

THE IMPORTANCE OF DONJALOLO IN MELVILLE'S MARDI

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to show how Melville uses King Donjalolo to clarify our understanding of the main character, Taji. This is achieved by contrasting and comparing the ways in which they react to specific myths and the mythic roles which they accept.

King Donjalolo's controlling myth is defined in terms of its origin, conditions, and its overall effect. The chapters concerning Donjalolo are examined in order to show how the king is dominated by myth to the extent that he is unable to voyage and mature normally.

Taji's reactions to Donjalolo and to his own mythic role are also examined. Taji and Donjalolo are shown as having similar problems but as reacting to them in vastly different ways. Using Donjalolo as a foil, Melville illustrates Taji's essential character, and his use of mythic identity for his own ends. In the process, Melville makes important statements about the nature of myth, and the value of voyaging.

The beginning of Mardi is the beginning of a voyage. The unnamed narrator is aboard the whaling ship "Arcturus," seeking sperm whales. His enthusiasm for the voyage turns first to impatience and then to despair when he learns of the Captain's determination to abandon the southern whaling grounds for those of the Right whale. Deciding to jump ship, he chooses the old Skyeman, Jarl, as his companion. Jarl is reluctant at first and attempts to dissuade the narrator, but soon agrees to accompany him. On a dark night the two voyagers lower a whaleboat and set a westward course for the South Seas.

The narrator and Jarl endure a six-day calm in their whaleboat. Shortly after the calm breaks they come upon the brigantine "Parki." At first they believe the ship to be deserted, but two natives appear, Samoa and his wife Anatoos. The following episodes are vividly comic, and provide an entree into the Polynesian scene dominating the rest of Mardi. This sojourn comes to an abrupt end when a storm overtakes the ship and the shrewish Anatoos is killed by falling debris from the ship's masts. Samoa, Jarl, and the narrator are forced to strike off in the whaleboat. On the ninth day after the flight from the "Arcturus," Jarl sights a large double canoe. The voyagers

intercept the craft and find that it is a sacred canoe, bearing the high priest Aleema, his sons, and Yillah, a white woman. Yillah is being transported to a distant island where she will be sacrificed. Aleema warns the narrator to leave or be killed, but the narrator is intent upon rescuing Yillah. When the high priest and his sons attempt to force the strangers from the boat, a skirmish takes place and the narrator kills Aleema. The voyagers are forced to retreat to the whaleboat, but manage to take hostages which are freed in return for Yillah. Three of Aleema's sons pursue the voyagers, seeking revenge, and appear at intervals throughout the book.

Rescued from sacrificial death, Yillah relates her life story. Yillah's journey begins at Amma, her birthplace. Some strange magic transports her to Oroolia, the Island of Delights, while she is still an infant. While walking in the woods of Oroolia she is captured by a vine. She grows as a flower, but is prematurely separated from the vine and borne seaward back to Amma. Upon her return and reincarnation she is installed as a goddess, the wife of Apo, in the sacred valley of Ardair. Aleema is the high priest and Yillah's only companion. A youth attempting to enter the sacred valley is killed by Aleema, but an encounter with a person from outside the valley leaves Yillah restless and disturbed. War breaks out on the island and Aleema tells Yillah that she must be taken home to Oroolia. A whirlpool on the coast of

Tedaidee is to be her passageway. It is on the journey to Tedaidee that the narrator rescues Yillah.

Five days after the skirmish, the voyagers come upon the island of Odo and are greeted by hospitable natives. The narrator learns that the islanders regard him as Taji, a demi-god from the sun. Encouraged by Samoa, and seeking to solidify his position, the narrator accepts his new identity and becomes Taji, declaring himself to the people.

The voyagers prepare to settle in at Odo. Banquets are held and Taji becomes acquainted with their host, King Media. The idyllic life which Taji now leads is temporarily marred by the appearance of a veiled woman who seems fascinated with Taji but regards Yillah with malice. Later, three women bring flowers from Queen Hautia to Taji, but he misses their symbolic message and replies inappropriately. These events, coupled with Media's vague comments on Hautia, trouble Taji for a while, but the pleasures of Odo obscure his anxiety. Taji and Yillah retire to an island adjacent to Odo. One day, without warning, Yillah disappears. Taji declares that he must leave Odo to search for her. Media proposes that he accompany Taji, along with Babbalanja the philosopher, Mohi the historian, and Yoomy the poet. The voyagers propose to search the whole of Mardi for the missing Yillah. From this point in Mardi until the final chapters, the voyage around Mardi becomes the central material of

the book and Yillah is mentioned infrequently.

Kings are the primary social group encountered in Mardi and it is with a series of four visits with kings that Volume I is ended.

King Peepi is a child-king, declared monarch before his birth. He has inherited the souls of his ancestors, who continually struggle within him. He is immature and erratic, ruling by whim.

King Donjalolo is a ruler of twenty-five, declared king shortly after his father's death. Upon acceptance of kingship, he is forbidden to leave the valley of Willamilla. This section of Mardi is one of the richest and most vivid portions of the book.

King Uhia is an ambitious man, attempting to fulfill an old prophecy. Mohi the historian relates the myth that if a Mardian island moves, its ruler shall rule all Mardi. Uhia's life is devoted to his attempt to move his kingdom and rule Mardi.

King Borabolla is a jolly monarch who enjoys the best of food and wine. But his body has suffered from dissipation, and attacks of gout and his obesity often incapacitate him.

Samoa and Jarl stay with King Borabolla while Taji goes on. It is the last we see of either character. Samoa is killed before the voyagers leave the island, and news of Jarl's death comes early in Volume II. Both are killed by Aleema's sons.

The voyagers sail for Maramma, the center of organized religion in Mardi. They see a multitude of shrines and temples, but the most striking aspect is the greed and hypocrisy of the holy island. Yoomy has a cryptic interview with a man he supposes to be an old hermit. In reality, the old hermit is the High Pontiff of Maramma.

At Padulla, they meet the entire population of two: Oh-Oh, an antiquarian; and Ji-Ji, a miser. These characters are the first in a series of satiric caricatures illustrating human failings. The antiquarian's collection of curiosities and books highlights the humorous aspects of humanity. The wealthy Ji-Ji lives in a hovel. Pimminee, the island of the Tapparrians, provides more material for satire. The people put fashion above all else, to the exclusion of comfort and practicality.

The chapters on Diranda form a transition between those sections of the book primarily concerned with social satire and those dealing in political satire. An island divided between two kings who employ war games as population control offers many opportunities for either type of satire.

In the next series of chapters, the lands described may be readily identified as satirical portraits of existing countries or regions. Dominora corresponds to Britain, Porphero to Europe, and Vivenza to America.

Sailing westward, the voyagers visit the arcane

philosopher Doxodox and later land at Hooloomooloo, the Island of Cripples, where whole men are regarded as monsters.

When they reach the island ruled by King Abrazza, a feast is held and the conversation turns to the author Lombardo and his epic work, the Kostanza. (The discussion of this labyrinthine work has been seen as an apology for Mardi and its form). But Babbalanja's discourse is too full of death and revolution for Abrazza, and the party is asked to leave.

In their search for Yillah, the voyagers come upon Serenia, the center of a religion much like Christianity in its earlier form. Babbalanja experiences a vision and is convinced of the truth of the Serenian beliefs. The others in the party want to return home but Taji refuses to give up the search.

The voyagers, minus Babbalanja, land at Flozella-a-Nina (The-Last-Verse-of-the-Song) which is ruled by Queen Hautia. She has captured Yillah and seeks to bewitch Taji. Media, Yoomy and Mohi try to convince Taji to return with them to Serenia but he is already under Hautia's power. Giving up hope, they abandon Taji to Hautia. Upon returning to Odo, Media finds that the people are revolting against his rule, agitated by the sons of Aleema. Media stays in an attempt to regain control of Odo, but sends Mohi and Yoomy to take Taji to Serenia.

Taji breaks Hautia's spell and is rescued by Mohi and Yoomy. But, seizing the boat, he insists upon continuing his quest for Yillah. Mohi and Yoomy swim to land while Taji, pursued by the sons of Aleema, sails out to sea.

The sprawling voyage called Mardi defies concise definition. Many early reviewers were not favorable in their assessment of Mardi. One critic complained of the book's obscurity and called Mardi "a 3 vol. metaphor into the applications of which we can only now and then catch a glimpse."¹ There seemed to be a general question as to why Melville strayed off the track indicated by Typee and Omoo. Beyond the "constant sense of disappointment" one review concluded that Mardi has "no movement, no proportions, and no ultimate end."² Another review expresses the opinion that, in addition to the fact that Mardi was inferior to Melville's first two books, it was "a really poor production" all by itself.³ Not all of the reviews were bad, of course. One review declared that Typee and Omoo were for "the multitude" and that current critics did not understand Mardi as "an allegory that mirrors the world."⁴

Despite the negative reactions of early reviewers, later critics have found a place for Melville's flawed third book. The inconsistent, erratic writing precludes any claim for Mardi as a masterpiece, but the work can serve as a valuable sourcebook for Melville's development as a writer. F. O. Matthiessen, while recognizing

Mardi's flaws, also recognizes the transparency of direction which these flaws make possible.

You can hardly construct a coherent view of man and society from the many counter-statements that are made; but you can follow the urgent drives of his mind in the direction in which they were aiming.

This idea of Mardi as a far from perfect, but still valuable, tool for analyzing Melville's progress as a writer occurs repeatedly in Melville criticism. Milton Stern writes that Mardi, while "the least unified of all his works", is "the central book in a study of Melville's thematic development."⁶ Expressing this idea in a slightly different manner, Merrell Davis says that "Mardi, despite its flaws, is peculiarly fitted to illustrate Melville at work and is an important focal point in his early literary career."⁷

Mardi was as important to Melville's development as a writer as it is to critical understanding of Melville's work. Melville experimented with new techniques and new ideas. Many of these are carried over to Moby-Dick: anatomical digressions, cataloging, the rejection of natural theology, quest romance, and a view of the South Pacific as an extension of the frontier. Some of these themes and techniques occur earlier, in Typee and Omoo, but after Mardi they are presented with more force and skill. When Mardi is seen in this light, it is easy to see the basis of Milton Stern's contention that "Moby-Dick would have been impossible without Mardi."⁸

One method of dealing with Mardi is to accept its disorganized character and select one of the many episodes or sets of chapters for analysis. This is valuable in some cases because of the emblematic nature of these episodes. Taken together, related chapters present ideas or situations that are commented on by Mardi's major characters, or serve as reference points for our understanding of the book and its characters. The chapters concerning King Donjalolo form such a unit; they make up a powerful and highly unified component of Mardi.

A brief summary of the chapters concerning Donjalolo is appropriate at this time. Approaching Juam, the main island of Donjalolo's kingdom, the voyagers are impressed by the steep cliffs, high mountains, and rocky shoreline. After landing, they make their way down a narrow valley, through a tunnel, and into the glen of Willamilla. This Edenic retreat has two villages, one on the eastern and one on the western side of the glen. Mohi relates the myth which dictates that all invested monarchs of Juam must remain in the glen or face death, and finishes by telling how Donjalolo came to accept kingship.

The royal palaces, the House of the Morning and the House of the Afternoon, are described, and Babbalanja delivers a soliloquy on the pavement of the second palace over the bones of Donjalolo's ancestors. Near the House of the Morning, Donjalolo maintains a harem which contains a separate wife for each day of the month.

While the voyagers are in Willamilla, agents of the king return with descriptions of the outer islands. Donjalolo is bitterly disappointed by this vicarious attempt to voyage when he finds that the reports of his agents are in constant conflict. The voyagers take their leave of Donjalolo to visit the tributary islands but are summoned back for a great feast attended by twenty-five kings. After the feast, the voyagers see Donjalolo once again. He is pale, irritable and bitter. As they leave, the king turns his face to the wall.

In these chapters, Donjalolo acts as a foil for Taji and through a detailed analysis of Donjalolo and his world, Taji's quest may be seen more clearly. In The Wake of the Gods, H. Bruce Franklin emphasizes the importance of "royal myths" and writes that by focusing on them "one can perceive a careful structure and a consistent purpose in what otherwise may seem a chartless voyage."⁹ Especially in Volume I of Mardi, secular power is invested and exercised in terms of controlling myths.

Myth, specific and general, is a keystone not only in the chapters concerning Donjalolo, but in all of Mardi. A myth is an anonymous, traditional tale used to explain institutions, customs or natural phenomena. In Mardi, myth takes the place of historical fact. Mohi the historian is actually Mohi the mythologist, his history consisting of Mardi's collected myths. Mardi is a microcosm of the world, possessing diverse myths in various

stages of codification. Some myths, such as those dealing with Alma and Oro, are religiously oriented. Others, such as the "royal myths" prevalent on Ohonoo and Juam (the realms of Kings Uhia and Donjalolo), explain the workings of secular power. Each myth is a self-contained set of justifications and precepts.

Donjalolo's specific myth is the key to an understanding of the king because it dictates the conditions of his life. As Franklin recognizes, Donjalolo rules "entirely in terms of" his myth.¹⁰

Donjalolo is an intensification of that portion of all men which is dominated by a myth. He is not so much a unique case, as an abnormal development of one part of man's existence. The commonality between Donjalolo and Taji lies in their involvement with mythic identities; the difference lies in the way in which they deal with those identities. Donjalolo is essentially a non-voyager, physically and spiritually a captive to a myth. Taji is the archetypal quester, seeking to shatter the myths around him while asserting and expanding his own mythic identity as a demi-god from the sun.

The specific myth which dominates Donjalolo must be explored in detail before the importance of Donjalolo as a character can be determined. It controls the king's cyclical pattern of life, which ranges from a desire for the complete security of the womb to a desire to voyage outside Willamilla.

"A Book from the Chronicles of Mohi" sets forth the origin of the myth and its meaning for the king. Marjora, a direct ancestor of Donjalolo, sought to wrest the throne from his brother Teei. After a fierce battle, Teei was defeated and was forced to flee with a small band of men. Unable to hold his own on the plain, he had to escape to the mountains. The logical shelter was the glen of Willamilla, "the last stronghold of the Juam monarchy: in remote times having withstood the most desperate assaults from without."¹¹ Although Marjora anticipated his brother's strategy and attempted to cut off Teei's warriors, "Teei the pursued ran faster than his pursuers" (p. 219-220). Marjora forced his warriors into the breach to slaughter his brother's men. Teei's death was reserved for Marjora who then assumed the kingship. But the sacred oracle declared that Marjora's murder of his brother had desecrated the glen. The oracle's justice was direct: since Marjora killed Teei in the sacred glen "so that Teei never more issued from that refuge of death; therefore the same fate should be Marjora's; for never, thenceforth from that glen, should he go forth; neither Marjora; nor any son of his girdled loins; nor his son's sons; nor the uttermost scion of his race" (p. 220). The glen becomes a more complex symbol at this point: the security and power of kingship are coupled with isolation. The fate of the dead, non-voyaging, is transferred to the living. That this is the sole

punishment for a crime of the severity committed by Marjora suggests that the sentence may be more severe than its conditions would indicate.

In his construction of the myth which dominates Donjalolo, Melville has transposed fragments of Christian myths to a Polynesian island. The effect of Donjalolo's myth is heightened by the use of familiar mythic elements against an exotic background. Mohi's chronicle begins with a form of the traditional myth formula, "many years ago" (p. 219). The myth's structure may be expressed in three steps. First, Pride, manifested in greed and ambition, leads a man to commit a sinful act. Second, this sin is punished by physical confinement, which is extended symbolically to include spiritual confinement. Third, the punishment is not limited to the sinner but is extended through the sinner's descendants. The sin of pride and the subsequent imprisonment bring to mind the fall of Lucifer, and the third condition seems to be patterned after the doctrine of original sin. Quentin Anderson notes that Emerson's generation was "concerned with transvaluing religious values," the strongest cultural ties existing in mid-nineteenth century America.¹² But, the same technique of redispousing "the elements of the Christian mythos to a new end" produces strikingly different results in the work of Emerson and that of Melville.¹³ The effect of this redispousition in Emerson is one of renewal and growth. Melville's use of this

technique in Mardi reflects the decay and stagnation of culture; the emphasis is placed on fragmentation.

By the time of Donjalolo, the myth has come to apply only to invested kings, and not to their relatives. The heir apparent has the choice of kingship or freedom up until the moment he is crowned. Melville narrows the focus to Donjalolo, and the choice he is forced to make. The choice is intensified within the structure of the myth by the manner in which the alternatives are expressed. The ceremony performed upon acceptance of the crown shows the accumulation of the burden through time.

For the space of as many days, as there had reigned kings of Marjora's dynasty, the inner mouth of the defile remained sealed; the new monarch placing the last stone in the gap. This symbolized his relinquishment forever of all purpose of passing out of the glen (p. 221).

The heir apparent who accepts the kingship allows himself to be ruled by the myth, in that his actions are restricted by the past. His captivity is made all the more pathetic because the past which imprisons him is not that of an enduring physical fact, but the past of religion, the oracle, and the legend. The barrier at the tunnel is erected on the basis of the myth.

Somewhere in the formative stages of the myth a condition was accredited by popular belief that the king who dared to leave the glen would die at the instant he stepped out of its boundaries. Marjora bows his head before the oracle in much the same way Donjalolo bows to the myth. Marjora's profound belief is perpetuated

through time: "This persuasion also guided the conduct of the son of Marjora, and that of his grandson" (p. 220).

Melville makes some significant comments on the nature of voyaging in exploring the alternatives of kingship or freedom. In the history of Juam, three men have given up kingly power and position for "the privilege of roving" (p. 221). Melville states that this privilege is particularly the option of "a prince of the blood" (p. 221). Voyaging is an activity of worth but it fosters "tastes and predelictions fatal to the inheritance of the girdle" (p. 221). In the words of Rani, one of the three who chose to travel, it is evident that voyaging involves both the soul and the body:

'What! shall I be a king, only to be a slave? Teei's girdle would clasp my waist less tightly than my soul would be bonded by the mountains of Willamilla. A subject, I am free. No slave in Juam but its king; for all the tassels around his loins' (p. 221).

Kingship is no guard against slavery, for as Ishmael says in Moby-Dick, "who ain't a slave. Tell me that."¹⁴

As Ishmael realizes, all men face the choices that Donjalolo faces, in some form. We all must decide whether to cling to secure surroundings or to voyage into the new and unknown. In his non-voyaging Donjalolo is captive both in soul and in body. Man's corporeal being can endure imprisonment far more stringent than Donjalolo's. It is in his mental agony that the king's character becomes evident. The physical incarceration of Donjalolo should not preclude mental voyaging, but Donjalolo's

acceptance of the myth also imprisons his mind.

Once the nature of the imprisonment has been defined, Melville goes on to identify the agents of Donjalolo's imprisonment. Donjalolo's father is clearly identified as one of the prime agents of his captivity. All guidance, and restraint, is centered in the figure of the father. The impression of dominance is heightened by his remote, authoritative aspect. The father "restrained the boy from passing out of the glen" because he wishes his son to voluntarily inherit the crown and keep the lineage intact (p. 221). Marjora's motive, ambition, is not destroyed by non-voyaging, but recurs, as fathers attempt to instill it in their sons. When it seems that Donjalolo's father can no longer keep his son isolated from the rest of Mardi, the king forces a choice upon Donjalolo. By committing suicide, he brings about the necessity of crowning a new regent. As for all of Juam's princes (and for many other men), the loss of their fathers coincides with an increased need for guidance. Donjalolo's father has denied his son the needed wisdom for the choice he has to make in two ways: by his earlier imposition of non-voyaging, and by his suicide. Donjalolo does not have the knowledge brought by experience and contact with the realities of life outside Willamilla. The myth's conditions are such that the son is punished or deprived by his father. When the son is abandoned by the father, he is left to find his own way

with an underdeveloped understanding of his own character and the surrounding world. Edwin Haviland Miller views Melville's heroes as orphans, betrayed or abandoned by their fathers. Miller writes that "the heart of Mardi . is the protagonist's search for the restoration, or reconstitution, of the basic human unit, the family."¹⁵ In terms of Donjalolo, the king as a passive orphan serves as a foil for Taji, a hostile orphan. Quentin Anderson observes that "our nineteenth-century literature was conditioned by the failure of the fathers, the fact that their sons did not accept them as successful in filling the role popularly assigned them."¹⁶ Donjalolo reacts to this failure with retreat, but Taji reacts by taking up the task which Anderson assigns to Emerson: "that of incorporating the power of the fathers who no longer seemed to be present."¹⁷

With the death of Donjalolo's father comes the choice of accepting kingship (and the myth), or freedom. All men face important choices when deprived of accustomed guidance, but Donjalolo's actions are placed in the foreground. One act will determine the conditions of his existence. Although he does not have the wisdom or experience of a voyager, he recognizes the crucial questions. At first, the pride and ambition of Marjora are revealed in his words: "If I but cross that shadow, my kingdom is lost. One lifting of my foot, and the girdle goes to my proud uncle Darfi, who would so joy to

be my master" (p. 222). But Donjalolo's subsequent rhetorical question shows his fears of non-voyaging as a type of death. He wonders why he hesitates at declining the girdle; didn't some of his ancestors voyage rather "than bury themselves forever in this fatal glen?" (p. 222). This thought is echoed by Taji when he thinks of the monarchs of Juam "buried alive in this glen" (p. 231).

The questions also reveal the king's ignorance and lack of experience. Not knowing the value of freedom, Donjalolo asks, "Is liberty a thing so glorious?" (p. 222). So sheltered a son is not ready to bear the burden and responsibility of ruling a group of islands: "My sire! my sire! Thou hast wrung my heart with this agony of doubt" (p. 222). When the moment of decision comes, Donjalolo accepts the girdle of Teei, and, symbolically, the validity of the myth. He does this out of pride and fear, but also out of a certain fatal innocence. His choice has been made without full recognition of the alternatives or the consequences.

Most of the first chapter dealing with Donjalolo (Chapter 71) is composed of a description of the physical aspects of Juam, the island containing Willamilla. The entrance to the glen is a "narrow defile, almost cleaving this quarter of the island to its base" (p. 217). This soon changes as the pathway leads into a tunnel; the "keystone of the arch seemed dropped into its place. We

found ourselves in a subterranean tunnel, dimly lighted by a span of white day at the end" (p. 217). The entrance and its boldly drawn lines encourage an attention to physical details which might otherwise be overlooked. The glen is initially described in terms of its impenetrability and its circular shape. "All round, embracing a circuit of some three leagues, stood heights inaccessible, here and there, forming buttresses, sheltering deep recesses between" (p. 217). Taji's comments reflect Donjalolo's situation: "Thus cut in twain by masses of day and night, it seemed as if some Last Judgement had been enacted in the glen" (p. 217).

The "dull, jarring sound" heard in the glen is an ominous reminder that the sea is held outside (p. 217). In a sense, the glen is submerged, its surface below sea level. For Taji and Jarl especially, the sea is the medium of voyaging. Donjalolo cannot reach the sea, or even see it, but he is subjected to the constant reminder of its presence and its power. The numerous stands of trees are "still and stately, as if no insolent waves were throbbing in the mountain's heart" but, unlike the trees, Donjalolo is caught up in the rhythm of the sea's movement, and he yearns to voyage (p. 217).

It is Media who first informs the party that "aside from his elevated stature as a monarch, Donjalolo was famed for many uncommon traits; but more especially for certain peculiar deprivations, under which he labored"

(p. 218). This puzzling comment by Media, and the opening allusion to the king's appearance are the only references to Donjalolo in the first of fifteen chapters on the king. Melville does not detract from the attention given to physical details, but juxtaposes these details and the myth which governs Donjalolo.

The third chapter in the series is the first to deal solely with Donjalolo and his character. The behavioral effects of the choice he has made are clear. When he was heir apparent, Donjalolo was "famed for his temperance and discretion" (p. 223).

But when Mardi was forever shut out; and he remembered the law of his isle interdicting abdication to its kings; he gradually fell into desperate courses, to drown the emotions at times distracting him (p. 223).

Melville raises a question in his description of the king's decline. Why didn't Donjalolo consider the law of the land earlier? As a prince he should have been familiar with the law, especially as he was temperate and discreet. The mixture of pride and inexperience which led him to accept the crown, also seemed to blind him to the law. It may be that the law mentioned here is related, in Donjalolo's mind, to the remote and authoritative figure presented by his father. The law and his father both control the young king, yet he cannot comprehend their meaning or pattern.

Earlier Taji had referred to the great size of Willamilla, but when describing it in terms of Donjalolo's

captivity Taji observes that the king's "generous spirit . . . found itself narrowed down within the little glen of Willamilla" (p. 223). Melville uses change in the qualitative description of physical dimensions to emphasize the king's confinement. The movement of Donjalolo's life is wasted in the glen. The energies which could have made him a successful king "repulsed all around, recoil upon themselves" (p. 223). Donjalolo's restless energy, lacking an outlet, has disintegrated into dissipation as the voyagers observe when Donjalolo appears. He is carried onto the scene, incapacitated by the previous night's eating and drinking. "Thus vacillating between virtue and vice; to neither constant, and upbraided by both; his mind, like his person in the glen, was constantly passing and repassing between opposite extremes" (p. 224). Donjalolo's body is confined by the glen, because his spirit is confined by the myth he has accepted. His acceptance of the myth has also bound Donjalolo's mind; he cannot do the mental voyaging necessary to understand his situation.

The confining character of the glen is reemphasized as the travellers go along "a broad shaded way over arched by fraternal trees" which leads to a pathway (p. 225). The arch seems to signal an entrance into the place of imprisonment, such as the arch over the entrance to Willamilla. The path goes, on one hand, to the House of the Morning, and, on the other, to the House of the

Afternoon. These are the king's palaces and in their location, at either side of the glen, they signify the opposite extremes between which Donjalolo travels. To Taji's eye, the ring of trees that lines the encompassing mountains is "an interminable collonade; all manner of antic architecture standing against the sky" (p. 225). In this grand circle one can see the interminable restrictions of the myth binding Donjalolo.

Through repetition, Melville conditions the reader to perceive the emblematic pattern of details. When Taji encounters Donjalolo, he sees the king in light of previous sights on Juam. The king is described as "a slender, enervate youth, of pallid beauty, reclining upon a crimson mat, near the festooned arch of a bower" (p. 226).

The king's loss of vitality is evident in his mode of transportation. He appears in a "fair sedan . . . borne by thirty men, gaily attired" (p. 226). The royal sedan leaves behind it "a long, rosy wake of fluttering leaves and odors" (p. 226). Even the simplest acts, such as smoking the narcotic Aina leaves, are considered a "solace too dearly purchased by the exertions of the royal lungs" so that attendants must waft the smoke they create towards Donjalolo (p. 226). These affectations show Donjalolo's weakness and suggest that his own submission to the myth significantly increases its power. After seeing Samoa, who resembles Marjora in having only one arm, Donjalolo reclined in "the arms of his damsels.

Recovering, he fetched a deep sigh, and gazed vacantly around" (p. 227). As shown by his behavior, Donjalolo is as much a captive of his overly romantic conception of himself as he is of the myth or the glen of Willamilla.

In "Time and Temples," the narrative progress pauses while an unidentified narrator discourses on Time and its relation to Man's spirit and achievements. The chapter makes it clear that it is not only Donjalolo but all men that are captive to Time. Even for the narrator, Time is inescapable.¹⁸ In this way Melville illuminates one of the links between Donjalolo and other men. If we are led to see ourselves as captives, our empathy with Donjalolo will be strengthened. Both Taji and Donjalolo are dominated, in some degree, by a myth and by time. (Taji's myth is the mythic identity as demi-god from the sun. In his humanity, he is subject to the limits of time). The irony is created in the difference in their reactions to their limits. Donjalolo will not risk leaving Willamilla, but Taji is willing to risk the voyage of leaving the "Arcturus" and, possibly, of leaving life altogether.

Taji's reaction to the limitations of time and necessity are shown even before he adopts his mythic identity. Early in Mardi, the narrator sets a precedent of revolt, defying the "chill and dismal fogs" of North Pacific whaling, and the "unforeseen determination" of the captain (p. 6). Taji abandons the "Arcturus" to

begin his own voyage.¹⁹

Donjalolo reacts to Time with acceptance rather than revolt. His period of freedom and irresponsibility is threatened by the death of his father. Faced with the choice of mobility or kingship, he laments, "'my fate converges to a point'" (p. 222). In his dilemma, Donjalolo unwittingly reveals that Time is one of the agents of his captivity. "'Too late, too late, to view thy [Mardi's] charms and then return'" (p. 222). The value of revolt and the possibility of freedom are not effective motivations for the young king. Donjalolo does not have the strength of will or the perception to challenge the temporal barriers of the myth. Acceptance of the myth is a tacit acceptance of time and necessity. It is most fitting that Donjalolo's emissaries bear the sign of the yellow lizard "as an emblem of their royal master," for Donjalolo's existence is analogous to the "endless string of royal lizards . . . in inverted chase of their tails" (p. 225).

It is no surprise that Taji meets the unearthly Yillah, while the king of Juam finds little pleasure in his many wives. In his time with Yillah (Chapter 62), Taji finds the ahistorical, mythical time, referred to by Georges Poulet, where limits and restrictions are broken down. However, Taji's paradise cannot withstand the specter of Aleema and the influence of Hautia. As the peace and happiness are shattered, Taji is thrust back

into the real world of necessity. He reacts to his loss by embarking on the quest for Yillah. Donjalolo's glen is also ahistorical to a degree. But for Donjalolo, the movement is less encompassing; after finding temporary respite in fine wines and the Aina leaves, he is overwhelmed by pain and bitterness. Taji reacts to loss with rebellion, Donjalolo with passivity.

Of all the characters in Mardi, only Taji pushes his quest to the limits. If this quest bears the risks of madness and bondage, it also offers the reward of a very deep and penetrating knowledge. Milton Stern sees Taji as "the monomaniac, the quest figure in full stature," and a forerunner of Ahab.²⁰

Each of the characters in Mardi finds his own motion within the time cycle. Mohi passes and repasses in an ancient intellectual journey through old tales and superstitions. The philosopher, Babbalanja, says in his farewell to the travellers that "in one's life span, great circles may be traversed, eternal good be done" (p. 638). It is atypically optimistic of Babbalanja to stay at Serenia, and this may be his acceptance of the temporal plan. Taji's plan is the most bold and comprehensive; it requires the entire book as an explication. The size of his circle may be measured against the size of circles traced by other characters in Mardi. In this way, a study of Donjalolo becomes an integral part of a study of Taji's circumnavigation; it is part of Taji's

experience, his realization of the nature of Time. In "Time and Temple," the narrator's mind ranges with a freedom which Donjalolo can never experience.

There is, of course, a price to pay before the voyager can explore Time. Taji endures the voyage in his small whaleboat, but more importantly, undergoes the guilt of killing Aleema, and the pain of losing Yillah. And yet he goes forward as a searcher and a voyager. Donjalolo, on the other hand, chooses the safety of the glen, which becomes a prison of the spirit as well as the body. Taji is allowed to voyage in mind and in body, but Donjalolo has not earned this right.

"Time and Temples" begins with a small catalog of ancient voyagers. Besides adding intellectual and historical ballast, these names convey the impression of an older wisdom: the wisdom of the traveler and the adventurer. This knowledge, born of time and experience, is enduring, and in it we see what Donjalolo cannot. Donjalolo's need to voyage and experience has been repressed. In his effort to forget this need he goes from debauchery to remorse and regret within hours. The king's impotence is in direct opposition to Taji's strength of will and ability to assimilate experience.

Melville has discovered the perfect illustration for his purposes in Gaudenzio di Lucca's account of the Libyan Temple of the Year. As a symbol, it is powerful and complex. On one hand there is the physical

description of a building which is dominated in its architectural conception by Time. It is a "mighty three-hundred-and-sixty-five-pillared" temple; "whereof, the columns did signify days, and all around fronted upon concentric zones of palaces, crosscut by twelve grand avenues symbolizing the signs of the zodiac, all radiating from the sun-dome in their midst" (p. 228). But Melville makes us aware that Time is not operative in the conception alone, but also in the construction. After his description of the wondrous Temple of the Year, and a recounting of Marco Polo's story of a palace which takes three generations to complete, he narrows the focus to a single, straightforward point: "But no matter for marvelling all this, great towers take time to construct. And so of all else" (p. 228).

At this point in the chapter, Melville feels free to introduce more abstract considerations. His words communicate a need for an understanding of the human response to Time. Whatever "long endures full-fledged, must have long lain in the germ" (p. 228). Man cannot fully experience the patience of the seed; he is too new, and yet has little time left in his existence. This germ is not only the beginning point of the creative intuition but the beginning point of man. Donjalolo, in womblike Willamilla, cannot progress past the state of the germ or embryo. The puzzling assertion that "eternity is eternal, because it has been," puts the emphasis on man's limited

vision of Time (p. 228). Man has no power to affect the future, little comprehension of the past, and attempts to see timelessness in the present. But this powerlessness has its roots in the very structure of the universe. "For we are not gods or creators; and the controversialists have debated, whether indeed the All-Plastic Power itself can do more than mold" (p. 229).²¹

Two possibilities present themselves in the face of this conception of Time: hopelessness and disoriented loss, or the continuation of the quest. What the quester seeks is the "one original" from which each sun gathers the light and heat conveyed to the "Prometheuses" among men (p. 229). The artist, the fabricator Prometheus, must make use of his experience of Time, while recognizing it as an inevitable factor in all his attempts at communication.

The narrator's thoughts return to the works of man. Using words as stones he proceeds to build a grand catalog of ancient structures illustrating the breadth of the ingenuity of man and nature. Palaces, temples, monuments, museums, and graves are supplemented by mountains, caves, and natural arches. Aided by the supporting framework of architecture, the narrator extends the reality of Time to all of man's achievements and actions.

Not were the parts of the great Iliad put together in haste; though old Homer's temple shall lift up its dome, when Saint Peter's is a legend. Even man himself living months ere his Maker deems him fit to be born; and ere his proud shaft gains its full stature, twenty-one

long Julian years must elapse. And his whole mortal life brings not his immortal soul to maturity; nor will all eternity perfect him (p. 229).

Melville sees Time as endowed with an incomparable vastness. The soul of the voyager files through "Time's endless tunnel . . . and finds eternities before and behind; and her last limit is her everlasting beginning" (p. 230). The same idea is expressed in Moby-Dick when Ishmael asks, ". . . but whereto does all that circumnavigation conduct? Only through numberless perils to the very point whence we started, where those that we left behind secure, were all the time before us."²² "Time and Temples" is central to the meaning of the section on Donjalolo and to the book as a whole, because it serves as an emblem for many things. It is a miniature of the cyclical voyage that takes Taji around Mardi. The vital difference in richness of experience between Taji and Donjalolo can be directly traced to the king's lack of physical and mental voyaging. The chapter emphasizes their difference, but also moves the reader to pity Donjalolo, because he is held back from voyaging and, like all men, held captive by Time.

Taji uses Time to his own advantage. While Donjalolo permits himself to be held a captive of Time, Taji finds all things in the scope of Time. That Time is "the mightiest of Alarics" cannot be denied, but Time is also "a mason . . . a tutor, and a counselor, and a physician, and a scribe, and a poet, and a sage, and a king" (p. 230).

This last role of Time exposes the irony of Donjalolo's captivity.

The two chapters concerning the Houses of the Morning and of the Afternoon contain both divergent and common elements, but the overall impression of these chapters is of an ironic application of ideas from "Time and Temples." The architecture in Willamilla is treated, partially, as a function of the time taken in its creation. Nathalia Wright states that "the episodes of Mardi are in a sense symbols. But they do not merely stand for natural phenomena; they do as these phenomena do. Their function is to be the thing signified, with all of being's implication of movement and growth."²³ This view of Mardi is particularly well suited to the chapters on Donjalolo's palaces. The two Houses are symbols of Donjalolo's existence, but instead of "movement and growth" we see a cyclical movement leading to stagnation.

The Morning palace is "raised upon a natural mound . . . overlooking many abodes distributed in the shadows of the groves beyond" (p. 231). But the House of the Afternoon is the extension of "a grotto running into the side of the mountain" (p. 233). Each building has an implied aura of age, or placement in Time, and a sense that its character has been determined by the passage of Time. The narrator, in describing the Morning palace, postulates that, "if the time employed in its construction" determines "the stateliness of an edifice . . . this retreat of

Donjalolo could not be otherwise than imposing" (p. 231). Because the architect intended that coconut trees should form its foundations, the actual building had to wait until specially planted trees were large enough to bear the weight. Age is implied in the case of the Afternoon palace in its connection to the mossy cave which holds the overgrown, forlorn image of Demi, the chief god of Willamilla. This unprepossessing image commands only the glen, not the whole kingdom. In reality, Donjalolo commands only Willamilla. Outside the glen his decrees are ignored and his viceroys rule. Both Demi and Donjalolo are incarcerated in Willamilla, and the power they might have, as god and king, is diluted by their impotence. The name of Demi, in this case, could be viewed as meaning divided, as in strength and purpose. He is a fitting deity for the divided world of Donjalolo. Evidence of the age of the House of the Afternoon lies in its flooring, "the reputed skeletons of Donjalolo's sires" (p. 236). These relics, more appropriate for a cemetery than for a house, show how much Donjalolo is surrounded by the burden of the myth. The kings' imprisonment in coral is analogous to their former imprisonment by the myth, brought upon them by Marjora. They are frozen in time, scepters raised forever, but for no purpose. Melville felt that this emblem was important and striking enough to justify building Chapter 78, "Babbalanja solus," around the coral kings.

Another similarity between the two houses is the construction of conduits to capture and convey natural streams. At the House of the Morning, the stream travels "through great trunks half-buried in the thatch" till they fall into a "basin" from where they are "conducted down the vale"(p. 232). The sense of captivity is intensified at the site of the other palace, where the water's "youthful enthusiasm was soon repressed" and it is "trained to do service" (p. 233). The path of the streams, from darkness to light, and back to darkness, is an emblem for the pattern of Donjalolo's existence. The narrator compares the existence of the streams with that of man: "Thus with life; man bounds out of night; runs and babbles in the sun; then returns to his darkness again; though, peradventure, once more to emerge: (p. 233).

These two chapters encapsulate the existence of Donjalolo. His passivity is heightened by his mode of transportation, being borne by servants throughout Willamilla. He avoids the light by being carried from one palace to another, trying to stay in the shifting shade, "thereby anticipating the revolution of the sun" (p. 235).

The myth has imposed certain limits on Donjalolo but fails to guide the young king as to behavior within these limits. The king seeks to satisfy his need to voyage, but is only able to alternate between the roles of debauchee and the repentent, bitter young man.

Melville objectifies Donjalolo's limitations by placing the chapters on Donjalolo's palaces between two mental voyages: "Time and Temples" and "Babbalanja solus." "Babbalanja solus" takes as its theme "death and immortality."²⁴ Although Babbalanja is limited physically and mentally to Mardi, he makes full use of his knowledge and experience: "For Babbalanja, as for Sir Thomas Browne, observations on the bones of the dead kings around him thus lead to meditation on his own beliefs and doubts on death and immortality."²⁵ This chapter also brings to mind Ishmael's meditations over the tablets in the Whalemens' Chapel and his evocation of Ecclesiastes in "The Try-Works."²⁶

The pavement of the House of the Afternoon is a mosaic of "the reputed skeletons of Donjalolo's sires" (p. 236). The element of ambiguity is always present in the details concerning Donjalolo's forefathers. "Reputed" implies that Donjalolo is bound by a myth rather than any practical considerations. The coral kings are an emblem of the myth's effect on Donjalolo, the petrification of his spirit.

Babbalanja recognizes the nature of the myth, and is able to question its effects. This in itself is a quest, a mental voyage which mocks Donjalolo. The philosopher addresses the king in absentia: "Art thou more truly royal, that they were kings? Or more a man that they were men? Is it a fable or a verity about Marjora and the

murdered Teei?" (p. 236). These chapters on Donjalolo are given their depth of feeling by the possibility that the myth has no basis. The desperate irony of the situation changes Donjalolo in the mind of the reader from a king like those of exotic tales to a tortured, isolated human being. The Coral Kings are powerless in and of themselves. "'Speak to him: son to sire, king to king. Prick him; beg; buffet; entreat; spurn; split the globe, he will not budge. Walk over and over the whole ancestral line, and they will not start. They are not here'" (p. 237). The only power they have is their ability to affect men's beliefs and through them their actions. Babbalanja sees the myth as a religious tool: "But they [the Coral Kings] have gone to the land unknown. Meet phrase. Where is it? Not one of Oro's priests telleth a straight story concerning it; twill be hard finding their paradise" (p. 237).

The "storied, sickle-shaped weapon," whether it is the armament of Marjora, or the proverbial emblem of Time, has great dominion over men (p. 236). Like the narrator in "Time and Temples," Babbalanja comes to see cyclical time as a force which forms his common bond with other men, while paradoxically assuring his isolation. In moving toward this belief, he realizes that, "backward or forward, eternity is the same; already have we been the nothing we fear to be" (p. 237). The constant time-change is dizzying and disorienting.

'Nothing abideth; the river of yesterday floweth not today; the sun's rising is a setting; living is dying; the very mountains melt; and all revolve; -- systems and asteroids; the sun wheels through the zodiac, and the zodiac is a revolution. Ah gods! in all this universal stir, am I to prove one stable thing?' (p. 238).

Babbalanja is able to confront the most apocalyptic implications of the Coral Kings and the myth of Marjora because he questions all myths. Donjalolo, in accepting the condition of the myth of Marjora, has forfeited the mental voyaging of Babbalanja. The following chapter emphasizes the king's mental and physical isolation.

The starting point of "The Center of Many Circumferences" is the narrator's description of one of Donjalolo's more private dwellings: a square, unadorned building. In construction it is like a snail-shell, for "three times three, you worm round and round, the twilight lessening as you proceed" (p. 238). In the center, "the inmate looks heavenward and heavenward only; gazing at the torchlight processions in the skies, when, in state, the suns march to be crowned" (p. 240). This building is the emblem of the womb which Donjalolo seeks. The concentric circles of Mardi, the reef around Juam and Willamilla have their center here for Donjalolo. Here, he can avoid the responsibilities which accompany kingship, and forget his captivity through sensual pleasures. Melville summons the elements of the universe to aid in his description of the captivity of Donjalolo.

And here, in this impenetrable retreat,

centrally slumbered the universe-rounded, zodiac-belted, horizon-zoned, sea-girt, reef-sashed, mountain-locked, arbor-nested, royalty-girdled, arm-clasped, self-hugged, indivisible Donjalolo, absolute monarch of Juam; -- the husk-inhusked meat in a nut; the innermost spark in a ruby; the juice-nested seed in a golden-rinded orange; the red-royal stone in an effeminate peach; the insphered sphere of spheres (p. 240).

The richness of the sensual imagery in the last lines is in ironic contrast to the pain and frustration of the king's existence. This chapter presents an emblem of the diminution of voyaging. Donjalolo increases his egocentricity at the same time he submits to the imprisonment of the myth. In using phrases which move from the universe to the zodiac to the horizon, and inwards toward Donjalolo, Melville is approximating a set of concentric circles that are, in some limited ways, available to man. Donjalolo feels that to reach the center is to achieve security and peace, but instead of freeing himself by this tactic, he has cut himself off from the possibilities of achievement which experience affords the traveller.

The narrator reveals that the harem "did much to stamp the character of Donjalolo" (p. 241). The temporal nature of the harem is emblematically portrayed in its quarters, as well as the numerical significance of a different queen for each night of the month. "The seraglio to the right was denominated 'Ravi' (Before), that to the left, 'Zono' (After)" (p. 242). The women move in turn from 'Ravi' to the king's chambers, to

'Zono', and back to 'Ravi'. Any attempted change on Donjalolo's part would be met by confusion and disorder. "In uniform succession, the thirty wives ruled queen of the king's heart" (p. 241). He is indeed ruled, for Donjalolo is as impotent with his wives, as in any other area of his life. Being heirless Donjalolo is, more than ever, the archetypal son.

The chapter "Donjalolo in the Bosom of His Family" is the culmination of a string of sexual references pointing up the king's immaturity and emasculation. Earlier, Melville identifies Donjalolo with feminine traits. The first descriptions of Donjalolo present positive assertions which are undercut by qualifications to create a sense of sexual ambiguity. The King is said to be "not only the handsomest man in his dominions, but throughout the lagoon. His comeliness, however, was so feminine, that he was sometimes called 'Foonoo,' or the girl" (p. 216). At each part of the description, more questions are raised as to the nature of Donjalolo's sexuality. The sound of the waves in the sea cavern below the hills may be the beating of a mother's heart, and Donjalolo the embryo within the womb of Willamilla.

In contrast to these passages, the grandeur and phallic imagery of "Time and Temples" mock Donjalolo. Melville sets up the progression from the human embryo, "living months ere his Maker deems him fit to be born," to the potent male, whose "proud shaft" has gained its

"full stature" (p. 229). Donjalolo is unable, and perhaps unwilling, to take part in this progression.

Further signs of Donjalolo's fluctuating, ambiguous sexuality are seen in his two palaces. John Seelye points out a pattern to Donjalolo's migration between the two houses. The king moves from the House of the Morning, a "mixture of artificial and natural elements, each an emblem of the male principle," to the "womblike" House of the Afternoon with its "Wordsworthian stream of life."²⁷ This "womblike" House itself rests within the womb of Willamilla. These elements which indicate an alternation between sexual principles fits in with earlier descriptions of Donjalolo as femininely handsome. His apparent appetite for women seems cast in the masculine role, but his impotence disappoints the expectations for a king. The details of Donjalolo's sexuality are revealed step by step to round out our view of the king as "the red-royal stone in an effeminate peach" (p. 240).

In view of Donjalolo's lack of vitality, it is natural that Samoa has only "disgust . . . for the enervated subjects of Donjalolo; and for Donjalolo himself" (p. 245). But, as Melville points out, the startling reception given to Samoa when mistaken for Marjora has a great deal to do with the Upoluan's disdain. This observation is partially obscured by comic incidents. Pragmatic Jarl calmly deposits his well-chewed arva root into a bowl, although he doesn't know the bowl's purpose.

A disgusted attendant hurriedly carries the bowl away. Babbalanja lectures Jarl on his mistake of assuming familiarity with the customs of the country. The philosopher relates how Karkeke, upon entering the afterlife, assumed that taking off one's head was the proper greeting. He soon found that, because of his folly, his head would not stay on, and he had to suffer the eternal indignity of carrying it around under his arm.²⁸

In one sense, this chapter is a diversion which separates two more serious chapters. But it is also an integral link in the study of Donjalolo. The travellers' discussion deals with an aspect of life denied Donjalolo, the assimilation of other cultures. The king of Juam is insulated from change, and he and the culture around him become stagnant. This situation is dramatically illustrated by Donjalolo's attempt to voyage vicariously, Donjalolo arouses compassion when he attempts to contact the world outside Willamilla.

Though so many of Donjalolo's days were consumed by sloth and luxury there came to him certain intervals of thoughtfulness, when all his curiosity concerning the things of outer Mardi revived with augmented intensity (p. 248).

The futility of his efforts help to reveal the wasted potential of the young king. To assuage his thirst for experience Donjalolo sends for people of the outlying islands: rulers, "priests, bards, storytellers, magicians, and wise men" (p. 248). But, to some degree, these men are

all subjects to a myth, as Donjalolo is subject to the myth of Marjora. Rulers gain power (or lose it) on the strength of mythical successions. Priests, as Babbalanja recognizes, propagate myths with enthusiasm. Bards and storytellers earn their living by creating and recreating myths, as do magicians. The wise men are those elders most steeped in the convoluted set of Mardian myths. Because of this, Donjalolo cannot depend on these men to voyage for him. All of his contacts are unable to escape their specific cultural bias.

The experience of voyaging must be immediate. Donjalolo discovers this when he attempts to bypass the prejudices of his contacts by sending his own subjects out into the archipelago. Each envoy returns with a conflicting view of the outside world. Without voyaging, Donjalolo is unable to piece together the varying reports into a mosaic of the world of Mardi. Upon hearing two subjects offer different reports of the same reef, Donjalolo asks "will ye contradict each other before our very face? Oh Oro! how hard is truth to come at by proxy!" (p. 249). The realization that "Truth dwells in her fountains; where every one must drink for himself," is a crushing blow to Donjalolo, and, for the time being, he considers it more desirable to "know nothing, than be deceived" (p. 250). It does not take long for the king to become passive and pleasure-seeking again.

The travellers depart Willamilla to see the remainder

of Juam. Their observations reveal a still darker side of Donjalolo's inability to voyage. In the intervals when Donjalolo is serious, he rules with charity and compassion. But, because he is confined "in that sunny donjon within the mountains" he cannot see the perversion of his rule by his viceroys (p. 251). The lesser rulers oppress the people for their own profit, but Donjalolo sees only the viceroys' obedience when they visit the glen. Because of Donjalolo's ineffectuality, his non-voyaging, what might be good degenerates into evil. The adherence to the myth costs Donjalolo not only his power and his freedom, but also his integrity as a ruler.

Taji's party is suddenly recalled to Willamilla for a royal feast. Donjalolo appears, scepter in hand, when they return to the House of the Afternoon. The scepter is a thighbone, "similar to those likenesses of scepters, imbedded among the corals at his feet" (p. 253). Originally an "emblem of dominion over mankind" chosen by Marjora, it is now an emblem of Donjalolo's domination by the myth. Melville evokes the evil origin of the myth, and Marjora's rule. Teei's skull had supposedly served as a spittoon, a vivid illustration of Marjora's hate which "no turf could bury" (p. 254). Typically, Melville underscores the significance of the specifics of the myth through an ironic disclaimer. "Yet traditions like these ever seem dubious. There be many who deny the hump, moral and physical, of Gloster Richard" (p. 254). In undercutting

the validity of the myth, Melville also undercuts the validity of Donjalolo's adherence to the old ways. After the setback to his voyaging, Donjalolo desperately tries to escape the realization of captivity. As Melville phrases it, it is "one of those relapses of desperate gayety invariably following his failures in efforts to amend his life" (p. 254). While Donjalolo retreats into the sensuality of his feast, Taji reacts to the food and wine with a mental voyage. Taji fills his mind with space and time, letting the wine evoke the pyramids at Giza and the burial places of pharoahs. But the banquet ends in unconsciousness and Donjalolo is temporarily cut off from his impotence and regret. Silently, the king is taken to his bed.

The travellers visit Donjalolo the next morning, only to find a bitter and disconsolate ruler. His attempt to escape has only facilitated the return of his frustration and depression. Bidding the voyagers farewell, the self-pitying king asks Media to "condescend" to visit "the poor slave in Willamilla" (p. 261). As a last gesture, Donjalolo falls back upon his bed and turns away from the travellers.

The effeminate, imprisoned king is the essential non-voyager while Taji is willing, and able, to circumnavigate Mardi in search of Yillah. But the similarities between the king and the sailor are a key to their differences. Although Taji and Donjalolo face many

of the same problems, their reactions in attempting to solve these problems are vastly different. Both Taji and Donjalolo are sons who suffer the loss of a father or surrogate father. Donjalolo is offered kingship as a direct result of his father's suicide. In one action the old king has abandoned his son and presented him with a crucial choice. Donjalolo could have refused the girdle of Teei. In this case, Donjalolo's uncle Darfi would have become king. But, unable to let Darfi become his master, the prince becomes king.

Taji stands in relation to several characters as son to father. The first is the Captain of the "Arcturus." Taji declares "he took a sort of fancy for me in particular; was sociable, nay, loquacious, when I happened to stand at the helm" (p. 5). The Captain listens to Taji's complaints about Right-whaling with fatherly patience, calling Taji "my lad" and "my boy" (p. 6). Because of the change in plans, Taji feels betrayed by the Captain and decides to jump ship. In achieving this end Taji acquires another surrogate father. Jarl and Taji had already been "chummies," but when the escape plans are laid out to Jarl, the old seaman counsels Taji like an "uncle" (p. 17). Jarl counsels and cares for Taji through their visit to King Borabolla. Jarl is requested to remain with the King, and Taji reluctantly assents, although he considers Jarl his "only link to things past" (p. 243). Later, this link is broken as Taji

learns that Aleema's sons have killed Jarl. Babbalanja and Media counsel Taji yet they never achieve the status of surrogate father. Within Mardi, both Donjalolo and Taji become orphans, and join so many of Melville's characters. While Donjalolo becomes an orphan by his father's choice, Taji's situation is more complex. He abandons one father and indirectly causes the death of another. Because of his murder of Aleema (a biological and religious father) Jarl is killed by the sons of the high priest.

Although Donjalolo becomes an orphan, he submits to his father's authority by becoming king of Juam. Even death does not diminish paternal power in this case. Taji consistently defies his surrogate fathers and seeks to appropriate their power and their possessions. Taji and Donjalolo go in different directions from the common ground of orphanage.

One of the crucial points in the lives of Donjalolo and Taji is their acceptance of a myth. The circumstances of Donjalolo's acceptance have already been explored. The narrator's acceptance is triggered by his mistaken identification by the islanders as Taji, the white demi-god, from the sun. After an initial hesitation, based on the fate of other voyagers hailed as gods in the South Seas, Taji makes his choice and determines to accept his mythic role. Taji is questioned by one of the old chiefs, who asks, "What bring'st thou hither then, Taji, before thy

time?" (p. 166). But Taji is sensitive to the arbitrary and deceptive quality of all myth. Based on miracles and wonders, it admits more miracles and adapts to any purpose. Using the power of his divinity, limited as it is, Taji answers the old chief. "Taji comes, old man, because it suits him to come. And Taji will depart when it suits him" (p. 166). The narrator as Taji exhibits proofs of the old chief's characterization of Taji as a "quarrelsome demi-god" (p. 166). Throughout the rest of the book the narrator is addressed and speaks of himself as Taji. The acceptance is complete on his part until his final rejection when he says to Mohi, "Taji lives no more. So dead, he has no ghost. I am his spirit's phantom's phantom" (p. 653).

Donjalolo accepts a myth, with all its restrictive conditions, while Taji accepts a mythic role which he then adapts to his own purposes. When the mythic role of Taji outlives its usefulness it is rejected. Donjalolo is unable to reject the myth he has accepted or violate its conditions. The king's imprisonment intensifies the dramatic power of Taji's rejection.

The crucial difference between Taji and Donjalolo lies in the circumstances of their acceptance of myths. Donjalolo subordinates his freedom to the myth of Marjora, treating it as truth or as a necessary condition of existence. Taji takes the myth of his godhood for his own purposes. Taji recognizes his deceit as he recognizes

the deceit in Aleema's myth of Yillah's origin, or the corrupted myths of Maramma. It is because Taji recognizes the deceit implicit in myth that he is able to use myth to his own advantages. Donjalolo, in his innocence and acceptance, serves as an important foil to Taji and helps the reader to see the nature of Taji's quest.

It is important to explore Donjalolo's world not only in terms of Mardi's perimeters, but in relation to another work by Melville. Donjalolo's acceptance and passivity may be clarified when compared to the rebellion of Taji's brother in spirit, Pierre. Both Donjalolo and Pierre are sons who feel they have been betrayed or abandoned by their fathers. In Pierre's case, his world is radically altered by the belief that his father has sired an illegitimate daughter. Within the time-frame of the novels, both Donjalolo and Pierre are fatherless. The reader is alerted to this abandonment through a genealogy, which helps set up the controlling factor in their lives. The genealogy effectively ends in each of the novels, through impotence for Donjalolo and death for Pierre. Both Pierre and Donjalolo are imprisoned, but there is a difference in their reactions. While Donjalolo submits to his imprisonment, Pierre rebels.

Some of the same emblems occur in both Mardi and Pierre. Fruit or nuts signify a captivity to be escaped, but also the security of the embryo within the womb. Donjalolo is the "husk-inhusked meat in a nut," imprisoned

and passive (p. 240). But Pierre is able to escape, for a time.

He could not stay in his chamber: the house contracted to a nut-shell around him; the walls smote his forehead; bareheaded he rushed from the place, and only in the infinite air, found scope for that boundless expansion of his life.²⁹

The relentless irony of Pierre mocks any attempt to define Pierre's flight to New York with his newly-discovered half sister as a victory. Escaping one situation, Pierre finds himself in more serious straits and in need of security.

There now, do you see the soul. In its germ on all sides it is closely folded by the world, as the husk folds to the tenderest fruit; then it is born from the world-husk, but still now outwardly clings to it; still clamors for the support of its mother the world, and its father the Deity.³⁰

But Pierre does voyage, and once in New York embarks upon a journey of the mind which lends a deeper dimension to his quest. Pierre learns that actions, once committed, cannot be undone, for "in the minutest moment momentous things are irrevocably done . . . and Time sweeps on . . . "³¹ In spite of this, Pierre chooses to voyage, even if his actions lead to death.

Although Pierre and Donjalolo are both betrayed by forces beyond their control (interior psychological forces as well as exterior social forces), Donjalolo does not have the strength or knowledge to voyage. His path through life remains a circle of small dimensions.

The chapters on Donjalolo have intrinsic merit in

their portrayal of a man who is captive to a myth. But their greatest merit lies in the ironic tension which comes from a comparison of Donjalolo the non-voyager to other characters in *Mardi*. At first glance, it seems that most are freer than Donjalolo, but as the book progresses, each character may be seen in terms of his or her own type of imprisonment. Uhia's energies are locked up in his attempt to fulfill an "old prophecy" (p. 275). His motivation is the same greed and ambition which drove Marjora. Borabolla is a prisoner of his own body, beset by gout and obesity. Even Babbalanja is not free so long as he is possessed by the devil Azzageddi.

Taji is profoundly affected by his acceptance of his false godhood and his search for Yillah. He is held, for all his mad voyaging, "deep within the deepest heart of *Mardi's* circle" (p. 567). Did Melville, in contrasting Donjalolo and Taji, wish the reader to seek the compromise between Donjalolo's passivity and Taji's violence of action? Donjalolo's existence in *Mardi* helps make Taji appear larger than life while reaffirming Taji's bond with all men. Tommo (from *Typee*), Taji, Ahab and Pierre are all distinguished by the wild voyages of their lives. Donjalolo evokes a claustrophobic fear and anxiety as a man trapped by a hollow myth. In their own way, his aimless circles are as disturbing as Taji's mad voyage.

NOTES

¹William Jerdan, "Review of Mardi, and a Voyage Thither," London Literary Gazette and Journal of Belles Lettres, No. 1679 (24 March, 1849) in The Recognition of Herman Melville: Selected Criticism Since 1846, ed. Hershel Parker (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1967), p. 8.

²George Ripley, "Review of Mardi," New York Tribune (10 May, 1849) in Parker, p. 16-17.

³Charles Gordon Greene, "Review of Mardi," Boston Post (18 April, 1849) in Parker, p. 15.

⁴Alfred Jones, "Melville's Mardi," United States Magazine and Democratic Review, Vol. 25 (July, 1849) in Parker, p. 19.

⁵F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1941), p. 381.

⁶Milton Stern, The Fine Hammered Steel of Herman Melville (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1957), p. 25.

⁷Merrell R. Davis, Melville's "Mardi": A Chartless Voyage (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. ix.

⁸Stern, p. 68.

⁹H. Bruce Franklin, The Wake of the Gods: Melville's Mythology (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963), p. 25.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 26.

¹¹Herman Melville, Mardi and A Voyage Thither (Evanston, Chicago: Northwestern University Press and the Newberry Library, 1970), p. 219. Subsequent page references are keyed to this edition.

¹²Quentin Anderson, The Imperial Self: An Essay in American Literary and Cultural History (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), p. 6.

¹³ Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁴ Herman Melville, Moby-Dick (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1967), p. 15.

¹⁵ Edwin Haviland Miller, Melville (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1975), p. 143.

¹⁶ Anderson, p. 15.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁸ Georges Poulet, in the supplement to his book Studies in Human Time, deals with Melville in terms of Time. For Poulet the point of departure in Melville's fiction is the protagonist's discovery of his captivity in Time, and the paralysis which this realization causes. "The immobility is that of a destiny that is fixed; or, rather one which reveals its eternal fixity." The natural reaction is one of anger and despair.

Georges Poulet, Studies in Human Time, trans. Elliott Coleman (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956), p. 338.

¹⁹ It is interesting to note that a clue to the later disaster of the "Arcturus" is held in her name. In John Gould's Maine Lingo: Boiled Owls, Billdads, and Wazzats (Camden, Me.: Down East Magazine, 1975), we read:

In early Maine days, amongst deep water sailors rather than fishermen, there was superstition about naming a vessel anything which commenced with an A. Tales were told of the dire mishaps that befell the "Arethusa" and the "Alice" (p. 1).

²⁰ Stern, p. 95.

²¹ At the time Mardi was being composed, questions were being raised as to the origin of the earth. In the historical note to Mardi, Elizabeth S. Foster writes, "Without doubt Melville's insatiable interest in all that might unriddle the universe led him about this time to read attentively works on geology and paleontology" (p. 674). The new science clashed with older religious beliefs. Time becomes all the more awesome when its impersonal nature is revealed. Through religion, man could convince himself that a deity existed whose power transcends time. But in geology, Time is one of the major formative powers.

²² Melville, Moby-Dick, p. 204.

²³ Nathalia Wright, "Form as Function in Melville," PMLA, 67 (1952), p. 340.

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²⁴ Davis, p. 174.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 174.

²⁶ Melville, Moby-Dick, pp. 41 and 355.

²⁷ John Seelye, Melville: The Ironic Diagram
(Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), p. 37.

²⁸ Melville, Moby-Dick, p. 59. A similar type of story appears in Moby-Dick when a whaling captain mistakenly washes his hands in an islander's punch bowl.

²⁹ Herman Melville, Pierre: or, The Ambiguities (New York: New American Library, 1964), p. 91.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 335.

³¹ Ibid., p. 109.

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