolve Van Buren's party connections, and to assemble platforms so evasive and specious that Thoreau, before calling his country a "slave-ship," would compare its cacophonous political contentions to "that universal aboriginal game . . . at which the Indians cried huib, bub!". In its leaderless, violent, fractious confusion, "Benito Cereno" is timely indeed. But just as Thoreau knows that disorderly politics are not new under the sun, Melville steers the San Bominicks course forward a more philosophical gloom.

In many ways, "Benito Cereno" is a cunning critique of a nation founded on a diverse and often incompatible body of political thought. Intellectual historians have done much to reconstruct the ideological origins of the United States, and for decades the terms of scholarly debate set the civic virtue of classical republicanism against a literal individualism associated with Locke. Recent work, however, resists this duality, advancing instead what Daniel Rogers calls a "poststructuralist reaction" that allows into play" all the messy, multitudinous possibilities of speech and discourse." Thus the intellectual plot of early national politics has become so thick that we cannot tell a unified or easily structured tale. This narrative crisis is also manifest in the antebellum ear, where studies of political discourse discuss profound linguistic anxieties at the center of national debate. As is so often the uncanny case, Melville anticipates this story. Isaac Kramanick notes, "there was a profusion and confusion of political tongues among the founders, but if "[t] they lived easily with the clatter, the author of "Benito Careno" does not” (105).

After Babo and his companions stage a revolutions abroad the *San Dominick,* they kill the aristocratic Aranda so they can "be sure of their liberty" (106). Cereno then arranges to "draw up a paper signed by [himself] and the sailors who could write, "as well as by Babo, for himself and all the blacks," thus ceding the ship to the rebels (108). This mock constitution is surely coercive, only dubiously representative, and it helps to establish a regime not unlike the United States government. In *Clarel* (1876), Melvile— like James Madison before him – compares the Constitution to a Gordian knot that "[s]ome cut but with the sword." And in "Benito Cereno," our ship's puzzling polity introduces a host of contractual tangles at a time when Garrisoning burned the Constitution, fire-eaters insisted only the right to secede, and women and blacks challenged the justice of virtual representation. Unionists like Daniel Webster placed the Constitution next to the Bible, while Richard Hildreth, the abolitionist political thinker, followed Locke in calling slavery "a permanent state of war" that "bears no resemblance to any thing like a social compact" (56). Melville, however, does not see slavery as so anomalous a condition; and he subverts the authority of social contracts by turning to the political philosophies of Machiavelli and Hobbes, who posed knotty problems for republican theories of viable representation.

J.G.A. Peacock and Frank Coleman have done much to reclaim Machiavelli and Hobbes as influential figures in the founding of America. In the antebellum era, however, both philosophers were fairly notorious – Machiavellian for amorality, Hobbes for suspect piety, both for antidemocratic tendencies and cynical views of human nature. Both put survival and self-interest at the center of natural law. Both voiced misgivings about rational efforts to order to the political world. They did advance a civic individualism that made republican theory possible, but they also called for a sovereign figure to preety a tyranny of the masses. It is thus not surprising that Jefferson and Madison often preferred the more catholic contracts of Locke, Rouseeau, and Montesquieu, who recognized the threat of political corruption but hoped that a virtuous, natural aristocracy could rationally resist the temptations of power. But when such leadership did not arise under the Articles of Confederation, the farmers reached what Pocock calls a sudden "crisis of confidence," a crisis only partly allayed by placing sovereignty in "the people" and one that remained a serious concern for antebellum political thinkers.

Hildreth and the proslavery Frederick Grinke for the most part followed the Fewderalist papers (1788), advocating an enlightened populace and an equitable balance of interests. But even the abolitionist Hildreth agreed with the "keensighted Machiavel" that virtue in the United States did not tend toward positions of power, while Calhoun (and also George Fitzhugh) used Machiavelli and especially Hobbes to contradict the "great and dangerous error . . . that all men are born free and equal." Thus even if the constitution signaled an End of Classical Politics," and even if the 1840s witnessed a peak of civic optimism, the more cynical thought of Machiavelli and Hobbes survived in antebellum America, particularly as the nation followed the violent examples of Renaissance Florence and England in the throes of civil war. This was especially true for Southerners like Clahoun and Fitzhugh, who railed against the perfectionist urges of antislavery reform. It is also to a lesser extent true for Northenr Whigs, who, as much as expedience allowed, tended to mough classical philosophy and bemoan democratic excess." Melville, however, voices a skepticism no politician could match, for "benito Cereno" slyly invokes Machiavelli and Hobbes to vex severely the possibility of any tenable republican politics.

In 1854, Bohn's standard Library released a new version of Machiavelli's The

History of Florence, and of the Affairs of Italy . . . with the Prince and Various Historical Tracts. The Prince might well serve as Babo's advice manual, so explicit as it in describing the uses of murder, terror, and dissembling. Moreover, Melvielle's "centaur" at the tiller (72) and the "dark satyr" on the San Domenick's stern (49), recall The Prince's allegorical centaur and Machievelli's infamous claim that wise men rule by both human law and vicious animal stealth. By making his tar a centaur, however, and by zoomorphic ally describing sailors and blacks, Melville takes the "double form of man and beast" that Machiavelli reserves for his leaders and applies it to every last sovereign, duplicitous soul abroad the San Dominick. The very viability of American republicanism depends on a virtuous people, and so Melville's irony is brutal indeed when he describes the San Dominick's animal asses as the ship's "republican element" (80).

If doubt remains that Benito Cereno represents a Machiavellian world, we may recall that in The History of Florence we see a disinterment, a tyrant who is cannibalized, a man who kills a prince then displays his head on a stick in the piazza, and one Franceco, yet another tyrannicide, who shares the name of a San Dominick rebel and before being executed cannot "be induced, by . . . words or deeds . . . to butter a syallable." Perhaps the San Dominick is actually Florence, and in some senses it is. By calling the ship an "Italian palace" (48) and comparing the sea to a "venetian canal" (49), Melville tricks both his captain and reader, for the proverbial stability of republican Venice will give way to Florentine violence. *Typee* or *Happar*? Venice or Florence? Such dualisms loom, especially in light of Karcher's conjecture that "Benito Cereno" and "The Bell-Tower" were originally written as a diptych. In the end, however, as with all Melville diptychs, such seeming distinctions blur. The San Dominick's fearfully balanced government is as Florentine as the supposed republic of

"The Bell-Tower," and the contract between Cereno and Babo is as defective as Bannadonna's bell, which, as a "triumph" of enlightenment reason forged in social oppression, can stand for the U.S. Constitution fatally flawed by slavery. In this way, "Benito Cereno" offers a terrible truth: The people are all Machiavellian princes, and the entire world's Florence.

Reading "Benito Cereno" with Leviathan (1651) furthers such radical claims, for aboard the San Dominick the "condition of Man . . . is a condition of Warree of everyone against every one." The story's locks and keys recall Hobbe's introductory advice that in juding the "dissembling" doctrines of others, who should also consider our own "designe", lest we (like the designing Delano" (decypher without a key". Most telling is the stern piece tableau – the prophetic "dark satyr in a mask, holding his foot on the prostrate neck of a writhing figure, likewise masked" (49). In a crucial section on political authority, Hobbes traces the word "Person" to "face" and, because faces can be "counterfeited on the Stage," to that "which disguise the face, as a Mask." In this way, the Commonwealth is composed of "persons Artificial"; for "a Person, is the same that an Actor is," and on this basis an individual can "Represent himself, or an other," not only as a metonymic figure, but on "diverse occasions, diversely," Interestingly, Hobbes uses this argument to establish the right of "covenants," for "The Actor – thugh inconstant, artificial, and masked – does, in fact, "acteth by Authority"; but by an authority seeking practical order more than essential truth, and one founded on an inseparable sovereignty, for "a Kingdom divided in itself cannot stand."

Melville, however, has made up his mind to annihilate practical masks. When Madison scattered his notion of sovereignty amongst an ill-defined people, he rejected Machiavelli, Hobes, and every republican theorist who believed that a unified concept of power was a needed defense against faction. Madison was well aware that he walked a new and dangerous path. He writes in Federalist that the "causes of faction are . . . sown in the nature of man"; and he admists that "[e]nlightened statesmen will not always be at the help" In such cases, national safety lies in a "scheme of representation" that balances interests os that any faction "will be unable to . . . mask its violence under the forms of the Constitiooon." The tricks is in the division of powers, for a system of government must steer between "the cabals of a few" and "the confusion of a multitude," a feat the San Dominick cannot accomplish with no sovereign presence at the helm and no common story to share.

Accordingly, the ship finally erupts, "not in misrule, not in tumult," but "with mask torn away" in "piratical revolt" (99). We do not see undifferentiated chaos but rather the clattering hubbub of faction – the predicted result of a sovereign people lacking a chief representative, even if that Hobesian Actor ins thespian and agent, even if he is a paper captain or a literal figurehead such as Aranda. The Old Word court misses this subtlety. By beheading Babo, "whose brain, not body, had schemed and led the revolt" (116), it forgets Leviathan's frontispiece and Hobbes's not-wholly-monarchical arguments that the head of the state is a political construction and that revolution comes form below- points that Billy Budd (1891) recalls when the sailors' "wedged mass of upturned faces" witness Billy's execution aboard a man-of-war. Thus decapitation will not dispel the murmurings of political upheaval, for a, as Melville quotes Hobbes in Moby-Dick, the "common wealth or State . . . is but an artificial man."

In this sense, then, "Benito Cereno" abides by a brutal Hobbesian logic, though Melville rejects the proslavery views of Hobbes, Calhoun, and Grimke-even while doubting the very existence of a monastic people, even in affirming Grimke's allusion of 1848: "Men throw the mantle of politics over their faces and fight each other in masks" (102). Like Grimke, Webster also lamented the excess of factional strife, proclaiming in his celebrated speech 'The Constitution and the Union" (1850) that no one held "The helm in this combat" and that "the vernacular tongue of the country [had] become greatly vitiated, depraved, and corrupted." In many ways, Melville agrees, although he ultimately suggests that the Union will not be saved and that the terrible equiopoise of slavery will finally give way to violence. "Benito Cereno" is thus a telling attack on American republican theory. By combining Machiavelli's centaur with Hobbe's mantled actor, Babo's "play" cuts to the quick of contractual civic humanism (87). For Melville, leaders always dissemble, political representation is false, political compacts are inherently flawed, and throwing off these republican fictions ends in factional strife that in 1799 to 1855 takes the likely form of a race war.

All of which poses a serious challenge to honest political discourse. Or, as Melville wrote in 1839 in precocious exception to enlightenment optimism, "What doth in avail a man, though he possesses all the knowledge of a Locke or a Newton, if he knows not how to communicate that knowledge" (qtd. in Melville 42). For Machiavelli, speech is essentially a means of deception and influence. Hobbes warns that man must take heed of words; which besides the signification of what we imagine . . . have a signification also of the . . . speaker. Not precisely difference, but not bad for the seventeenth century. And as critics suggest, quite germante to an antebellum America beset with misprision and faulty typology, commanding hegemony and clattering hubbub. This, in part, constitutes the local relevance of "Benito Cereno," though Melville speaks also to the human condition when Don Benito tragically cries that his story is "plast all speech" (81).

We cannot turn form the condition of war to a pre-social state of humanity. Although Delano spies "pure tenderness and love" in the naked nature (73), we later learn that the women rebels are effective political actors. Hobbes can turn to a "perfect speech" that is the sovereignty of God, but when our captain’s cheat their death, Delano cannot rightfully point to "providence," any more than Cereno can praise "the Prince of Heaven" without a Machiavellian twist (115). Nor can one turn to private relations in "Benito Cereno." we might watch the gregarious, needy, Delano win over Cereno's reserve. We might even pitch a psychological thriller: Man who lost brother displaces affection on brother captain who has eaten a friend. But if Melville's buddy urge is strong, in the end politics rule. At the very height of "sympathetic experience" (61), Delano verges on the terrible truth that Cereno will "never divulge" (112), and Babo convinces him "not again to broach a theme so unspeakably distressing" (61). Indeed, Babo is always underfoot – in the lengthy hand-squeeze "across the black's body" (97), even aboard the Bachelor's Delight when the Negro’s shadow falls upon what should be a budding relationship. Together we escaped a political plot but, well, we don't talk much anymore.

CHAPTER-FIVE

Conclusion

Through a long textual analysis of “Bartleby the scrivener” and “Benito Cereno,” the researcher comes to the conclusion that Herman Melville is writer of the revolt. He creates his characters as if they are unable to speak and seem to be speechless where the characters are set on the floor of protagonist. They are made speechless in a dominated and suppressed condition which becomes revolt in his most novellas. Melville fails to maintain harmony in his work; and it is not because the characters are like that but because he maps a hierarchical discrimination in the society. He also shows the pathetic condition proletariats suppressed by capital investor or ante.

The narrator allows Bartleby to stay because he cannot bear to experience up close and personally what he is doing professionally. Foreclosing on Bartleby would make too painfully real the activity he is performing for Astor and other landlords, activity he manages to hide - the wall off- from his conscience .One way he hide it from himself and the reader is by pampering Bartleby in what amount to reserve scapegoat. Instead, Bartleby symbolizes for him all those who have suffered, who are suffering and who will suffer by the lawyer's participation. The narrator’s professional involvement in foreclosures, which I call the outer story, suggests a reason for Bartleby's refusal to work.

Most commentators assume that if there is an objective reason for his "passive resistance" (646) it is Bartleby's reaction to the lawyer's attitude or behavior towards him or to the conditions of his employment. But the reason may lie, instead in the nature of the documents Bartleby is copying. He first refuses to review the copy done by another while himself copying “four lengthy documents, being quadruplicates of a week's testimony "- in " an important suit", the lawyer says - "talked before me in my High Coutt of Chancery " (644). This may well require foreclosure to which Bartleby moral objects. Bartleby second refusal is to help examine the documents he has copied for this suit.

Bartleby may be declining further complicity in the suffering of those losing homes and property. We might be sure his refusal is an act of conscience it he had replied above 'indignantly ' rather than "indifferently." Never -the less, his refusal to copy may be the only act of love of which he is capable, based on a moral disapproval that underlies his implied harsh judgment of the lawyer: "I know you ...and I want nothing to say to you" (669). However, appealing the possibility of such moral clarity is undermined by Bartleby's evident lunacy: his subsequent refusal to leave the lawyer's office.

The question of Bartleby’s representation in fact has dichotomized the bulk of the scholarship on the text into two categories: Marxist readings that take Bartleby to the representative of the alienation of the worker from the means of production and existentialist readings that take Bartleby to be representative of the alienating effects of modernity. In the first case, Bartleby’s behavior is considered to be a response to the conditions under which he labors; in the second, to his empathic understanding of the meaninglessness of existence.

Melville's choice of objects-- the bells worn by Ashantee warriors the silk cord around the king's neck and the gold chain round his body-- are all transmuted into art. Only now do we know how these objects came to his attention making this possible for him to transform some into crucial symbol in Binito Cereno. We can observe Melville's intense interest in Africa, but that cannot be said for most of us for it has been practically unimaginable the America's greatest writer seriously enough to make them major influences in his aesthetic.

Awareness of the desperate levels of characterization and experience from which the Actual we now know was created and the one- dimensional, defiantly quit but immense Negro known to Delano opens a crucial new window on Melville's multi- faceted process of characterization.

Melville decided to make use of this material while reading Amasa Delano's Voyage and travels. Much of the shaving scene derived from this source and in addition from other significant source of Melville's inspiration. The following finding is a supreme illustration of this point in Voyage and Travels, One George Howe of connecticut took sick and was visited by Delano who found his " flesh waste, till he was almost a skeleton" (Delano 290). The reader will recall that in the novella, Don Benito is "almost worn to a skeleton" (BC 169). Concerning Howe Delano States," my feeling on the occasion can better be imagined than described. We had spent many happy hours together and I could not help contrasting those times with what I now saw. In fact, Benito Cereno faints many times and, thanks to Babo, he prevented from falling.

While Beneto Cereno himself and the shaving scene are treated in greater detail on the hatcht-polishers, it is the event that the novella in, light of the George Howe revelation is, more related to American slavery than previously thought. Not just Amasa Delano but George Howe both Americans are model for major characters in Benito Cereno, which removes any lingering doubt that the novella is preeminently about slavery. To be sure, American slavery was high in Melville's consciousness while he was creating the work. And the flawed forecastle bell as Karcher and Adler have suggested with the discovery of Howe is now more certainly related to America's flawed liberty Bell. We also see the relationship between Delano and

Benito Cereno in a new light - to extend as fellow Americans. It is an interesting formulation for the Ashantee in the royal procession after whom Atufal was modeled was a carrier of objects a porter as well. Melville thereby associates West Africans with Egyptians just as in comparing Babo to a Nubian sculptor he associates the West African with an Egyptian neighbour that once conquered and ruled that great civilization. Benito Cereno relates the power of the ecclesiastial court of the inquisition to slavery and trafficking in slaves, Principle crimes of the modern era.

Melville uses the defiance of the authority to the church, which gave slavery its blessing and the means of executing the heretic to develop important parts of the novella not unrelated to Babo is the prisoner in the jail-yard. Though upon the wide sea, "Melville writes at in point that he ‘seemed in some far inland country: Prisoner in some deserted chateau, left to stare at empty grounds and peer out at vague roads, where never wagon or wayfarer passed’” (BC 200).

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