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THE INFLUENCE OF THE DRAMA ON CLARISSA:  
A SURVEY OF SCHOLARSHIP

THESIS

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Most Richardson scholarship mentions that Clarissa shares affinities with drama; however, with the exception of three books and a few articles, there is no comprehensive study of the drama's effect upon the composition of the work. No one work deals with all areas in which drama affected the novel, and no one work deals exclusively with Clarissa.

The drama influenced the composition of the novel in three ways: First, tragedy and theories of neoclassic tragedy exerted an influence upon the work. Richardson himself defended his novel in terms of eighteenth-century views of tragedy. Secondly, Restoration and early eighteenth-century plays affected the plot, character portrayals, and language of Clarissa. Lastly, Richardson adapted techniques of the stage to the novel so that Clarissa, though an epistolary novel, achieves the manner, if not the effect, of the theater.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

English drama and eighteenth-century theories of drama were major influences upon the composition of Clarissa. As Eaves and Kimpel have noted, Richardson had little knowledge of the classics or of continental literature.<sup>1</sup> He drew the numerous quotations in his novels from English literature, and most frequently the genre of English literature from which he took the passages was the drama. There is evidence that Richardson attended some performances of contemporary plays and conjecture that he saw others.<sup>2</sup> Certainly, throughout Clarissa, he quotes from plays and often refers to the theater. Of course, it is also true that most of the lines which are quoted from the drama appear in eighteenth-century collections, such as Bysshe's Art of English Poetry and that, therefore, the quoted verses would not furnish sufficient evidence that Richardson knew in detail the plays from which he took the lines.<sup>3</sup> Forty-three of the quotations from plays in Clarissa are, in fact, in Bysshe's collection of verses.<sup>4</sup> Yet, though they seem sometimes to be quoted for decoration only, for the most part, the extracts illustrate parallels between the novel and the drama from which the selections come.<sup>5</sup> To McKillop the verses indicate the

direction in which Richardson was working and the tone he was trying to approximate.<sup>6</sup> In his first letter in Clarissa Lovelace quotes passages from Dryden's Tyrannick Love, saying that the last three lines describe "the passions in my stormy soul":

Love various minds does variously inspire:  
 He stirs in gentle natures gentle fire;  
 Like that of Incense on the Altars laid:  
 But raging flames tempestuous Souls invade.  
 A fire which every windy passion blows;  
 With Pride it mounts, and with Revenge it glows.  
(I, 147)<sup>7</sup>

These lines are one example of the way in which Richardson used dramatic verse for characterization. Lovelace's early description of himself should prepare the reader for the Lovelace of the later volumes.

Richardson discouraged all efforts to connect himself with previous prose fiction. The reason he disliked the temporary preface to Clarissa written by Warburton was that Warburton, by describing the history of prose fiction, seemed to indicate that prior fiction influenced the composition of his novel.<sup>8</sup> Richardson rarely mentions other novelists; when he does, it is often to deny that he has read them.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, he took several opportunities to disavow any connection between himself and prior prose fiction. To Aaron Hill, Richardson wrote that he intended "more than a Novel or Romance by this piece," namely a work of "the Tragic

Kind."<sup>10</sup> Among Richardson's papers are several sheets called "Hints of Prefaces for Clarissa," which, with the exception of two, seem to have been put together by Richardson.<sup>11</sup> In "Hints of Prefaces" he warns that "they who read Romances and Novels, being Accustomed to a Variety of Intrigues and Adventures, thro' which they are hurried to the Castrophe; when they take up Clarissa, not considering that it is another kind of Work, or rather a new Species of Novel, are apt to think it tedious."<sup>12</sup> He further warns the reader not to expect a happy ending like those of the authors of "Novels and Romances, who always make their Heroes and Heroines contend with great Distresses (the more romantic, with them, the better) and who seem to think they have done everything, when they have joined the Lovers Hands."<sup>13</sup>

In his correspondence, as well as in Clarissa, Richardson makes references to and is critical of the theater. He attributes the success of The Orphan by Otway to its presentation of events as "they appear purely in Nature" (Letters, pp. 105). This criticism would seem to indicate that he had seen some plays, at least enough to know what he did not like. In another letter Richardson mentions having seen Shakespeare performed (Letters, p. 250). In the novel itself, Belford discusses the relationship between Clarissa and the heroine of The Fair Penitent (IV, 117-118), and Lovelace takes Clarissa to see Venice Preserved (II, 372). Too, there are

works by several dramatists in the library at Sinclair's (II, 194).

Certainly Lovelace gives a description of playgoing that seems to indicate Richardson's acquaintance with the theatre:

I have never given noisy or tumultuous instances of dislike to a new play, if I thought it ever so indifferent: for I concluded, first, that every one was entitled to see quietly what he paid for: and, next, as the theatre (the epitome of the world) consisted of pit, boxes, and gallery, it was hard, I thought, if there could be such a performance exhibited as would not please somebody in that mixed multitude. (IV, 35)

This description comes close to the actual condition in the playhouses as they are described by Allardyce Nicoll in his history of the theatre during the Restoration.<sup>14</sup>

Another kind of evidence of Richardson's connection with and knowledge of the drama is that as a printer he published several works in the genre, fourteen of which have been identified by William M. Sale.<sup>15</sup> He also published discussions on the drama, such as Aaron Hill's essays on the drama in the Prompter<sup>16</sup> and Hill's theories on acting, the Art of Acting.<sup>17</sup> In addition McKillop has identified two pamphlets--The Apprentice's Vade Mecum (1733) and A Seasonable Examination of the Pleas and Pretensions of the Proprietors of, and Subscribers to, Play-houses, Erected

in Defiance of the Royal License (1735)--which he attributes to Richardson.<sup>18</sup> In the Apprentice's Vade Mecum Richardson discusses the playhouse and contemporary drama; in the second pamphlet, he repeats many of his earlier criticisms of the theater found in Vade Mecum. Both works further demonstrate his interest in and knowledge of the drama.

Another revealing aspect of Richardson's link to the drama is his friendships. Among his friends were Colley Cibber, playwright and actor; Aaron Hill, playwright, essayist, and drama critic; Edward Young, poet and playwright; David Garrick, actor and theater manager; and Edward Moore, playwright. It is a reasonable assumption that Richardson shared the interest of these friends, particularly that of Aaron Hill, who was his closest male friend and with whom he carried on a fifteen-year correspondence.<sup>19</sup>

Richardson was, then, knowledgeable about the drama, though this knowledge seems to have been unsystematic and incomplete, gained partly from books, partly from attendance at the theater, and partly from the men with whom he associated.<sup>20</sup> The question to be dealt with is how this association with the drama affected the composition of Clarissa, a question which scholars, with a few recent exceptions, have dealt with only briefly. The purpose here is to bring



together all scholarship relating to the influence of drama upon Clarissa.

Some early critics mention the influence of drama upon Richardson. Walter Raleigh in The English Novel, 1894, pointed out the similarity between the drama and Clarissa: "It is as if the novel were merely a play with its framework of stage directions expanded for the ease of the reader."<sup>21</sup> In 1900, Wilbur Cross noted that Richardson was indebted to the drama "somewhat in the way of character, much more in the way of plot and structure." He saw the novel as largely composed of "dramatic dialogue within the letters." Cross also pointed out the similarity between Clarissa and the bourgeois tragedy of the early eighteenth century. Two other points made by Cross were that Richardson derived from drama a time limit, his idea being that the occurrences of any one day be related on that day, and that he compressed the story within the time period of one year, a conscious extension of the "dramatist's one day."<sup>22</sup> In 1902, Austin Dobson mentioned the possibility that Lothario in The Fair Penitent might have been a model for Lovelace,<sup>23</sup> a theory already espoused by Richardson's contemporary Dr. Johnson in his "Life of Rowe."<sup>24</sup>

Other than the works of these men and Alan McKillop's biography of Richardson published in 1936, the influence of

the drama upon Richardson's novels has received scant attention until the last fifteen years. Generally this recent scholarship centers in three areas: the influence of the theories of neoclassic tragedy, of the drama of the Restoration and early eighteenth century, and of the use of techniques of the drama.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, Samuel Richardson: A Biography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 569-570.

<sup>2</sup> Eaves and Kimpel, p. 582.

<sup>3</sup> Eaves and Kimpel, p. 572; Ira Konigsberg, Samuel Richardson and the Dramatic Novel (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968), p. 9; Alan D. McKillop, Samuel Richardson: Printer and Novelist (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), p. 141.

<sup>4</sup> Eaves and Kimpel, p. 572.

<sup>5</sup> Konigsberg, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Samuel Richardson, p. 141.

<sup>7</sup> Citations from Clarissa are from Everyman's Library Edition (New York: E. P. Dutton Company, 1932). They will be given in the text by volume and page; John Dryden, Tyrannick Love, in The Works of John Dryden, ed. H. T. Swedenberg, Jr., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), X, 136.

<sup>8</sup> Eaves and Kimpel, p. 583; McKillop, Samuel Richardson, p. 139.

<sup>9</sup> Eaves and Kimpel, p. 584.

<sup>10</sup> John Carroll, ed., Selected Letters of Samuel Richardson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 99 (Hereafter cited in the text as Letters).

<sup>11</sup> Eaves and Kimpel, p. 308.

<sup>12</sup> Samuel Richardson, Clarissa: Preface, Hints of Prefaces, and Postscript, Augustan Reprint Society Pub. No. 103 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p. 7.

- 13 Ibid., p. 2.
- 14 A History of English Drama, 4th ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), I, 16-17.
- 15 Samuel Richardson: Master Printer (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1950), pp. 146-223.
- 16 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 60; McKillop, Samuel Richardson, p. 142.
- 17 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 170.
- 18 "Samuel Richardson's Advice to an Apprentice," JEGP, 42 (1943), 40; "Richardson's Early Writings--Another Pamphlet," JEGP, 53 (1954), 72.
- 19 Konigsberg, pp. 12-16.
- 20 McKillop, Samuel Richardson, p. 142.
- 21 The English Novel, 5th ed. (1894; rpt. New York: Scribner's, 1905), p. 36.
- 22 The Development of the English Novel (New York: Macmillan, 1900), pp. 36-37.
- 23 Samuel Richardson (London: Macmillan, 1902), p. 13.
- 24 Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birbeck Hill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), II, 67.

## CHAPTER II

### CLARISSA: THE INFLUENCE OF TRAGEDY AND TRAGIC THEORY

In "Hints of Prefaces" Richardson writes that Clarissa is "intended to be of the Tragic Species."<sup>1</sup> He further writes in a letter to Aaron Hill: ". . . I intend more than a Novel or Romance by this piece; and that it is of the Tragic Kind" (Letters, p. 99). Not only did Richardson refer to his work as of the "tragic species" but so did his friends. Aaron Hill wrote to Richardson: "With how much justice, dear Sir, do you tell me, your Clarissa is a work of tragic species!--Every branch of my attentive family can prove it true, by an experienced demonstration! I am moved more strongly, almost every where, throughout this series of enchantments, than any Tragedy, I ever met with." In another letter Hill writes: "Why does your postscript waste a word about poetic justice? You move through every not to be described enchantment of this amiably killing process, more forcibly, than in all the Tragedies of all the nations in the world, from Athens down to Otway."<sup>2</sup>

Richardson himself undertook a defense of the plot of Clarissa as tragedy. In the postscript to the novel, he defends Clarissa in terms of neoclassic concepts of tragedy (IV, 553-556), quoting scholarly works on tragedy by both

Addison and Rapin. Also in the postscript, Richardson quotes Aristotle, as interpreted by Addison:

Mr. Addison . . . tells us, that Aristotle, in considering the tragedies that were written in either of the kinds, observes, that those which ended unhappily had always pleased the people, and carried away the prize, in the public disputes of the state, from those that ended happily. (IV, 554)

To further justify his tragic ending, Richardson quotes Rapin's Reflections on Aristotle's Treatise of Poesie (IV, 556). Certainly Richardson devoted a great deal of effort to defend the ending of Clarissa to his readers, many of whom wished the heroine to be made happy. To Lady Bradshaigh he wrote to defend his ending in dramatic terms: "To have given her her reward here, as in a happy Marriage, would have been as if a Poet had placed his Catastrophe in the Third Act of his Play, when the Audience were obliged to expect two more" (Letters, p. 108). His friend Edward Young defended his ending, again in terms of drama: "Your critics, on seeing the first two or three acts of Venice Preserved, the Orphan, and Theodosius [sic], would have advised that the innocent and amiable Belvideras, Monimias, and Athenias, should be made happy; and thus would have utterly ruined our three best plays."<sup>3</sup>

A concurrent problem arising from the tragic ending of Clarissa was the concept of poetic justice. The subject arises in the novel when Belford muses:

What a fine subject for tragedy would be the injuries of this lady, and her behavior under them, both with regard to her implacable friends, and to her persecutor, make! What a grand objection as to the moral, nevertheless; for here virtue is punished! (IV, 117-118)

In a note Richardson disagrees:

Mr. Belford's object, that virtue ought not to suffer in a tragedy, is not well considered, Monimia in the Orphan, Belvidera in Venice Preserved, Athenais in Theodosius, Cordelia in Shakespeare's King Lear, Desdemona in Othello, Hamlet (to name no more), are instances that a tragedy could hardly be justly called a tragedy, if virtue did not temporarily suffer and vice for a while triumph. (IV, 118)

Though he quotes Addison's argument against poetic justice from Spectators 40 and 548, Richardson concludes that he has actually satisfied poetic justice: ". . . the notion of poetic justice, founded on the modern rules, has hardly ever been more strictly observed in works of this nature, than in the present performance" (IV, 557).<sup>4</sup> Addison had called poetic justice a "ridiculous Doctrine in Modern Criticism."<sup>5</sup> John Dennis, on the other hand, wrote that "every Tragedy, ought to be a very solemn Lecture, and shewing it plainly protecting the Good, and chastizing the Bad, or at least the Violent; and that, if it is otherwise, it is an empty Amusement or a scandalous and pernicious Libel upon the Government of the World."<sup>6</sup> Both men based

their arguments on Aristotle's Poetics, it being the "chief source of misconception" for the neoclassic critic.<sup>7</sup>

Aristotle clearly had not advocated poetic justice in the neoclassic sense of meeting out justice to the virtuous and the villainous.<sup>8</sup> Aristotle, in fact, in Book XIII of the Poetics, condemns the tragedy that has "an opposite catastrophe for the good and for the bad."<sup>9</sup> Disregarding this prohibition, John Dennis went even further in his "Usefulness of the Stage" to suggest "future Rewards and Punishments," poetic justice in the hereafter.<sup>10</sup> It is this version which Richardson ultimately followed to satisfy poetic justice in Clarissa, Dennis's concept of poetic justice, which allowed the death of a flawed protagonist if his virtues were rewarded in the hereafter.<sup>11</sup> Clarissa's reward was a heavenly one, Richardson writes in the Postscript (IV, 554, 558). Not only did Clarissa receive poetic justice but also all the other characters received their just reward. The good people, such as Anna Howe and Mrs. Norton, were assigned happy lives; the villainous were punished:

For, is not Mr. Lovelace, who could persevere in his villainous views, . . . --is not this great, this wilful transgressor, condignly punished, and his punishment brought on through the intelligence of the very Joseph Leman whom he had corrupted; and by means of the very woman whom he had debauched--is not Mr. Belton, who has an uncle's hastened death to answer for--are not the whole Harlowe family--is not the vile Tomlinson--are not the infamous Sinclair



and her wretched partners--and even the wicked servants, who, with their eyes open, contributed their parts to the carrying on of the vile schemes of their respective principals--are they not all likewise exemplarily punished? (IV, 557-558)

Eighteenth-century critics were in agreement concerning the character of the tragic hero and in agreement with Aristotle,<sup>12</sup> who said that the character of the hero should be that of a man who was "not eminently good and just," yet whose misfortune is brought on not by vice or depravity, but by some error or frailty.<sup>13</sup> Since in its widest sense the function of tragedy for the neoclassicist was to imitate nature, this definition of the hero was suitable.<sup>14</sup> It was not natural for any tragic hero to be perfect since no man was perfect. Addison emphasized this view in the Spectator No. 548:

Our Goodness being of comparative, and not an absolute Nature there is none who in strictness can be called a Virtuous Man. Every one has in him a natural Alloy, tho' one may be fuller of Dross than another: For this reason I cannot think it right to introduce a perfect or a faultless Man upon the Stage; not only because a Character is improper to move Compassion, but because there is no such thing in Nature.<sup>15</sup>

Richardson, in keeping with the critical opinion of his day, gave Clarissa a tragic flaw, though in his correspondence, he contradicted himself on the matter of Clarissa's responsibility for her downfall.<sup>16</sup> To Aaron Hill, Richardson wrote

that he "intended to make her so faultless, that a Reader should find no way to account for the Calamities she met with . . ." (Letters, p. 73). Yet other statements made by Richardson and the text of the novel itself disprove this remark. He intended that the first step with Lovelace should be her first error.<sup>17</sup> In "Hints of Prefaces," a Reverend Spence says that Clarissa takes but one false step which puts her into Lovelace's power and occasions all her suffering.<sup>18</sup> Agreeing, Richardson writes that Clarissa's misfortunes were a result "of her first Error, of Corresponding with Lovelace against Prohibition" (Letters, p. 201).

When Lady Bradshaigh suggested that Clarissa be made a victim of pure accident, Richardson replied in a marginal note in her book: "I did not want her to be wholly blameless."<sup>19</sup> He said the same thing in a letter to Aaron Hill: "My Girl is thought over nice by many, I find: But I think I could defend her in all her Delicacies--And yet, I would that she should have some little things to be blamed for, tho' nothing in her will . . ." (Letters, pp. 87-88). And to Sarah Chapone: "I designedly drew Clarissa with some Defects in Judgment, and that even in palpable Cases, in order to give an Air of Probability to the Character. And I have made her ever ready to point out, and accuse herself of these Faults."<sup>20</sup> Further, he writes that he had "no

Apprehension so strong, when I was writing the History of Clarissa, as that I should make her Character too perfect to be natural."<sup>21</sup>

It is clear that Richardson intended Clarissa to have some culpability for her fall. Perhaps the reason Richardson sometimes contradicted himself is that his moral purpose at times conflicted with his tragic purpose. He wanted Clarissa to be an example to her sex; yet he wanted her to have a flaw, to bring about her own misfortunes. In the context of the novel, regardless of what Richardson said in his correspondence, Clarissa acknowledges the flaw which led to the fatal first step: pride.<sup>22</sup>

Early in the novel, Clarissa in a letter to Anna Howe examines herself by asking a question: ". . . is not vanity, or secret love of praise, a principal motive with me at the bottom?" (I, 92). Later, again writing to Miss Howe, she says that she is the pride of all her friends, "proud myself of their pride, and glorying in my standing" (I, 419). Further in the same letter, Clarissa continues, saying that her misfortunes have caused her "to turn my gaudy eye inward; to make me look into myself! And what have I discovered there? Why, my dear friend, more secret pride and vanity than I could have thought had lain in my unexamined heart" (I, 419-420). After having castigated herself for her pride, she suggests that she may have been "singled out . . . to be

a very unhappy creature! --signally unhappy!" (I, 419). Is this not pride also?<sup>23</sup>

Clarissa suspects pride is at the root of her attempts to reconcile Lovelace and her family.<sup>24</sup> She calls it the "height of folly" (I, 413). "I am afraid that I have thought myself of too much consequence. But however this be, it is good, when calamities befall us, that we should look into ourselves, and fear" (I, 413). Her troubles were "all originally, through [her] own fault; so [she] ought to bear punishment without repining" (IV, 178).

After her crisis is over and she has become resigned to her situation, Clarissa comes to the same conclusion and acknowledges her pride in a letter to her uncles:

But perhaps I was too apt to value myself upon the love and favour of every one: the merit of the good I delighted to do, and of the inclinations which were given me, and which I would not help having, I was, perhaps too ready to attribute to myself; and now, being led to account for the cause of my temporary calamities, find I had a secret pride to be punished for, which I had not fathomed: and it was necessary perhaps that some sore and terrible misfortunes should befall me, in order to mortify that my pride and that my vanity" (IV, 364-365).

Clarissa, in fact, says it all metaphorically in the story she tells of a lady and a lion. She is at the time in a state of derangement following the rape. She tells the tale of a lady who took a fancy to a lion (or a bear cub). It became like a lapdog. At some later time, the lady

displeased it in some way, and it reverted to its nature and killed her. Clarissa asks, "And who was most to blame, I pray? The brute, or the lady? The lady, surely! For what she did was out of nature, out of character, at least: what it did was in its own nature" (III, 206).

The evidence of a flaw or error in the heroine is convincing and supports the view that Richardson meant Clarissa to have some imperfection with which to blame herself. It is true, however, that he weakened this purpose somewhat, mostly in response to criticisms by his readers, by making Clarissa's character nobler and by darkening Lovelace's character.<sup>25</sup>

Just as the hero could not be perfect so the neoclassic critic felt the villain should have some virtue in him.<sup>26</sup> For example, Dryden, in the "Preface to Troilus and Cressida, said that to produce a villain, "without other reason than a natural inclination to villainy, is, in Poetry, to produce an effect without a cause."<sup>27</sup> Dennis, in his criticism of the character of Cato in Addison's tragedy of the same name as too virtuous, added that "those of Sempronius and Syphax are too scandalous for any tragedy."<sup>28</sup> Richardson points out in his Preface to Clarissa that Lovelace and his fellow rakes are not "infidels or scoffers, not yet such as think themselves freed from the observance of those other moral duties which bind man to man" (I, xiii). He also wrote to Aaron Hill that

he intended Lovelace to have "some Qualities in him, laudable enough to justify her [Clarissa's] first liking (Letters, p. 74). Later, writing to the same correspondent, Richardson says of Lovelace that he aimed "at an uncommon, altho' I supposed, a not quite unnatural Character" (Letters, p. 79). Again, in another letter to Aaron Hill, Richardson writes that just as he wished Clarissa to have something to blame herself for so he wanted Lovelace to have "something to say for himself to himself, tho' it could not have weight to acquit him with the rest of the World" (Letters, p. 88). Lovelace is well-motivated for his evil acts; he has had an unhappy love affair, and he has been treated badly by the Harlowes. In fact, Lovelace's character is much more attractive than that of Clarissa's family or of Solmes. He seems to be an appealing alternative to Solmes. Certainly, he is handsome, charming, physically courageous, and a generous landlord. All who encounter him in the novel are attracted to him. Belford, for instance, cares for him, even after Clarissa's death. As the novel progresses, however, Lovelace is led by his pride into more and more evil, relishing power over others above all else. Consequently, his generosity, for example, is false as he is generous only when his power is acknowledged. It is when his power is recognized that he displays feeling for Rosebud and arranges for her to marry the boy she loves. Lovelace is, then, what

Richardson intended him to be, a morally complex man who has good qualities intermingled with the bad.

Though neoclassic critics agreed that the tragic hero should be a man "who is not eminently good and just," nor eminently bad, they disagreed in regard to the rank of the hero. By nobility, Aristotle meant moral goodness; some critics, however, misinterpreted his meaning and thought he meant that the hero must be of noble rank, whereas others felt that the hero did not have to be of the nobility but rather a private person, though a person of quality. Some critics, then, considered royal tragedy as more moving; others, domestic tragedy.<sup>30</sup>

Thus, though Richardson's heroine is not of noble rank, many of the neoclassic critics would not have found fault with her as a tragic heroine. Even so, the choice of a middle class protagonist did not free him from efforts to make his novel conform to neoclassic doctrine concerning tragedy.<sup>31</sup> It did, however, move him closer to the domestic tragedy of his contemporaries.

Aristotle was specific concerning unity of action; the plot is an imitation of an action and one action only.<sup>32</sup> The concentration of the plot of Clarissa on one conflict, therefore, resembles that of classic tragedy.<sup>33</sup> Richardson notes in his postscript that his is a story told "without the aid of digressions and episodes foreign to the principal end

and design" (IV, 562). In "Hints of Prefaces" he further writes that judges will see that "long as the Work is, there is not one Digression, not one Episode, not one Reflection, but that arises naturally from the Subject, and makes for it, and to carry it on."<sup>34</sup> Richardson, as he himself points out, adhered to the doctrine, Aristotelian and neoclassic, of unity of action.

The other two unities were not Aristotelian canons, although Aristotle in the Poetics does say that "Tragedy endeavours, as far as possible, to confine itself to a single revolution of the sun, or but slightly to exceed this limit."<sup>35</sup> For the neoclassical writers this statement, which seems to have been one of historical fact only, became law.<sup>36</sup> Both the unities of time and place were the subject of much debate among the neoclassicists.<sup>37</sup> There is in Aristotle's work nothing that could be interpreted as a statement of unity of place, though there were many neoclassic writers who believed unity of place essential.<sup>38</sup> Both Wilbur Cross and Ira Konigsberg believe that Richardson, with modification, tried to satisfy unity of time. Konigsberg observes that "the ratio of the time sequence of Clarissa to its length is proportionate to the ratio of the time sequence of a neoclassic tragedy to its length." Clarissa covers less than a year; the first letter is dated 10 January and the last one 18 December. Other prose fiction written earlier, such as that



of Defoe, covered entire lifetimes of its characters. That Richardson imposes a time restriction of one year may be another indication of the influence of tragic theory upon *Clarissa*.<sup>39</sup>

The function of tragedy, according to Aristotle, was to effect the proper purgation of the emotions of pity and fear.<sup>40</sup> The eighteenth century stated this doctrine another way: that the proper function of tragedy, and indeed of all literature, was to teach and delight.<sup>41</sup> Richardson sought to suit his novel to this requirement. He wrote Lady Bradshaigh that "Terror and Fear and Pity are Essentials in a Tragic Performance" (Letters, p. 105). Earlier he discussed how he met this requirement: "Nor that I should do well if I punished not so premeditated a Violation; and thereby made Pity on her Account, and Terror on his, join to complete my great End, for the sake of Example and Warning" (Letters, p. 104). Richardson weighted his story on the side of pity, writing in the postscript to the novel that "the tragic poets have . . . seldom made their heroes true objects of pity" (IV, 553).

The ending of Clarissa sounds another note similar to tragedy, "that acceptance of destruction and ruin which purifies us of bitterness and repining and which may . . . be what Aristotle meant by his mysterious 'catharsis.'"<sup>42</sup> This note of acceptance becomes marred by the novel's lengthy

drawing out, but it is, nonetheless, there. Clarissa forgives everyone, even Lovelace, and calmly prepares for death, reconciled to the reversal that has taken place in fortunes. There is triumph in her dying. She tells her brother in a posthumous letter that it is "good for me that I was afflicted!" (IV, 346).

Prevading the novel is a sense of fate. Clarissa tells her ex-suitor Wyerley that "there was a kind of fatality by which our whole family was impelled" (IV, 204). And earlier she writes Anna Howe: "Strange I may well call it; for don't you see, my dear, that we seem all to be impelled, as it were, by a perverse fate which none of us is able to resist? And yet all arising . . . from ourselves?" (I, 419). Lovelace says of Belford, "Fate, I believe, in my conscience, spins threads for tragedies, on purpose for thee to weave with" (IV, 450). Over all, throughout the novel, is a feeling of impending doom which creates tension in the reader.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps the best example of this is Clarissa's foreboding dream of herself being buried alive by Lovelace and thrown into a pit with other bodies (III, 206). Further, the letter to Belford creates tension as soon as Clarissa is in Lovelace's power. For example, the reader knows the situation Clarissa is in at Mrs. Sinclair's brothel, but Clarissa does not know. A similar kind of tension is created in the fatal duel. The reader knows that Lovelace is going to die; yet he is held in suspense through several intervening letters before the note written

by Lovelace's servant arrives announcing his death, a device not uncommon in Greek plays in which the violent acts occur offstage and are described by servants or strangers.<sup>44</sup>

Clarissa is similar to tragedy in another way. Both share the characteristic of partial vision. The four principal correspondents do not all see completely; their knowledge of a given event is often distorted. It is not until Belford agrees to use certain portions of Lovelace's letters that the complete picture can come into focus. Clarissa is anxious that she be vindicated after her death, that the whole story be told. This truth Belford promises her. The truth has been hidden from most of the characters; Lovelace with his plots and intrigues often obscures the vision of other characters, particularly Clarissa's. Yet, even Lovelace, after Clarissa is at the Smith's and out of his power, is able to see but partially. Belford furnishes him with the information he gets, and Lovelace must wait for Belford's letters. To the other characters, the Harlowes, Miss Howe, Lord M., Colonel Morden, an understanding of Clarissa's tragedy comes slowly and too late.<sup>45</sup>

Though no one claims that the original impetus for Clarissa came from the drama or that Richardson received his primary inspiration from tragic theory or tragic drama, it seems certain from his own statements and from textual evidence within the novel that Richardson, once he began Clarissa,

tried to satisfy the requirements of tragedy.<sup>46</sup> At least, it is as Eaves and Kimpel suggest that the novel and tragedy share a similar view of mankind.<sup>47</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Richardson, Clarissa: Preface, Hints of Prefaces, and Postscript, Augustan Reprint Society Pub. No. 103 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> The Works of the Late Aaron Hill, Esq., 2nd ed. (London: n.p., 1754), II, 331-333.

<sup>3</sup> Anna Laetitia Barbauld, ed., The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson (New York: AMS Press, 1966), II, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Konigsberg, p. 90.

<sup>5</sup> Robert J. Allen, ed., Addison and Steele: Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator (New York: Holt and Rinehart, 1967), p. 87.

<sup>6</sup> John Dennis, "The Usefulness of the Stage," in Critical Works of John Dennis, ed. E. N. Hooker (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1939), I, 183.

<sup>7</sup> Clarence C. Green, The Neo-Classic Theory of Tragedy in England During the Eighteenth Century (1934; rpt. New York: Benjamin Blom, 1966), p. 6.

<sup>8</sup> Green, p. 142.

<sup>9</sup> S. H. Butcher, trans., Poetics, in Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, 4th ed. (London: Dover Publications, 1951), p. 47.

<sup>10</sup> Dennis, I, 183.

<sup>11</sup> Konigsberg, p. 90.

<sup>12</sup> Green, p. 150.

<sup>13</sup> Poetics, XIII, 45.

<sup>14</sup> Green, p. 128.

<sup>15</sup> Allen, p. 463.

- 16 Konigsberg, pp. 80-81.
- 17 McKillop, Samuel Richardson, p. 129.
- 18 Samuel Richardson, Clarissa: Preface, Hints of Prefaces and Postscript, Augustan Reprint Society Pub. No. 103 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), pp. 10-11.
- 19 Samuel Crompton, "Richardson's Clarissa Annotated," Notes and Queries, 5 (1877), 102.
- 20 Cited from McKillop, Samuel Richardson, p. 130.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 281.
- 23 Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1973), p. 169.
- 24 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 281.
- 25 See T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, "The Composition of Clarissa and Its Revision Before Publication," PMLA, 83 (1968), 416-428; Mark Kinkead-Weekes, "Clarissa Restored?" Review of English Studies, 10 (1959), 156-171, for a discussion of the blackening of Lovelace's character.
- 26 Konigsberg, p. 85. See John Dennis, "Remarks Upon Cato, A Tragedy," in Hooker, Works of John Dennis, II, 53; John Dryden, "Preface to Troilus and Cressida," in Essays of John Dryden, ed. William P. Ker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), I, 213-214; Thomas Rymer, A Short View of Tragedy, in The Critical Works of Thomas Rymer, ed. Curt A. Zimansky (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), pp. 156-157.
- 27 John Dryden, Essays of John Dryden, ed. W. P. Ker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), I, 214.
- 28 Hooker, Critical Works of John Dennis, II, 53.
- 29 Green, p. 152; Poetics, XIII, 45.
- 30 Green, pp. 154-159; Poetics, II, 11.
- 31 Konigsberg, p. 78.

- 32 Poetics, VII, 35.
- 33 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 281.
- 34 Samuel Richardson, Clarissa: Preface, Hints of Prefaces and Postscript, Augustan Reprint Society Pub. No. 103 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p. 4.
- 35 Poetics, V, 23.
- 36 Green, p. 42.
- 37 Konigsberg, p. 87.
- 38 Green, p. 42.
- 39 Cross, p. 37; Konigsberg, pp. 87-88.
- 40 Green, p. 128.
- 41 Green, p. 138.
- 42 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 281.
- 43 Konigsberg, p. 91.
- 44 Konigsberg, p. 92.
- 45 Anthony Kearney, "Clarissa and the Epistolary Form," Essays in Criticism, 16 (1966), 50-51.
- 46 Konigsberg, p. 77.
- 47 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 282.

### CHAPTER III

#### CLARISSA: THE INFLUENCE OF RESTORATION AND EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DRAMA

The drama of the Restoration and early eighteenth century affected the plot, character portrayal, and language in Clarissa. One of the most frequently-cited examples of the influence of the drama upon Richardson's work is the similarity between Clarissa and Nicholas Rowe's The Fair Penitent (1703).<sup>1</sup> Richardson anticipated comparisons between the two works when he had Belford deny that Clarissa and Calista were similar (IV, 118-119). Yet, while denying any parallels between the two heroines, Belford concedes that "the author knew how to draw a rake" (IV, 118). Both Dr. Johnson and Austin Dobson mention the closeness between the characters Lovelace and Lothario.<sup>2</sup> The first detailed study of the two heroes, however, is an article by H. G. Ward. He notes the following similarities: both protagonists are motivated by revenge toward the families of the heroines; both lose their lives in duels; neither particularly wants to marry; the two are brave, rashly so; and both Lovelace and Lothario are exceedingly proud of their families. Ward concludes that Lothario is the chief model for Lovelace.<sup>3</sup>



Another point in common between the two works, according to Margaret Ann Doody, is that in The Fair Penitent a rake is presented within the context of tragedy. It was Rowe who brought the two together for the first time. Before this play, egotism and lust for power were dealt with in anti-thetical ways. In comedies the rake was treated with approval and the tyrant-hero of heroic drama with disapproval; hubris in the latter was "sexual genius" in the former. "Restoration audiences could approve Etherege's Dorimant and disapprove of Dryden's Morat, or Lee's Augustus." These two traditions, the rake of comedy and the tyrant-hero of tragedy, come together in the character of Lovelace in Clarissa.<sup>4</sup>

A second drama frequently mentioned as having affinities with Clarissa is Charles Johnson's Caelia (1732). Ernest Bernbaum, among several others, noticed that the plots of the two works were alike.<sup>5</sup> For instance, both heroines are taken to a bawdy house, and both heroes die in a duel. Also, in their bare outlines, the plots of Clarissa and Caelia are bourgeois tragedy, though Richardson adds more detail and has more psychological depth.<sup>6</sup> A more detailed study of the two works is one by Ira Konigsberg, who believes that Caelia is the drama which most resembles Clarissa. Though Caelia has submitted to Wronglove before the elopement, the two heroines are comparable in other respects. Both come unwittingly to a London brothel; both are imprisoned and ultimately die.

The two heroes, Lovelace and Wronglove, are both selfish members of the upper class; both are intriguers; and both die in duels, aware of the chaos they have brought upon themselves. Each has a friend and brother rake who is converted and whose names, Belford and Bellamy, are similar. Both works expose the masculine code which demands honesty in all dealings except in those that involve women. Too, there are other similar details in the novel and the play, such as the giving of a ring by both women to their jailors, similar speeches by the dying villains, and the characterization of minor figures, particularly the closeness of the two brothel madams, Sinclair and Lupine, and that of the brother rakes, Belford and Bellamy. Konigsberg concludes that the two works are similar in theme, plot and portrayal of character.<sup>7</sup>

Another play which bears a resemblance to Clarissa, and one which is mentioned in the novel, is Thomas Otway's Venice Preserved (1682). During the period when Clarissa is at Mrs. Sinclair's, Lovelace takes her to see this play, which acts as a touchstone by reflecting the situation in the novel. Like Clarissa, the heroine of Venice Preserved, Belvidera, suffers under a father's curse. Lovelace, like Jaffeir, is in love; but, like Renault, he is willing to betray the woman in his protection. The distresses of Belvidera, which the innocent Clarissa watches on the stage, foreshadow

Clarissa's fate: madness and death. When she is in a state of derangement following the rape, Clarissa recalls a section from the play and uses Belvidera's words to express her own agony:

Lead me, where my own thoughts themselves may lose  
me;  
Where I may doze out what I've left of life,  
Forget myself, and that day's guilt!--  
Cruel Remembrance!--how shall I appease thee?  
(III, 209)<sup>8</sup>

Clarissa thus identifies herself with Belvidera in wishing for forgetfulness.<sup>9</sup>

Richardson also mentions Otway's The Orphan in his correspondence as well as in the novel. There has been no detailed analysis, however, of the play's correspondence to Clarissa. Yet the two works do share some similarities. In a letter to Lady Bradshaigh, Richardson comments on her earlier remark that Clarissa was so affecting because the novel was close to real life: "The Orphan perhaps owes its Success more to this Consideration than to any other. Its Characters are all of a private Family; tho' in high yet not in princely life" (Letters, p. 106). Both heroines are innocent victims. Yet, though blameless, both experience guilt and view themselves as ruined, both in society and in their own eyes. Monimia is an orphan and is dependent upon herself. Clarissa too is alone in her ordeal with only

herself to rely upon. Indeed, Belford calls Clarissa an orphan (IV, 95). Each heroine prefers death to dishonor, although Monimia hastens her death by committing suicide. The male protagonists, Lovelace and Castalio, are not so similar as the heroines, though both share a disdain for marriage and each is trapped by deceit. A minor character, Chamont, resembles Colonel Morden. Lovelace calls Morden "a perfect Chamont" (IV, 223).

Other plays of the period treat the same major subjects that Richardson treated in his novel. The theme of the enforced betrothal was a subject often presented in the drama and in other popular genres such as the periodical essay and conduct books. The most developed treatment of this theme, however, occurs in the drama. The same character types, the same relationships, and even the same scenes as were to appear in Clarissa were common in the drama. Some of the plays which deal with the theme of the enforced betrothal include Edward Ravenscroft's The Careless Lovers (1673), which portrays a tyrannical father who tries to force his daughter to marry against her will and which also features a gay, outspoken female friend of the heroine; Charles Hopkins's Neglected Virtue; or, The Unhappy Conquerour (1695), which shows a similar pattern of figures, the tyrannical father, the oppressed daughter, and the daughter's female confidant; John Sturmy's The Compromise; or Faults on Both

Sides (1722), a play which again presents a father who tries to force a daughter to marry a ridiculous suitor to the chagrin of an outspoken female friend. Richardson uses the same plots and character types that are in the drama, although his characters are more fully developed than their prototypes in the drama.<sup>10</sup>

A second major theme in Clarissa is Clarissa's struggle to maintain her virtue. Like several other heroines of the drama, Clarissa suffers greatly in her effort to keep her honor. There are many plays which treat the same struggle. John Banks' Vertue Betrayed'd; or Anna Bullen (1682) portrays a suffering heroine like Clarissa who struggles to keep her virtue and self-respect but who is finally destroyed. Showing a greater resemblance to Clarissa is Rowe's The Tragedy of Jane Shore (1714). Both Jane and Clarissa struggle for and ultimately die for their virtue. The heroine and the predicament in which she finds herself in Marina (1738), by George Lillo, are also like Clarissa and her situation. Like Clarissa, Marina is trapped in a brothel with Mother Coupler, who is a prototype of Sinclair. Clarissa's and Marina's fates, however, are different since Marina ends happily. Anthony Brown's The Fatal Retirement (1739) has as its subject a heroine who is similar to Clarissa in that she has been raped and who, by confronting the villain, wills her own death since she knows that he will kill her. Other heroines

who, though placed in different situations, are proud and independent with high standards of morality are Isabella in Southerne's The Fatal Marriage (1694) and Maria in Hewitt's Fatal Falsehood (1734). Thus, Clarissa's character type, the woman who fights to keep her physical and spiritual purity, was not new to the literature of the eighteenth century.<sup>11</sup>

Behind each of the main characters in Clarissa lies a stage tradition.<sup>12</sup> But no character in Clarissa is a more complete stage character than Lovelace. Indeed, the name Lovelace seems to be derived from the names of such rakes as Loveless in Colley Cibber's Love's Last Shift (1699) and Wronglove in Charles Johnson's Caelia.<sup>13</sup> The main stage traditions behind Lovelace are the tyrant-heroes of the Restoration, similar villains of early eighteenth-century neoclassic tragedy, and the popular rake of comedy.<sup>14</sup> It is, however, the role of the tyrant-hero which Lovelace most often adopts.<sup>15</sup>

Considering that the role of the tyrant-hero is the part Lovelace most likes to play, it is not surprising that Dryden is his favorite poet (III, 25, 276). It is Dryden's works which Lovelace quotes most often, though he also quotes or makes reference to other of the Restoration and early eighteenth-century dramatists.<sup>16</sup> Lovelace uses these quotations as rhetorical comments on his own mood, and the plays from which he takes the passages give him a role with which to

to identify.<sup>17</sup> Richard Cohen attaches further importance to the quotations, believing that one is able to ascertain Richardson's feelings about a character by his favorable or unfavorable response to particular writers.<sup>18</sup>

Lovelace is the heir of the supermen of heroic drama; he has the lawless egotism that is common to both the heroes and the villains of the genre, and, to McKillop, this general resemblance is more important than any specific similarities to Lothario.<sup>19</sup> Doody, too, agrees that Lovelace, rather than resembling a particular villain or tyrant-hero, shares the general motives and attitudes common to all the heroic monarchs. It is also Doody's thesis that Lovelace labors under the delusion that he is a comic hero and a comic dramatist, that he merges the role of the comic rake more and more into the role of the tragic tyrant, that he is not aware that he has actually taken the tragic alternative, and that it is this illusion which brings about his downfall.<sup>20</sup>

The heroic plays commonly had as their theme the clash of love and honor, though love was usually the dominating note.<sup>21</sup> Although love was the surface subject of the plays, the real subject was the contest of wills between the hero and the heroine. The struggle in Clarissa, like that in the heroic plays, is at bottom not a sexual struggle at all but a power struggle. The only lust in Clarissa is for power.<sup>22</sup> For this reason, because her will is paralyzed, the rape is not a trial

of Clarissa's virtue. It cannot, therefore, have been a physically satisfying experience for Lovelace. Both Mark Kinkead-Weekes and Eaves and Kimpel have commented on Lovelace's apparent lack of lust.<sup>23</sup> Considering his reputation, he is remarkably chaste throughout the novel. But, of course, sex is not Lovelace's motive: dominance is. Belford makes this point when he writes that if Lovelace were interested in sensual enjoyment, any of the prostitutes would be likelier prospects than Clarissa (I, 172-173). Lovelace believes that the rape will cause Clarissa to become passive and lose all will since he, like the tyrant-heroes, thinks that pride is the motive for Clarissa's virtue:

As haughty Vertue's sharpest punishment,  
Thou shalt live still, but not live innocent.

. . . . .

Thy Virgin-pride shall vanish into air.<sup>24</sup>

Above all, Lovelace is motivated by pride and a desire for power, as are the protagonists of heroic tragedies. Lovelace writes, "I find a pleasure in playing a tyrant over what I love" (III, 65). For this reason, he is obsessed with a psychological compulsion to destroy what he cannot control.<sup>25</sup> Like the heroes of Restoration tragedy, Lovelace is deluded by what he regards as his absolute will. For instance, the tyrant-heroes in Aureng-Zebe, Tyrannick Love, Don Sebastian



(Dryden), Mithridates (Lee), and Valentinian (Rochester) are a few examples among many who threaten or attempt to possess a woman against her will.<sup>26</sup>

To feed his insatiable vanity, Lovelace likes to compare himself to the ranting kings and princes of heroic drama.<sup>27</sup> He thinks of himself in terms of figures of power such as Caesar (I, 50; II, 39, 424; III, 203), Herod (II, 98; III, 10, 65), King David (II, 221), Alexander (II, 424), Hannibal (II, 494), Satan (III, 41), Aeneas (IV, 30-31), Beelzebub (III, 202), and Zeus (I, 98). Conversely, he casts Clarissa in a victim's role such as those of Herod's Mariamne (I, 98; III, 10), Dido (II, 483; IV, 30-31), or the unfortunate lover of Zeus, Semele (I, 98). It is only when his power is acknowledged that Lovelace is able to let that part of him which is admirable come out.<sup>28</sup>

In all the tyrant-heroes of heroic drama, there is a continual storm of conflicting passions.<sup>29</sup> Likewise, Lovelace says that he has three passions at war within himself, "all imperial ones. Love, revenge, . . . desire of conquest" (II, 494-495). Lovelace alternates between the sensations of love and rage in the manner of the tyrant-hero. He welcomes resistance. When Belford writes Lovelace to urge him to marry Clarissa, he quotes Indamora's plea:

Sweet are the joys that come from willingness.  
(II, 244)

In reply, Lovelace meets Belford's argument with the Emperor's answer to Inadmora:

It is Resistance that inflames desire,  
Sharpens the darts of love, and blows its fire.  
(II, 327)<sup>30</sup>

Resistance provides the motive for vengeance. Lovelace tells Belford that he is "mad with love, fired by revenge" (II, 460). He also writes Belford that every person has a predominant passion which "breaks through principle, and controls us all. Mine is love and revenge taking turns" (III, 244). On another occasion Lovelace says that "my Revenge and my Love are uppermost by turns" (I, 175). For Lovelace, love allied with revenge is more satisfactory than love alone. Lovelace reiterates the same passions metaphorically when he compares himself to Dryden's lion that seems tame and lies sleeping, all the while planning his revenge (I, 175). Here Dryden's work is part of the fictional language of Clarissa, contributing imagery and content. These sentiments, love and revenge, are similar to those of an Augustus<sup>31</sup> or a Muley Moluch, who says to Almeyda that she "has restor'd me to my native Rage; And I will seize my happiness by force."<sup>32</sup> Like these and other tyrant-heroes, Lovelace seizes upon vengeance, which he believes gives him the right to conquer a woman by force.<sup>33</sup>

Once when Clarissa does not arrive for an expected meeting, Lovelace writes in a theatrical pose:

On one knee, kneeling with the other, I write!  
My feet benumbed with midnight wanderings through  
the heaviest dews that ever fell. . . . Day but  
just breaking--sun not risen to exhale. (I, 327)

The hero on his knees writing in the misty dawn comes straight from Restoration tragedy and its indulgence in whipped-up emotion.<sup>34</sup> These wild emotions and exaggerated effects led the dramatists to create a special language, a kind of ranting rhetoric.<sup>35</sup> Accordingly, Lovelace presses his "burning lips" to Clarissa's breast (II, 476). The dialogue is theatrical and reminiscent of the language in Dryden and Lee.<sup>36</sup> In describing his feelings at Clarissa's death, Lovelace borrows the inflated language of the heroic plays. To express his sorrow, he uses lines from Ziphares in Lee's Mithridates:

She's out! The damp of death has quench'd  
her quite!  
(IV, 378)<sup>37</sup>

Or he quotes from Tamerlane:

To be a dog, and dead. (IV, 442)<sup>38</sup>

When Lovelace is informed of Clarissa's death, he insists like Tamerlane and Borgia that she not be buried (IV, 376) and that he should have her heart (IV, 376). Lee's Borgia,

when confronted with the fact of his victim's death wants to preserve the body:

I swear this body shall not be consum'd;  
I'll have't embalm'd to last a thousand years.<sup>39</sup>

Lovelace, in the throes of a Restoration tragic frenzy, also wants to embalm the body of Clarissa (IV, 375).<sup>40</sup> Mowbray, sending one of Lovelace's letters to Belford, writes that Lovelace "read it to us with the air of a tragedian" (IV, 373). Belford calls Lovelace's actions "raving unmanageableness," his "frenzy," and says Lovelace's "fits are of the raving kind" (IV, 369).

Lovelace is sometimes joined by Clarissa in exhibitions of extreme passion displayed with this unnatural rhetoric.<sup>41</sup> Clarissa's language in the beginning is in a conversational idiom, but as she nears her tragic fate, her language takes on the accents of formal stage rhetoric. It is in a theatrical, declamatory style that she berates Lovelace, laments her misfortunes, and pleads for her virtue.<sup>42</sup> When Clarissa remonstrates with Lovelace for describing the attempted rape as slight, Lovelace calls it a "violent tragedy speech" uttered in a "high manner" (III, 45). Describing her reaction at finding herself tricked back into Sinclair's brothel, Clarissa says that she was in a "kind of frenzy" (III, 370). Lovelace

calls Clarissa's passion in an earlier scene "extravagant" and adds that it was "perfect frenzy" (III, 238).

Lovelace, on the other hand, adopts a plain, even hesitant style in the beginning because he knows that this style is one that Clarissa prefers; but once she is in his power, he reverts to hyperbolic language.<sup>43</sup> It is, then, when Lovelace is most confident that he thinks in terms of the heroic lovers and their fair victims. There is, for example, the letter that Lovelace writes after Clarissa has come away with him in which he describes her in lines from Dryden's heroine *Almeyda* (I, 493). Lovelace also speaks of her here, as well as on other occasions, as "my Gloriana," the beautiful victim of Augustus in Lee's play, forgetting that Gloriana was the victor in the battle of wills (II, 22, 223, 241, 425).<sup>44</sup> Lovelace plays the role of the tyrant-hero; unfortunately, he fails to see that he will be caught in the role and become a victim himself. Such assumptions concerning women as Lovelace and his prototypes make are always shown in the heroic plays to be false.<sup>45</sup> Though he thinks he is directing a comedy (II, 271) and says that he hates tragedy (II, 339), Lovelace shares, because of his assumption of their role, the same fate as the tyrant-heroes.

On several occasions Lovelace feels genuine tenderness for Clarissa, a feeling he often expresses through his numerous quotations.<sup>46</sup> He quotes, for instance, Ferdinand's

lines describing Miranda in The Tempest to express his tender feelings for Clarissa (I, 150).<sup>47</sup> Characteristically, however, it is on tragedy that Lovelace draws to express the softer emotions.<sup>48</sup> He borrows the lines of Lee's Alexander:

O ecstasy!--My heart will burst my breast,  
To leap into her bosom!

(I, 493)<sup>49</sup>

Or he repeats the declaration from Semandra in Lee's

Mithridates:

That I do love her, O all ye host of heaven,  
Be witness!--That she is dear to me!  
Dearer than day, to one whom sight must leave;  
Dearer than life, to one who fears to die!

(IV, 137)<sup>50</sup>

He describes her beauty in a passage from Don Sebastian:

Mark her majestic fabric!--She's a temple  
Sacred by birth, and built by hands divine;  
Her Soul the deity that lodges there;  
Nor is the pile unworthy of the god.

(II, 223)<sup>51</sup>

Or Rowe's Tamerlane:

The bloom of op'ning flow'rs, unsully'd beauty,  
Softness, and sweetest innocence, she wears,  
And looks like nature in the world's first spring.

(II, 223)<sup>52</sup>

Many of Lovelace's cruelest and most brutal moments, however, are reactions against these moments of tenderness.<sup>53</sup> The protagonists of the heroic plays and the tragedies which succeeded them, and to some extent drew on them, are characterized by rapid alternations in mood.<sup>54</sup> One can see this rapid change in mood in Lovelace in his first letter when he describes his love for Clarissa in lines from Otway's Calius Marius:

CLARISSA!--O there's music in the name,  
That, soft'ning me to infant tenderness,  
Makes my heart spring like the first leaps of life!  
(I, 147)<sup>55</sup>

Immediately, Lovelace checks himself, calling these lines from Otway "over-tender" and moves to lines from Dryden's Tyrannic Love:

But raging flames tempestuous souls invade:  
A fire, which ev'ry windy passion blows;  
With Pride it mounts, and with Revenge it glows.  
(I, 147)<sup>56</sup>

The same antithesis appears in Lovelace's emotions when he discovers that Clarissa has escaped from Sinclair's house. Here the worst rant of Rochester's Valentinian is opposed to the sweet mood of Lee's Borgia:

'Tis nobler like a lion to invade  
When appetite directs, and seize my prey,  
Than to wait tamely, like a begging dog,  
Till dull consent throws out the scraps of love.  
(II, 526)<sup>57</sup>

Yet, Lovelace says he could at times subscribe to Lee's lines:

She reigns more fully in my soul than ever;  
 She garrisons my breast, and mans against me  
 Even my own rebel thoughts, with thousand graces,  
 Ten thousand charms, and new-discovered beauties!

(II, 526)<sup>58</sup>

When Clarissa collapses after hearing of her father's curse, Lovelace feels genuine sorrow for her, but his reaction after he gains control of himself is one of his nastiest moments (II, 187). It is Kinkead-Weekes's theory that Lovelace uses the villain's mask to hide that part of him which is good, that which Lovelace could have been, thus heightening his tragedy.<sup>59</sup>

Another stage tradition behind Lovelace's character is that of the rake or intriguing libertine. The rake appeared in comedies in which he, with little change in attitude, won the girl and in comedies in which he reformed; Lovelace is closer to a third type of rake, who appeared in darker plays and was a more threatening figure than the first two. Lovelace's prototype is Alberto in Thomas Southerne's The Dissappointment; or the Mother in Fashion (1648), who tries to seduce as many women as possible to satisfy his ego and who also shares Lovelace's cynicism concerning women. Alberto believes there are no virtuous women:



. . . I've made  
 A study of the Sex, and found it frail:  
 The black, the brown, the fair, the old, the young,  
 Are earthly-minded all. . . .<sup>60</sup>

Lovelace shares Alberto's views:

Thou knowest, that I have more than once,  
 twice, or thrice, put to the fiery Trial young  
 women of name and character; and never yet  
 met with one who held out a month. . . . (II, 40)

Granger in Theophilus Cibber's The Lover (1731) is another of these darker rakes who try, as does Lovelace, to justify their behavior by an appeal to the need for variety in sex and who are consummate actors.<sup>61</sup>

Lovelace is also similar to the fashionable rake of Restoration comedy.<sup>62</sup> He inherits their cynicism and their fluency. Lovelace plans his own comedy, starring himself and Clarissa, giving it the title "The Quarrelsome Lovers" (II, 271). Lovelace reminds himself of Horner in William Wycherley's The Country Wife (1675), who shares Lovelace's view of women. The country wife is virtuous only because her virtue has never been attempted. Lovelace assumes the mood of Cibber's careless husband and desires Clarissa to be "Lady Easy to all my pleasures" (II, 416).

Lovelace adopts the Restoration rake's code. He has proven the three maxims of the creed in practice. The first maxim is that "every woman is a rake in her heart" (II, 55).

This rule implies a refusal to believe in the reality of moral feeling or desire for chastity. In Lovelace's view these ideas are products of custom, education, and pride since it is his belief that a woman's nature is primarily sexual (II, 185; II, 36). The second canon of the rake's code is that "importunity and opportunity no woman is proof against" (II, 35). If the first maxim of the rake's creed is true, this second one logically follows. Lovelace simply needs to find the right approach to Clarissa; the approach which he adopts is reformation of himself (II, 42). The third tenet of the rake's code is "if once subdued . . . always subdued" (II, 41). This maxim also follows naturally if one accepts the premise that a woman's nature is sexual. Belford shows that he accepts this code in acknowledging that Clarissa can be overcome (II, 158-159). These basic assumptions will be tested by Clarissa's reaction to the rape. Lovelace must prove her "less than angel" to justify his rake's code, to restore his freedom, and to verify his whole view of himself (I, 150).<sup>63</sup>

Like the comic rakes, Lovelace delights in disguises and inventions. He, in fact, describes himself as a lover of intrigue (I, 172), a "contriving genius" (IV, 323). He confirms Belford's view that Lovelace's "is the most plotting heart in the world" (II, 249). Moreover, many of his dishonest devices come from comedy. For instance, the device

of testing a woman's love by feigning illness is used by Fowler in James Shirley's The Wittie Fair One (1633) and by Valentine Legend in William Congreve's Love for Love (1695).<sup>64</sup> The device of setting a house on fire to gain access to the lady in the middle of the night could have been suggested by Robert Howard's The Vestal Virgin, in which Mutuis suggests to Sulpitius that he frighten his lady out of coyness by setting fire to her house.<sup>65</sup>

Lovelace is like the rake in his view of the battle of the sexes since he, too, views love as a war. In one of his earliest letters to Belford, Lovelace uses this commonplace: "Thou knowest the whole progress of our warfare: for a warfare it has truly been; and far, very far, from an amorous warfare, too" (I, 514). In one of his frequent fantasies of a method he might use to break in upon Clarissa, he imagines that he has succeeded and imagines her sighs and faintings and his vows and promises and "all the gentle and ungentle pressures of the lover's warfare" (III, 250). He compares himself in love to Hannibal in war, calling Hannibal "the father of war-like stratagems" (II, 494).

Since the stimulus to the rake is intellectual rather than sensual, it is the chase that is important.<sup>66</sup> Lovelace suggests annual marriage licenses as "the joys of expectation, the highest of all our joys, would invigorate and keep all alive" (III, 182). Belford writes of Lovelace that

he is more intent upon the "preparative stratagem, than upon the end of conquering" (II, 487). For Lovelace, the pleasure is in subduing. He makes the observation that since it takes twenty times the trouble to be a rogue as it would cost to be honest, he thinks the rogue should not be begrudged his prize, "especially as, when we have obtained our end, satiety soon follows" (II, 455). Lovelace compares the love chase to hunting: "Do not the hunters of the noble game value the venison less than the sport?" (II, 249). Why then, Lovelace asks, should he be reflected upon, considering that he is engaged in the "most noble of all chases" (II, 249). Thus, Lovelace is at one with the rakes of comedy in his obsession with the chase.

Doody suggests yet another character type of the Restoration which is inherent in Lovelace. Closely related to the rakes of comedy and to Lovelace is a type of villain in the heroic tragedies, the Machiavellian schemers who are witty and cunning in obtaining the object of their sexual or political desires and who enjoy contrivances, looking on the worst of them as if they were nothing but practical jokes. This villain is contemptuous of virtue and delights in using others to achieve his end. Dryden's Zulema is one of the best examples of this type. Zulema dismisses the possibility of love other than physical:

Dream on; enjoy her Soul; and set that free;  
I'm pleas'd her person should be left for me.<sup>67</sup>

Lovelace quotes Zulema, saying that he used to subscribe to these words of Zulema:

Man makes his Fate according to his mind.  
the weak, low spirit Fortune makes her slave;  
But she's a drudge, when hector'd by the brave.  
If Fate weave common thread, I'll change the doom,  
And with new purple weave a nobler loom.

(IV, 511)<sup>68</sup>

Lovelace and Zulema represent another side of the power mania and self-deception seen in the heroes of Restoration tragedy; they, too, come to bad ends.<sup>69</sup>

The main tradition behind Lovelace, however, is the tyrant-hero of Restoration heroic drama. Lovelace selects this role because the tyrant heroes' motives and attitudes most nearly reflect his. The role he casts Clarissa in is, therefore, the role of the proud Restoration beauty.<sup>70</sup> He often refers to her in the novel as "proud beauty" (I, 144; II, 67, 315, 392, 406, 518). When Lovelace chooses the part of a Maximin, he casts Clarissa in the supporting role of the virgin martyr of heroic tragedy, of a woman whose resistance is not a ploy to inflame desire but is a defiant assertion of her will and her freedom to be what she wants to be. Lovelace's choice of role is voluntary; Clarissa's is thrust upon her when Lovelace selects his part in the drama of their

relationship. She is not consciously playing a part, but she unknowingly plays a role for which only Lovelace has the script.<sup>71</sup>

Clarissa's similarity to the tragic heroines is pointed out from the beginning of the novel by Lovelace's allusions to the tyrant-heroes who serve as his models. These references should prepare the reader for the position Clarissa will be forced to assume in her fight to preserve her innocence. Lovelace uses dramatic rhetoric to highlight Clarissa's situation. As in the heroic tragedies, the heroine sets up a counteraction in her opposing will.<sup>72</sup>

Like other tragic heroines, Clarissa has to plead with Lovelace to spare her chastity. The scene before the rape in which Clarissa sinks on her knees imploring Lovelace's pity is Richardson's version of a scene often enacted upon the stage, and her preference for death rather than dishonor is typical of all the victim-heroines.<sup>73</sup> Almeyda in Dryden's Don Sebastian, like Clarissa, prefers death to dishonor:

Now learn by this, the little value  
I have left for life. . . .<sup>74</sup>

Gloriana feels much the same:

Not innocent! I scorn thy impious breath,  
I'll ope' ten thousand doors to let in death.  
My life shall starve that honour may survive.<sup>75</sup>

During the fire scene when Lovelace is in Clarissa's room, she says to him:

Kill me! kill me! if I am odious enough in your eyes to deserve this treatment; and I will thank you! Too long, much too long, has my life been a burden to me! Or . . . give me but the means, and I will instantly convince you that my honour is dearer to me than my life! (II, 504)

Like the heroic heroines, she scorns Lovelace after the rape:

My father's dreadful curse has already operated upon me in the very letter of it, as to this life; and it seems to me too evident that it will not be your fault that it is not entirely completed in the loss of my soul, as well as of my honour-- which you, villainous man! have robbed me of, with a baseness so unnatural, so inhuman, that, it seems, you, even you, had not the heart to attempt it.

. . . Hear me out, guilty wretch! abandoned man! Man, did I say? . . . since the mortal worryings of the fiercest beast would have been more natural, and infinitely more welcome, than what you have acted by me. . . . And well mayest thou tremble, and falter, and hesitate, as thou dost, when thou reflectest upon what I have suffered for thy sake, and upon the returns thou hast made me!

. . . . .

O thou guiltful betrayer! . . . Hadst thou not sinned beyond the possibility of forgiveness!  
. . . (III, 219-223)

Her reproaches are similar to those of Lucina to Valentinian:

Wilt thou not kill me Monster, Ravisher?  
 Thou bitter Bane o' th' Empire, look upon me,  
 And if thy guilty eyes dare see the Ruines  
 Thy wild Lust hath laid level with Dishonor,  
 The sacrilegious razing of that Temple,  
 The Tempter to thy black sins would have blusht at,  
 Behold, and curse thy self. . . .

. . . . .  
 What restitution canst thou make to save me? . . .

. . . . .

Fly from me,  
 Or for thy safeties sake and wisdom kill me.<sup>76</sup>

Or of Semandra to Mithridates:

'Tis sure, thou has undone this helpless Creature,  
 And turn'd to mortal paleness all her Beauties;  
 Thou hast made her hate the Day which once adorn'd  
 Her op'ning Sweets: how wretched hast thou made me!

. . . . .

Dost thou repent? or are they but feign'd tears?

. . . . .

Then hadst thou thus dissolved, I shou'd have  
 blest thee:  
 But now, thy Black Repentance comes too late.  
 What, Ah! what satisfaction canst thou make?<sup>77</sup>

These are but two illustrations from many in the tragic dramas. Like these two victim-heroines and others in heroic drama, Clarissa renounces Lovelace after the rape, which he thought would ensure her submissiveness forever. She tells him "that the man who has been the villain to me you have been, shall never make me his wife" (III, 222). Clarissa's victory is



apparent in the penknife scene. Such scenes are traditional on the stage; for example, a similar scene takes place between the Duke and Amidea in James Shirley's The Traytor.<sup>78</sup>

Like the Restoration tragedians, Richardson shows the triumph of individual freedom. Saint Catherine asserts her liberty in lines spoken to Maximin:

To my respect thou hast no longer right:  
Such pow'r in bonds true piety can have.  
That I command, and thou art but a Slave.<sup>79</sup>

Clarissa tells Lovelace: "My soul is above thee, man! . . . Urge me not to tell thee, how sincerely I think my soul above thee! Thou hast, in mine, a proud, a too proud heart to contend with!" (II, 382-383). Lovelace and Maximin describe the two women similarly:

See where she comes with that high air and mien  
Which marks in bonds the greatness of a queen.<sup>80</sup>

In the penknife scene, Lovelace describes the impressiveness of Clarissa's entrance:

Then hear her step towards us, and instantly  
see her enter among us, confiding in her own  
innocence; and with a majesty in her person  
and manner, that is natural to her; but which  
then shone out in all its glory! (III, 287)

Further, both Saint Catherine and Clarissa make an effort to divorce themselves from earthly ties, and both feel a responsibility to set an example to the rest of the world.<sup>81</sup>



I could a Tale unfold--  
 Would harrow up thy soul!----  
 (III, 209) 88

Other than during this period of derangement, Clarissa rarely quotes the dramatists. She earlier argues against sudden conversions in lines from Rowe's Ulysses, and she quotes lines exhibiting the stoical pride of the tragic heroines from the Oedipus of Dryden and Lee.<sup>89</sup> As Clarissa nears her tragic end, however, she identifies with the victim-heroines and thinks in terms of the drama of the Restoration. The implications of heroic drama become part of the drama of Clarissa.<sup>90</sup>

Besides Clarissa and Lovelace, there are other character resemblances to Restoration drama. Anna Howe is the witty lady of Restoration comedy and shares Lovelace's sex-war language and ideology.<sup>91</sup> She sees the relationship between the sexes as constant war and is scornful of Clarissa's "meek regard to that little piddling part of the marriage vow which some prerogative-monger foisted into the office to make that a duty which he knew was not a right" (I, 341). The word Anna means is "the little reptile word OBEY" (I, 342). She is a part of Lovelace's world of power; she sees her relationship with Hickman as a struggle for dominance. When Lovelace gets her correspondence, it reinforces his view of what women are like. She expresses sentiments which convince Lovelace that he has been right all along in his assessment of women. Anna

is more emancipated than Clarissa and has the air of refined cynicism typical of the female half of the pair of witty lovers of Restoration comedy.

Like Lovelace, Anna is also something of an intriguer: she suggests plans to make Lovelace speak out; she plans the Townshend scheme; she uses threats to make Clarissa continue writing to her; and she schemes to get at Lovelace's letters. Her epistolary style is a feminine variant of Lovelace's, displaying his changes in mood, his wit, and his animal imagery. Because Anna is as arrogant as Lovelace and has his basic contempt for the opposite sex, she fits the rake's idea of what a woman is. Her past liaison with Sir George Colmar proves to Lovelace that he is right about women. She confirms his notion that women are attracted by rakes and "her female tyranny, strategy, and pride seem wholly to endorse his view of the sex-war."<sup>92</sup>

The final major character in Clarissa and the least realized portrait of the four is Belford, a name reminiscent of several eighteenth-century stage names, such as Bellmour in The Old Bachelor, Bellmour in Jane Shore, Bellamant in The Modern Husband, Bellamy in Caelia.<sup>93</sup> The stage tradition behind Belford is the reformed rake of Restoration comedy or, later, the rake who becomes the man of feeling in the mode of Steele and Lillo in English sentimental drama.<sup>94</sup> Belford is able to reform because he allows himself to feel pity.

Even the Harlowe family has its models in the drama. They are not unlike families portrayed by Dryden in The Conquest of Granada and Aureng-Zebe.<sup>95</sup> Like Lovelace, the Harlowes pursue power. Both share the same basic ideology except that Lovelace substitutes the war of the sexes for the economic war of the Harlowes.<sup>96</sup> The motive for both is pride and power.

As the evidence makes apparent Clarissa shares affinities with Restoration drama. Some critics, however, link Richardson to the sentimental drama of the early eighteenth century, although only one critic, Ira Konigsberg, has written an in-depth analysis of the similarity of Clarissa and sentimental drama. Colley Cibber's Love's Last Shift; or the Fool in Fashion (1696) is for the most part a comedy of manners, but the scenes in which Amanda appears are different from Restoration drama in substance and tone, a difference which makes it the first English sentimental drama.<sup>97</sup> In these comedies, the fifth act conversion atones for all previous sins. For example, Loveless in Love's Last Shift is converted to virtue when he allows himself to feel pity for Amanda's suffering.<sup>98</sup>

In sentimental comedy the audience is expected to admire the virtuous characters and feel pity for them. To elicit this response from the audience, Cibber has his heroine, Amanda, contend against great distresses, but she is at last rewarded when her husband reforms. The same pattern is

repeated in Cibber's The Careless Husband, where the audience is expected to admire Lady Easy for her suffering, which has been brought on by an unfaithful husband. Here again the husband is converted by the pity he feels for the suffering female. Other sentimental comedies which present this type of "emotional moralism" are Charles Johnson's Country Lasses, George Lillo's Silvia, and Richard Steele's The Conscious Lovers.<sup>99</sup>

This new sensibility also developed in the tragedy though its emergence was slower than in the comedy. Usually the hero in the tragedies is a virtuous person overcome by catastrophe; often the hero has a flaw or commits some moral error that partially brings on his suffering. The audience, as in sentimental comedy, is expected to pity the disproportionate suffering of the hero. In Aaron Hill's The Fatal Extravagance (1721), for example, the hero Bellmour is a good and virtuous man whose only flaw is his love of gambling, which, despite his merits, causes his utter ruin, not only for himself but also for his virtuous wife Louisa, who has not sinned in any way. Other plays which follow a similar pattern are Lillo's The London Merchant (1731) and Johnson's Caelia.<sup>100</sup>

The heroes of sentimental drama allow themselves to feel, and it is this ability to feel that brings on their conversions. Similarly, denial of feeling strikes at one of Richardson's

deepest convictions. His works were meant to bring about a sentimental reaction from the reader, who is improved by reading and feeling sympathy for the novel's noble characters. Since Richardson wishes the reader to feel pity and be instructed by her example, Clarissa's suffering is far out of proportion to her error. Like the heroes of sentimental drama, Belford allows himself to feel for Clarissa; consequently, he reforms. It is only the man who will not or cannot feel who is irredeemable. The Harlowes, excepting James and Arabella, refuse to see Clarissa lest their true feelings and pity cause them to relent.<sup>101</sup> Clarissa says that Arabella lacks a heart:

Bella has not a feeling heart. The highest joy in this life she is not capable of: but then she saves herself many griefs by her impenetrableness. Yet, for ten times the pain that such a sensibility is attended with would I not part with the pleasure it brings with it. (I, 218-219)

She also says that she believes Lovelace may lack a feeling heart and writes that anyone who "wants a heart . . . wants everything" (I, 202). Lovelace acknowledges this lack of feeling: "What's a tender heart good for? Who can be happy that has a feeling heart? And yet thou'lt say, that he who has it not, must be a tiger, and no man" (III, 110). If Lovelace could feel pity for Clarissa's sufferings, he could convert; this formula was the pattern for sentimental drama.

At times something in Lovelace does feel, and he has to force himself back into his chosen role: "My heart, my heart, Belford, is not to be trusted--I break off to reperuse some of Miss Howe's virulence" (II, 470). Hence, in Clarissa, the characters are divided according to their capacity for feeling. The models upon which the characters are based are, for the most part, Restoration figures, but the purpose of the novel is sentimental in the manner of eighteenth-century drama.<sup>102</sup>

Another element of sentimental plays similar to Clarissa is that, unlike Restoration drama, sentimental drama treats domestic affairs. For example, Congreve in Love for Love portrays the relationship between Sir Sampson Legend and his son Valentine cynically; on the other hand, Steele in The Conscious Lovers treats with sympathy the family ties between Bevil Senior and Bevil Junior. Like the sentimental playwrights, Richardson treats a domestic relationship with seriousness and respect.<sup>103</sup> The connection between Clarissa and her family is a major subject of the novel.

Sentimental tragedy portrays characters lower in the social hierarchy than does Restoration drama. In The Fatal Extravagance, for example, the major figures are former members of the country gentry made destitute by the hero's gambling; in Caelia, the heroine's family are gentry; in Lillo's George Barnwell, a merchant's apprentice is the tragic hero; and in his The Fatal Curiosity, the main



characters are of an impoverished middle class.<sup>104</sup> Clarissa belongs to the middle class and shares its values. Lovelace, of course, is an aristocrat and is shown as a symbol of decadence.<sup>105</sup> Although sentimental comedy generally portrayed characters of high rank, all sentimental drama inculcated strong bourgeois morality. Sentimental comedy, moreover, treated its middle-class characters with respect. For example, in Farquhar's The Constant Couple (1699), the merchant Smuggler is sharply satirized, whereas his counterpart Old Sealand in Steele's The Conscious Lovers (1722) is drawn with sympathy.<sup>106</sup> As the social standing of its characters changed, the setting of the plays also changed from the exotic settings of heroic drama to the contemporary scenes of sentimental plays.

Types of characters also changed. The female half of the witty, gay couple of the comedy of manners became the woman of feeling, and the attractive libertine evolved into a more wicked man in whom vice was made unattractive and who turned into a sentimental man before the play ended (like Belford in Clarissa). The tyrannical father became the benevolent old patriarch; the humorous servant evolved into the worthy old family retainer (like Mrs. Norton in Clarissa); and the witty, intriguing confidant became the sympathetic friend. Lovelace has the same unfeeling heart as the nobles who attack bourgeois values in the sentimental plays.<sup>107</sup>

By shifting the emphasis in the novel from action to the sentimental drama's stress upon emotions, Richardson developed for the first time in the novel portrayals of internal histories and, as a result, he created more realistic characters.<sup>108</sup> As in the theater, this new stress upon sentiment lessened the amount of action and slowed the pace of the work. This fact accounts for the length of Clarissa.

The plays of the Restoration and early eighteenth century were a primary influence upon the composition of Clarissa. The basic plot of the virtuous heroine in distress runs throughout this drama and was not new to Richardson. Each of the characters in the novel has his type portrayed over and over in the theaters of the period; furthermore, the characters in the novel and those on the stage often speak similar lines. The drama of the contemporary stage was an important source for Clarissa.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Alan D. McKillop, Samuel Richardson: Printer and Novelist (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936), p. 145; Duncan Eaves and Ben Kimpel, Samuel Richardson: A Biography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 235; George Sherburn, "Samuel Richardson's Novels and the Theatre: A Theory Sketched," PQ, 41 (1962), 326.

<sup>2</sup> "Life of Rowe," in Lives of the English Poets, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), II, 67; Samuel Richardson (London: Macmillan and Co., 1902), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> "Richardson's Character of Lovelace," MLR, 7 (1912), 494-98.

<sup>4</sup> Margaret Ann Doody, A Natural Passion: A Study of the Novels of Samuel Richardson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 113.

<sup>5</sup> Ernest Bernbaum, The Drama of Sensibility (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1915), III, 148-162, 165; Eaves and Kimpel, p. 235; Ira Konigsberg, Samuel Richardson and the Dramatic Novel (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968), p. 40; McKillop, Richardson, p. 144; Allardyce Nicoll, A History of English Drama: 1660-1900, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), II, 122; Sherburn, p. 326.

<sup>6</sup> McKillop, Richardson, p. 144.

<sup>7</sup> Konigsberg, pp. 40-45.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Otway, Venice Preserved, in Three Centuries of English Drama, ed. Henry Wells (New York: n.p., 1954), Act IV, Sc. ii, p. 48. Unless otherwise noted, all citations from plays in my text are from this microcard collection.

<sup>9</sup> Doody, pp. 115-16.

<sup>10</sup> Konigsberg, pp. 28-32.

<sup>11</sup> Konigsberg, pp. 33-36.

12 Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1973), p. 434.

13 Konigsberg, p. 37.

14 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 439; Konigsberg, p. 37; Ian Watt, The Rise of the Novel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), p. 227.

15 Doody, p. 110; Eaves and Kimpel, 253; McKillop, Richardson, p. 149.

16 Erich Poetzsche, Samuel Richardson Belesenheit (Kiel, n.p. 1908), pp. 1-104, lists several of Richardson's literary references and quotations; but, as McKillop, p. 141, points out, he deals mostly with only those passages for which Richardson gives a source and, therefore, leaves out about half of the relevant material.

17 Doody, p. 107; McKillop, Richardson, p. 149; Konigsberg, p. 46.

18 Literary References and Their Effect Upon Characterization in the Novels of Samuel Richardson (Bangor, Maine: Husson College Press, 1970), p. 46.

19 McKillop, Richardson, p. 149.

20 Doody, p. 117.

21 Allardyce Nicoll, A History of English Drama: 1660-1900, 4th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), I, 127.

22 Doody, p. 108.

23 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 149; Eaves and Kimpel, p. 261.

24 Doody, p. 112; Nathaniel Lee, Gloriana, or the Court of Augustus Caesar, 1676, Act III, Sc. ii, pp. 27-28.

25 Anthony Kearney, "Clarissa and the Epistolary Form," Essays in Criticism, 16 (1966), 49.

26 Doody, p. 108.

27 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 253.

- 28 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 152.
- 29 Nicoll, I, 126.
- 30 Doody, p. 111; Dryden, Aureng-Zebe, 1676, Act II, Sc. i, p. 19.
- 31 Lee, Gloriana, Act III, Sc. ii, pp. 26-28.
- 32 Dryden, Don Sebastian, 1690, Act II, Sc. i, p. 35.
- 33 Doody, pp. 110-12.
- 34 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 156.
- 35 Nicoll, I, 129.
- 36 Konigsberg, p. 46.
- 37 Konigsberg, p. 46; Lee, 1678, Act V, Sc. ii, p. 79.
- 38 Rowe, 1702, Act I, Sc. i, p. 10.
- 39 Caesar Borgia, 1680, Act V, Sc. i, p. 59.
- 40 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 273.
- 41 Konigsberg, p. 45; Eaves and Kimpel, p. 260.
- 42 William J. Farrell, "The Style and the Action in Clarissa," SEL, 3 (1963), 371.
- 43 Farrell, p. 369.
- 44 Doody, p. 111; Gloriana, Act II, Sc. i, p. 32.
- 45 Doody, p. 111.
- 46 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 152.
- 47 Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act III, Sc. i, ll. 39-48, in the Complete Works, ed. George Lyman Kittredge (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1936), p. 1262. All citations in my text to Shakespeare are from this edition.
- 48 McKillop, Richardson, p. 151.
- 49 Lee, The Rival Queens, 1677, Act III, Sc. i, p. 36.

- 50 Lee, Act I, Sc. i, p. 6.
- 51 Dryden, Act II, Sc. i, p. 32.
- 52 McKillop, Richardson, pp. 150-51; Rowe, Act I, Sc. i, p. 5.
- 53 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 187.
- 54 McKillop, Richardson, p. 150.
- 55 Otway, 1680, Act I, Sc. i, p. 8.
- 56 Dryden, 1670, Act II, Sc. iii, p. 19.
- 57 Rochester, Valentinian, 1685, Act V, Sc. i, pp. 219-220, in the Collected Works of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, ed. John Hayward (London: Nonesuch Press, 1926), p. 205.
- 58 Caesar Borgia, Act II, Sc. i, p. 24.
- 59 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 187.
- 60 Konigsberg, p. 37; Southerne, Act I, Sc. i, p. 4.
- 61 Konigsberg, pp. 38-39; Cibber, Act II, Sc. ii, p. 24.
- 62 McKillop, Richardson, p. 148; Also, see Doody, p. 113; Christopher Hill, "Clarissa Harlowe and Her Times," Essays in Criticism, 5 (1955), 323; Watt, p. 147.
- 63 Kinkead-Weekes, pp. 178-81.
- 64 Doody, p. 117; Shirley, Act III, Sc. i, p. F1; Congreve, Act IV, Sc. i, p. 69.
- 65 Doody, p. 117; Howard, Act II, Sc. i, p. 161.
- 66 Nicoll, I, 199.
- 67 Conquest of Granada, Part I, 1672, Act III, Sc. i, p. 33.
- 68 Doody, pp. 112-13; Dryden, Conquest of Granada, Part I, Act II, Sc. i, p. 19.
- 69 Doody, pp. 112-13.

- 70 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 157; Helen S. Hughes, "Characterization in Clarissa Harlowe," JEGP, 13 (1914), 115; McKillop, Richardson, p. 152.
- 71 Doody, p. 118.
- 72 Doody, p. 118.
- 73 Doody, p. 119.
- 74 Dryden, Act II, Sc. i, p. 34.
- 75 Lee, Gloriana, Act III, Sc. ii, p. 26.
- 76 Doody, p. 119; Rochester, Collected Works, ed. Hayward, Valentinian, Act IV, Sc. iii, pp. 48-49.
- 77 Doody, p. 120; Lee, Mithridates, Act IV, Sc. i, pp. 52-53.
- 78 Doody, p. 120; Shirley, Act III, pp. F<sub>3</sub>-F<sub>4</sub>.
- 79 Doody, p. 122; Dryden, Tyrannick Love, Act I, Sc. i, p. 22.
- 80 Hughes, "Characterization in Clarissa," p. 117; Dryden, Tyrannick Love, Act II, Sc. i, p. 15.
- 81 Hughes, "Characterization in Clarissa," p. 117.
- 82 Kinkead-Weekes, pp. 239-40.
- 83 McKillop, Richardson, p. 153; Otway, Venice Preserved, Act IV, Sc. ii, p. 48.
- 84 Adapted from Otway, Venice Preserved, Act IV, Sc. ii, p. 53.
- 85 Dryden and Lee, Oedipus, 1679, Act III, p. 32.
- 86 Dryden, Indian Emperor, 1667, Act V, Sc. ii, p. 63.
- 87 Hamlet, Act III, Sc. iv, l.40.
- 88 Hamlet, Act I, Sc. v, l.15.
- 89 McKillop, Richardson, p. 153; Dryden and Lee, III, p. 47.

- 90 Doody, p. 107.
- 91 Kinkead-Weekes, pp. 155, 436.
- 92 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 205.

93 Leo Hughes, "Theatrical Convention in Richardson: Some Observations on a Novelist's Technique," in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature, ed. Carroll Camden (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1963), p. 246.

- 94 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 440.
- 95 Doody, p. 123.
- 96 Kinkead-Weekes, pp. 146-47.
- 97 Nicoll, I, 278.
- 98 Konigsberg, pp. 57-59.
- 99 Konigsberg, pp. 58-59.
- 100 Konigsberg, pp. 59-60.
- 101 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 137.
- 102 Konigsberg, p. 65.
- 103 Konigsberg, p. 60.
- 104 Konigsberg, pp. 60-61.
- 105 Konigsberg, p. 67.
- 106 Konigsberg, p. 60.
- 107 Konigsberg, p. 61.
- 108 Konigsberg, p. 68.



## CHAPTER IV

### CLARISSA: THE INFLUENCE OF THE TECHNIQUES OF DRAMA

Clarissa is technically an epistolary novel, but its epistolary style is unique in that it is influenced by techniques adopted from the drama. Of course, the epistolary novel does share common characteristics with the drama. In both, the characters are introduced by no one or by one another, and the action is made up of a series of scenes with few general summaries.<sup>1</sup> The idea of writing fiction in letter form was not new to literature. What was new in Richardson's work was the idea of using the letters to achieve in epistolary style the equivalent of the experience of drama.<sup>2</sup> Experiences in Clarissa are presented directly, rather than through an authorial filter.<sup>3</sup> The story is told in the voices of the characters as the author banishes himself and creates personality by becoming each of his characters without being identified with any of them.<sup>4</sup> There is not a focus of observation or a central controlling consciousness.<sup>5</sup> Richardson describes this aspect of his work: "Here I sit down to form characters. . . . I am all the while absorbed in the character. It is not fair to say--I,

identically I, am any-where, while I keep within the character" (Letters, p. 286).

It is when a work is written viva voce that it can truly be called dramatic.<sup>6</sup> Practitioners of the epistolary method other than Richardson employ letter writers who write letters; Richardson's novel has letter writers who write dramatic narratives and dialogues.<sup>7</sup> The letters in Clarissa are not like letters that people really write and are unlike letters in other epistolary novels in that they attempt to catch living voices in a dramatic present.<sup>8</sup> One reads Clarissa as if seeing a play or a film, in a continuous present.<sup>9</sup> To lay emphasis upon Richardson as an epistolary novelist is to mistake a technical means for the formal end: the novel as drama.<sup>10</sup> Richardson creates by an imaginative process that is dramatic, whether the form be a verse monologue, a stage play, or an epistolary novel.<sup>11</sup>

Richardson saw the affinity of his method with the dramatic. He called Clarissa a "History (or rather Dramatic Narrative)" (Postscript, IV, 554). Another indication that Richardson thought of his novel as drama is that, following the preface, he listed the characters as "Names of the Principal Persons" in the manner of the dramatis personae of drama.<sup>12</sup> He describes his method as a dramatic one:

All the letters are written while the hearts of the writers must be supposed to be wholly engaged in their subjects (the events at the time generally dubious): so that they abound

not only with critical situations, but with what may be called instantaneous descriptions and reflections . . . ; as also with affecting conversations, many of them written in the dialogue or dramatic way. (Preface, I, xiv)

Richardson is saying that his work is more realistic because it creates the immediate mental and emotional states of the characters and the immediate reality of the episodes.<sup>13</sup> He further describes this technique:

The minute particulars of events, the sentiments and conversations of the parties, are, upon this plan, exhibited with all the warmth and spirit that the passion supposed to be predominant at the very time could produce, and with all the distinguishing characteristics which memory can supply in a history of recent transactions.

(Postscript, IV, 562)

Belford feels that the letters Clarissa is writing in the midst of her "present distresses" must be very good:

How much more lively and affecting, for that reason must her style be, her mind tortured by the pangs of uncertainty . . . , than the dry narrative, unanimated style of a person relating difficulties and dangers surmounted; the relater perfectly at ease; and if himself unmoved by his own story, not likely greatly to affect the reader. (IV, 81)

Richardson's and Lovelace's name for this affecting style is "to the Moment" (Letters, p. 329; II, 498). Lovelace describes it:

Thou'lt observe, Belford, that though this was written afterwards, yet . . . I write it as it was spoken and happened, as if I had retired to

put down every sentence as spoken. I know thou likest this lively present-tense manner, as it is one of my peculiars. (III, 195)

Indeed, Lovelace's letters are so current that he ends one letter with "Here she comes!" (III, 218). "Familiar writing is but talking," (III, 241) Lovelace explains; and certainly in Clarissa the speaking voice reigns supreme over the writing voice, especially when the scene is described by Lovelace.

Lovelace, however, is not the only character setting scenes in the novel. At the beginning of the work, Clarissa prepares the reader for the style of letters she will write:

And then you will always have me give you minute descriptions, nor suffer me to pass by the air and manner in which things are spoken that are to be taken notice of; rightly observing that air and manner often express more than the accompanying words. (I, 5)

Certainly "writing to the moment" does reveal things the characters do not know about themselves. One must read between the lines, because often in the heat of a scene, a character, through his "air" or "manner," lets slip a picture of himself which he would prefer to remain hidden or a truth about himself of which he is unaware.<sup>14</sup>

Clarissa does give the "air" and "manner" of the Harlowes through narrative which often becomes drama; in scene after scene, she brings them alive and real to the reader through voice inflection, facial expression, and gesture. On the other hand, her encounters with Lovelace are rarely dramatized in

the first volume. As a result, the difference in the narrative summary and the dramatized narrative is vividly apparent. Knowledge of Lovelace is kept from the reader as he, the reader, is becoming intimately acquainted with the Harlowes. Compare, for example, Clarissa's description of her encounter with Lovelace in the garden with any of the big scenes with her family.<sup>15</sup>

It is in the dramatized scenes that the Harlowes become like figures on a stage. The reader hears their tones of voice, sees their facial movements, and watches their gestures. Arabella "sneeringly" pronounces the word "pi-ous" (I, 213). She changes her "sneering tone to an imperious one" (I, 226). Clarissa writes that Arabella's voice is "spitefully low" (I, 397). To show her cousin Dolly's reluctance to collect Clarissa's writing materials, the heroine uses the dash: "--you must--indeed you must--deliver to Betty--or to me--your pen and ink" (I, 407). James Harlowe "tauntingly" forbids her corresponding with anyone (I, 34). Arabella's "plump high-fed" face bursts "with restraint of passion" (I, 30). Or she "whisperingly lifts up her voice in contempt" or talks to Aunt Hervey in a "loud whisper" (I, 31, 235). When Clarissa goes to plead with her mother to try to soften her father's displeasure, she notices her sister's "furrowed forehead" (I, 105). Betty Barnes has a "saucy leer" on her face (I, 113). Solmes's face is "overspread with confusion, twisted . . . and all awry, neither mouth nor nose standing

in the middle of it" (I, 396) and is "whitened over . . . , his hollow eyes flashing fire . . . (I, 399). Uncle Antony, told by Clarissa that she would rather have his kindness than his money, is stupidly nonplussed and angry; he falls into wonderment, and, in silence, "looked about him this way and that" (I, 388). Clarissa also records gesture. Her sister leaves with a "haughty toss" (I, 9). Her uncle bites his lip and looks on Solmes, who rubs his cheek (I, 393). Betty Barnes comes to deliver a message, "her arms spread abroad, and all her fingers distended and held up" (I, 375). Through this method the Harlowe household becomes more solid and real than a narrative summary could have made it.<sup>16</sup>

There are, according to Ira Konigsberg, three techniques of epistolary writing in Clarissa.<sup>17</sup> First, there is the method which is used to summarize past events quickly, such as the visit of Dr. Lewen to Clarissa (I, 364). This visit comes just before the dramatized visit by James and Arabella. There is no attempt to record Clarissa's voice or movements. The scene merely emphasizes the fact that the Harlowes control the pastor and, thereby, shows the hopelessness of Clarissa's situation in the following scene with her brother and sister.

The second technique dramatizes the correspondent rather than the action. In these scenes the writer speaks directly to another character (III, 321) or, more rarely, loses awareness of the recipient. These self-revealing scenes

approach the soliloquy of the drama. Lovelace furnishes the best example of the dramatic soliloquy:

And must, think I, O creature so divinely excellent, and so beloved of my soul, those arms, those encircling arms, that would make a monarch happy, be used to repel brutal force; all their strength, unavailing perhaps, exerted to repel it, and to defend a person so delicately framed? Can violence enter the heart of a wretch, who might entitle himself to all thy willing, yet virtuous love, and make the blessings I aspire after, her duty to confer? Begone, villain-purposes! Sink ye all to hell that could only inspire ye! And I am then ready to throw myself at her feet, to confess my villainous designs, to avow my repentance, and to put it out of my power to act unworthily by such an excellence.

How then comes it, that all these com-  
passionate, and, as some would call them,  
honest sensibilities go off? Why, Miss Howe  
will tell thee: she says, I am the devil. By  
my conscience, I think he has at present a  
great share in me. (II, 399)

Here Lovelace seems to step forward and deliver a dramatic monologue. Such soliloquies function in Clarissa as they do on stage, allowing a character to express his inner thoughts and feelings.

The third technique of Richardson's epistolary style is in direct contrast to the self-revealing episodes. In this method a fully realized scene is presented, a scene that is obviously based upon Richardson's knowledge of the theater. An excellent example of this type is a scene between Clarissa and her mother:

She then went to her toilet, and looked in the glass and gave half a sigh--the other half, as if she would not have sighed could she have helped it, she gently hemmed away.

I don't love to see the girl so sullen.

Indeed, madam, I am not sullen. And I arose and, turning from her, drew out my handkerchief, for the tears ran down my cheeks.

.....

I could hold no longer; but threw myself at her feet: O my dearest mamma! Let me know all I am to suffer: let me know what I am to be! I will bear it, if I can bear it: but your displeasure I cannot bear!

Leave me, leave me, Clary Harlowe! No kneeling!--limbs so supple; will so stubborn! Rise, I tell you.

I cannot rise! I will disobey my mamma when she bids me leave her without being reconciled to me! No sullens, my mamma: no perverseness: but worse than either: this is direct disobedience! Yet tear not yourself from me! (wrapping my arms about her as I kneeled; she struggling to get from me; my face lifted up to hers with eyes running over, that spoke not my heart if they were not all humility and reverence) you must not, must not, tear yourself from me! (for still the dear lady struggled, and looked this way and that in a sweet disorder, as if she knew not what to do.)--I will neither rise nor leave you, nor let you go till you say you are not angry with me.

O thou ever-moving child of my heart! (folding her dear arms about my neck, as mine embraced her knees) why was this task! But leave me--you have discomposed me beyond expression! Leave me, my dear! I won't be angry with you--if I can help it--if you'll be good.

I arose trembling and hardly knowing what I did, or how I stood or walked, withdrew to my chamber.

(I, 89-91)

This scene is more visual and real than scenes in previous prose fiction. As in drama, the time taken to read the scene approximates the duration of the event itself. It is organized as if it occurred on stage by blending elements of the



playscript with the narrative. Dialogue is presented directly; speech is individualized; voice quality is specified; and movement, gesture, and facial expression are noted. Of course, Richardson describes more stage action than would a playwright in an eighteenth-century playbook since Richardson had to depend entirely upon the printed word, whereas the dramatist has actors to perform stage business. But he, like a playwright, emphasizes dialogue more than anything else. Too, he suits speech to the character and individualizes it so that one is able to recognize the style of each of the correspondents, even if no name is given.<sup>18</sup>

Another scene set by Clarissa illustrates more obviously Richardson's reliance on dramatic form:

Will you go down and humble that stubborn spirit of yours to your mamma?

I said nothing.

Shall I conduct your ladyship down? [offering to take my declined hand.]

What! not vouchsafe to answer me?

I turned from her in silence.

What! turn your back upon me too! Shall I bring up your mamma to you, love? [following me, and taking my struggling hand.] What! not speak yet! Come, my sullen, silent dear, speak one word to me--you must say two very soon to Mr. Solmes, I can tell you that.

Then [gushing out into tears, which I could not hold in longer] they shall be the last words I will ever speak.

Well, well [insultingly wiping my averted face with her handkerchief, while her other hand held mine, in a ridiculing tone] I am glad anything will make thee speak: then you think you may be brought to speak the two words--only they are to be the last! How like a gentle lover [sic] from its tender bleeding heart was that!

Ridiculous Bella!

Saucy Clary! (I, 225-226)

The paragraphing, the separation into brackets of description of action, and the use of the present participle indicate the influence of the playbook.<sup>19</sup> A scene such as this can easily be changed to actual dramatic form:

Bella. Shall I conduct your Ladyship down  
 [Offering to take Clarissa's declining hand.]  
 What! not vouchsafe to answer me? [Clarissa  
 turns from her in silence.] What! turn your  
 back upon me too!--Shall I bring up your Mamma  
 to you, Love? [following Clarissa and taking  
 her struggling hand.] What! not speak yet!  
 Come, my sullen, silent dear, speak one word to  
 me--You must say two very soon to Mr. Solmes, I  
 can tell you that.

Clarissa. [gushing out into tears.] Then they  
 shall be the last words I will ever speak. (20)

Another scene between Clarissa and Arabella sustains almost pure dialogue for pages with only occasional notice of gesture and expression (I, 216-221). Clarissa also writes Anna a "short dialogue" between herself and Betty Barnes (I, 318-322). The ugliness of Solmes and the revulsion Clarissa feels for him are vividly brought out in another dramatic scene (I, 378-384). When Clarissa is in prison, Belford describes a sustained dialogue between Clarissa and two of the prostitutes, Sally and Polly (III, 432-435). Even when gestures and expression are not specified, it is easy to visualize them. One can easily project the characters in these scenes onto a stage.

Richardson uses several varieties of dialogue in Clarissa between the "he said, she said" and pure drama; in between is a mixed mode where condensed third person narrative is interspersed with speech.<sup>21</sup> Passages of reflection generally alternate with lively descriptions of actions.<sup>22</sup> As emotional temperatures rise, connectives and commentary tend to fall away; and the more emotional the relater becomes, the more the speaking voice replaces the writing voice until one ceases to be aware of the letters as written.<sup>23</sup> As a result writing "to the moment" stimulates the experience of seeing scenes on the stage.<sup>24</sup> One of the most important devices for creating these scenes in Clarissa is the use of the present tense.<sup>25</sup> Lovelace is "vomiting" and "straining again" during the sick scene (II, 436). Actions, especially when described by Lovelace, read like drama. For example, Lovelace describes a meeting with Clarissa after he has offended her. She enters ready to go out, and Lovelace invites her to have breakfast with him.

Yes, she would drink one dish; and then laid her gloves and fan in the window just by.

I was perfectly disconcerted. I hemmed, and was going to speak several times; but knew not in what key. Who's modest now, thought I! Who's insolent now! How a tyrant of a woman confounds a bashful man! She was acting like Miss Howe, I thought; and I the spiritless Hickman.

At last, I will begin, thought I.

She a dish--I a dish.

Sip, her eyes her own, she; like a haughty and imperious sovereign, conscious of dignity, every look a favour.

Sip, like her vassal, I; lips and hands trembling, and not knowing that I sipped or tasted.

I was--I was--I sipped--(drawing in my breath and the liquor together, though I scalded my mouth with it) I was in hopes, madam----

Dorcas came in just then. Dorcas, said she, is a chair gone for?

Damned impertinence, thought I, thus to put me out in my speech! And I was forced to wait for the servant's answer to the insolent mistress's question.

William is gone for one, madam.

This cost me a minute's silence before I could begin again. And then it was with my hopes, and my hopes, and my hopes, and my hopes, that I should have been early admitted to----

What weather is it, Dorcas? said she, as regardless of me as if I had not been present.

A little lowering, madam. The sun is gone in. It was very fine half an hour ago.

I had no patience. Up I rose. Down went the tea-cup, saucer and all. Confound the weather, the sunshine, and the wench! Begone for a devil, when I am speaking to your lady, and have so little opportunity given me.

Up rose the saucy-face, half-frightened; and snatched from the window her gloves and fan.

You must not go, madam!--seizing her hand--by my soul you must not----

Must not, sir! But I must. You can curse your maid in my absence, as well as if I were present--except--except--you intend for me, what you direct to her. (II, 381)

It is apparent that Richardson had visualized such scenes.<sup>26</sup>

In other scenes the dialogue is set out like the text of a play with speakers' names in the left margin. This method allows for objectivity and often comic effect.<sup>27</sup>

Examples are Anna Howe's account of her discussion with her mother of Uncle Antony's courtship (II, 353-359), Lovelace's family trial (III, 395-411), the potentially serious confrontation between Lovelace and Colonel Morden (IV, 219-235), the Tomlinson scenes (II, 444, 448-450; III, 83-85, 106-122, 124-131), the scene involving Clarissa and the Hamstead ladies, Mrs. Moore, and Miss Rawlins (III, 65-71), and the Widow Bevis episode (III, 158-161). Though Clarissa writes dramatically, she rarely uses the exact form of a play.<sup>28</sup> Since she is serious and deeply involved in a terrifying experience, she never attains the objectivity necessary for playbook drama. One is always aware of her past involvement in or her present attitude toward the event.<sup>29</sup> On the other hand, because Lovelace's passages often look like pages from a play script, he seems more removed and less involved.<sup>30</sup> His attitude is frequently mocking. He sees himself and Clarissa as characters in his comedy, of which he is the puppet master (II, 100). It is only when he realizes that Clarissa is dying that he too gives up play form, though he continues to dramatize himself until his dying moment.<sup>31</sup> As Clarissa's situation worsens, Richardson gradually de-dramatizes her.<sup>32</sup>

Clarissa sets scenes, but it is Lovelace who is the consummate actor, stage manager, and playwright. He loiters about Harlowe place in "different disguises" (I, 314, 316,

432, 446). He writes Belford: "I topped the brother's part on Monday night before the landlady at St. Albans" (II, 16). At Hampstead, he gave a performance as an old man:

Although grievously afflicted with the gout,  
I alighted out of my chariot (leaning very hard  
on my cane with one hand, and on my new servant's  
shoulder with the other). . . . (II, 34)

I sat down with a gouty Oh! (II, 35)

I find by the bill at the door, that you have  
lodgings to let [mumbling my words as if . . .  
I had lost some of my fore-teeth]. (III, 35)

I hobbled in, and stumped about. . . . (II, 39)

And having rubbed my eyes till I supposed them  
red, I turned to the women. . . . (II, 60)

Lovelace rehearses; he watches himself play parts; and, as he reminds Belford, he is "not a bad mimic" (III, 33).

Lovelace rehearses for a meeting with Clarissa:

But all gentle shall be my movements: all  
respectful, even to reverence, my address to  
her--her hand shall be the only witness to the  
pressure of my lip--my trembling lip: I know  
it will tremble, if I do not bid it tremble.  
As soft my sighs . . . By my humility will I  
invite her confidence: . . . but little will  
I complain of, not at all will I threaten.  
. . . . (I, 175)

Lovelace's every motion and expression is planned. He continually describes his gestures and expressions. A few examples among many are the following: "And I looked modest" (III, 59), "And I tried to blush" (III, 85), "I looked down,

and, as once before, turned round my diamond ring" (III, 85), or he brings his "clenched fist" to his forehead (III, 110). Like an excellent actor, Lovelace gives his best performances before audiences; this desire for an audience comes to its ugly climax when he allows the prostitutes to be present at the rape (III, 472). In fact, Lovelace is acting all the time; he is not, as he tells us, what he appears to be (III, 146). It is only in certain moments with Belford that one glimpses the real Lovelace. Lamenting the death of M'Donald, Lovelace pays him the supreme compliment: M'Donald can act "imcomparably any part given to him" (IV, 450).

Not content to play parts alone, Lovelace is the director, guiding the other characters in their parts in his drama. He coaches Joseph Leman before the elopement scene (I, 489-491), though he was not as prompt at answering the signal as Lovelace would have liked (I, 512). For Belford and the other rakes, he writes out "instructions general and particular for your behavior on Monday night" (II, 218). He continues with "a faint sketch of my plot" for the evening (II, 219). He is proud of his casting of a leading role for the evening: "Priscilla Partington (for her looks so innocent, and discretion so deep, yet seeming so softly) may be greatly relied upon" (II, 216).<sup>33</sup> When the women in the brothel dine with Lovelace and Clarissa, Lovelace is ecstatic at their performances: "All excessively right! The two nieces have

topped their parts" (II, 221). He arranges every detail in each of the scenes he plans, continually reminding Belford of the importance of attending to minute details in order to ensure success (II, 115, 218; III, 27, 251, 304; IV, 33).

Polly, another of Mrs. Sinclair's "nieces," is invited to attend Venice Preserved with Clarissa and Lovelace. She, too, must have her instructions:

I have directed her where to weep: and this not only to show her humanity [a weeping eye indicates a gentle heart], but to have a pretence to hid her face with her fan or handkerchief. (II, 342)

Before one of his elaborate dramas, Lovelace coaches the false Lady Betty and Cousin Charlotte:

Top your parts, ye villains! You know how nicely I distinguish. There will be no passion in this case to blind the judgment, and to help on meditated delusion, as when you engage with titled sinners. My charmer is as cool and as distinguishing, though not quite so learned in her own sex, as I am. Your commonly assumed dignity won't do for me now. Airs of superiority, as if born to rank. But no over-do! Doubting nothing. Let not your faces arraign your hearts.

Easy and unaffected! Your very dresses will give you pride enough.

A little graver, Lady Betty. More significance, less bridling in your dignity.

That's the air! Charmingly hit----Again---- You have it.

Devil take you! Less arrogance. You are got into airs of young quality. Be less sensible of your new condition. People born to dignity command respect without needing to require it.



Now for your part, Cousin Charlotte!

Pretty well. But a little too frolickly that air--yet have I prepared my beloved to expect in you both great vivacity and quality-freedom.

Curse those eyes! Those glancings will never do. A downcast bashful turn, if you can command it. Look upon me. Suppose me now to be my beloved.

Devil take that leer! Too significantly arch! Once I knew you the girl I would no have you to be.

Sprightly, but not confident, Cousin Charlotte! Be sure forget not to look down, or aside, when looked at. When eyes meet eyes, be yours the retreating ones. Your face will bear examination.

.....

Once more, suppose me to be my charmer. Now you are to encounter my examining eye, and my doubting heart----

That's my dear!

Study that air in the pier-glass!

Charming! Perfectly right! (III, 186-187)

With Tomlinson, Lovelace uses signals:

A wink of the left eye was to signify, Push that point, captain.

A wink of the right, and a nod, was to indicate approbation of what he had said.

My forefinger held up, and biting my lip, Get off of that as fast as possible.

A right forward nod, and a frown, Swear to it, captain.

My whole spread hand, To take care not to say too much on that particular subject.

A scowling brow, and a positive nod, was to bid him rise in his temper. (III, 123-124)

Though Lovelace prides himself on his attention to detail in preparing for his scenes, his tight control begins to slip in the scene where the Widow Bevis attempts to impersonate Clarissa. Lovelace's hastily-arranged scene succeeds only

because of the ignorance of his audience, the fellow sent by Anna Howe. Yet he still directs and does his best with what he has to work with. Other instances of Lovelace's constructing and casting his own real-life plays are abundant (III, 229, 246, 303). During the effort to trick Clarissa back to London, the false Lady Betty has to invent an excuse to walk around the room in order to remove from her stays a note and to reread her instructions from Lovelace (III, 355). This coaching, rehearsal of dialogue, and facial expression occurs before every major scene directed by Lovelace.<sup>34</sup>

Lovelace is also a playwright and the dominant dramatic force in the novel. He describes his entire relationship with Clarissa in terms of drama:

Sally, a little devil, often reproaches me with the slowness of my proceedings. But in a play does not the principal entertainment lie in the first four acts? Is not all in a manner over when you come to the fifth? (II, 274)

When Clarissa escapes to Hampstead and Lovelace finds where she is, he writes Belford about his arrangements:

And here, supposing my narrative of the dramatic kind, ends Act the first. And now begins  
 Act II  
 Scene.--Hampstead Heath, continued.  
 Enter my Rascal. (III, 30)

He sees at last "the happy conclusion of a well-laid plot" (III, 248). Earlier he had decided he would make his and Clarissa's story a comedy entitled The Quarrelsome Lovers (II, 271).

To illustrate his thesis that Lovelace exercises a dramatist's control down to the last detail, William J. Palmer arranges the sick scene in the following manner:

special effect	This ipecacuanha is a most disagreeable medicine. . . . I presently looked as if I kept my bed a fortnight. . . . Two hours it held me. I had forbid Dorcas to let her lady know anything of the matter. . . .
dialogue coaching	Well but Dorcas was nevertheless a <u>woman</u> , and she can <u>whisper</u> to her lady the secret she is enjoined to keep!
direction of facial expression	Come hither, toad . . . let me see what mixture of grief and surprise may be beat up together in thy pudden-face. That won't do. That dropped jaw, and mouth distended into the long oval, is more upon the horrible than the grievous. . . . A little better <u>that</u> ; yet not quite right: but keep your mouth closer. . . .
choreography	There! Begone! Be in a plaguy hurry running upstairs and down . . . till motion extraordinary put you out of breath, and give you the sigh natural. . . .

dialogue  
coaching

At last, O Lord! Let Mrs. Lovelace know! There is danger, to be sure! whispered one nymph to another; but at the door, and so loud, that my listening fair one might hear.

Out she darts. . . .

How do you, Mr. Lovelace?

acting

O my best love! Very well! Very well! Nothing at all! Nothing of consequence! I shall be well in an instant! Straining again! for I was indeed plaguy sick, though no more blood came.

he takes his  
curtain call

In short, Belford, I have gained my end. I see the dear soul loves me. (II, 434-436)<sup>35</sup>

As a special effect the ipecacuanha is second only to the fire.<sup>36</sup> In this scene Lovelace sits writing a "to the moment" letter in gown and slippers, obviously enjoying the drama he is creating.<sup>37</sup> He gives the scene a sense of urgency with the use of dashes and exclamation points. One can vividly see the confusion taking place as the characters rush up and down the stairs. It is, as is every major scene in Clarissa, a "play-within-a-novel."<sup>38</sup>

The rape is a product of the lowest of Lovelace's imaginative powers. The letter he writes Belford announcing the rape is the only nondramatic letter that Lovelace writes. Though his play has reached a climax, it is not the one Lovelace had expected. In the denouement which follows, his loss of artistic control is repeatedly emphasized.<sup>39</sup> For

example, Lovelace begins to look ridiculous in the scene where he pretends to berate Dorcas in front of Clarissa, who, frightened, hits her nose against the edge of a chair. Her nose begins to bleed, and Lovelace prepares to do away with himself (III, 239-240). His complete loss of control is signaled in the penknife scene (III, 284-291). As in all these scenes, the action begins with shouts, tears, and general confusion; Lovelace's sword is out. But when Clarissa comes in voluntarily to confront Lovelace and the prostitutes, the farcical uproar ends and silence falls.<sup>40</sup> Lovelace's scene falls apart when the now wiser Clarissa walks in. Lovelace tries another role at the Smith's, but again it does not play. He emerges from the scene as a cruel aristocrat who takes advantage of people who have no power to retaliate.

Besides the plays he actually writes, casts, directs, and stages, Lovelace composes another kind of play, a play he writes in fantasy. Some of his scenarios are of his own sexual prowess. For example, he suggests a kidnapping and rape at sea of Mrs. Howe and Anna followed by a meticulously staged courtroom scene in which he is vindicated (II, 420-425), and later he relates a scheme to lure the Hamstead ladies to Sinclair's to participate in a sex orgy (III, 215-217).<sup>41</sup>

Other fantasies concern Clarissa and her submissiveness (II, 251, 369, 477).

Lovelace also uses theatrical stage directions, which further suggest the novel's kinship with dramatic techniques:

Enter Captain Tomlinson, in a riding-dress, whip in hand. (II, 443).

Enter Dorcas in a hurry. (II, 447)

Exit Dorcas. (II, 447)

Enter Dorcas again, in a hurry. (II, 451)

Enter Dorcas again, out of breath. (II, 451)

Aside. (II, 451)

Exit Landlord. Re-enter with two great-coats.  
(III, 32)

Enter Goody Moore. (III, 35)

Exit Hickman. (III, 496)

Still another technique which Richardson took directly from the stage is the stylized gesture.<sup>42</sup> One of Richardson's favorites was the lifting of hands and eyes, which he used nearly a hundred times in Clarissa. Characters are also constantly kneeling or throwing themselves at someone's feet or more violently "flinging" themselves at another's feet. Another theatrical gesture prized by Richardson is the contemptuous twirl of a hand. The handkerchief to the eye is yet another popular stage gesture which Richardson used.<sup>43</sup>

Richardson apparently took these gestures from the drama of his time. One may feel sure that he knew the plays which he put in the library at Sinclair's: "Steele's, Rowe's, and Shakespeare's plays; that genteel comedy of Mr. Cibber, The Careless Husband, and others of the same author" (II, 194). He could, in fact, have got his cues for his stage gestures from these plays alone because his two favorite motions, the lifting of hands and eyes and the kneeling or throwing of oneself at someone's feet, can be found in these plays. Another source for Richardson's theatrical gestures is published illustrations of plays which he printed, many of which showed figures in such poses. For example, two pieces known to have been printed in Richardson's own shop, the frontispieces to Eliza Haywood's Wife to be Lett (1735) and Aaron Hill's Alzira (1736), show characters kneeling, lifting up hands and eyes, and holding handkerchiefs to their eyes. Too, Aaron Hill, in his advice to actors in the Art of Acting (1746), recommends many of these gestures.<sup>44</sup>

There is not a great deal of interest in environmental details or in objective descriptions in Clarissa. None of the homes in the novel are described, and interiors are generally vague, with chairs and, now and then, a table or whatever the action requires, but no more. Characters tend to sit side by side, usually in chairs. Although there is a sofa at Mrs. Moore's in Hampstead, it is used strictly as

stage property. Occasionally Richardson does provide details of interiors, as in the description of Clarissa's room at the bailiff's:

A horrid hole of a house, in an alley they call a court; stairs wretchedly narrow, even to the first-floor rooms: and into a den they led me, with broken walls, which had been papered, as I saw by a multitude of tacks, and some torn bits held on by the rusty heads.

The floor indeed was clean, but the ceiling was smoked with a variety of figures, and initials of names, that had been the woeful employment of wretches who had no other way to amuse themselves.

A bed at one corner, with coarse curtains tacked up at the feet to the ceiling; because the curtain rings were broken off; but a coverlet upon it with a cleanish look, though plaguily in tatters, and the corners tied up in tassels, that the rents in it might go no farther.

The windows dark and double-barred, the tops boarded up to save mending; and only a little four-paned eyelet-hole of a casement to let in air.

. . . . .

She was kneeling in a corner of the room, near the dismal window, against the table, on an old bolster . . . of the cane couch, half-covered with her handkerchief; her back to the door; which was shut to . . . ; her arms crossed upon the table, the forefinger of her right hand in her Bible. (III, 444-445)<sup>45</sup>

Here the detailed description of setting and of Clarissa in a melodramatic pose gives a stagelike effect such as might come from the stage or an illustration in a playbook.<sup>46</sup>



Just as Richardson rarely described homes and interiors, he also did not often describe dress.<sup>47</sup> He does so in Clarissa only in crucial scenes. Lovelace, for example, describes Clarissa's apparel on the day of the elopement:

Her morning gown was a pale primrose-coloured paduasoy: the cuffs and robings curiously embroidered . . . in a running pattern of violets and their leaves. . . . A white handkerchief wrought by the same inimitable fingers. . . .

Her ruffles were the same as her mob. Her apron of a flowered lawn. Her coat white satin, quilted: blue satin her shoes. . . . (I, 512)

The next description of her dress is when Lovelace finds that she has escaped from Sinclair's (II, 525). Lovelace lastly mentions her dress after the rape: "She was dressed in a white damask night-gown" (III, 218). We are told of her resolve on 19 June not to change her clothes as long as she is at Sinclair's (III, 225-226) and reminded of it on 22 June (III, 264). Belford writes that she is still wearing her white damask undergarments borrowed from Mabel on 29 June (III, 311); and, almost a month later, 17 July, Belford sees her in the bailiff's wearing the "white damask, exceedingly neat" (III, 445). Leo Hughes notes that Belford's memory must have been short, for in a letter of the day before, he reported Sally's remark to Clarissa that she was "a little soily" (III, 439). Mercifully, Richardson provides Clarissa

with a change of clothes before her death, but he does not change the color: "I found her up and dressed; in a white satin nightgown" (IV, 324).<sup>48</sup>

In costuming Clarissa, Richardson followed the fashion of his own day combined with a mixture of theatrical tradition. The garments, materials, and colors described were fashionable at the time; the apron, for example, was in vogue, as was white with embroidery or painting on it. One can be even more specific regarding stage costumes. White was a popular color for leading ladies of the stage.<sup>49</sup>

As has been noted, Richardson did use techniques and styles of the stage of his contemporaries, making his novel often read like drama. The overall effect of his use of the methods of stagecraft is in the reality of the characters he created. One goes inside their minds and feels that he knows them intimately. A section from "Hints of Prefaces" notes the fact that this present-tense method takes the reader into the minds of the characters:

The Writer chose to tell his Tale in a Series of Letters, supposed to be written by the Parties concerned, as the Circumstances related passed: For this Juncture afforded him the only natural Opportunity that could be had, of representing with any Grace those lively and delicate Impressions, which Things present are known to make upon the Minds of those affected by them. And he apprehends, that in the Study of human Nature the Knowlege [sic]

of those Apprehensions leads us farther into the Recesses of the human Mind, than the colder and more general Reflections suited to a continued and more contracted Narrative.<sup>50</sup>

Each scene adds to the reader's knowledge of the characters. He watches them move, sees their gestures and facial expressions, and hears their tones of voice. These theatrical scenes are so much like watching real people on a stage that a reader is able to envision the scene completely. This "to the moment" technique allowed Richardson to concentrate on fewer episodes and thereby emphasize character.<sup>51</sup> One has, consequently the feeling after reading Clarissa of having lived with real people for a long time.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Brian Downs, Richardson, 2nd ed. (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1969), p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Kinkead-Weekes, Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1973), p. 395.

<sup>3</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, p. 395.

<sup>4</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, pp. 396-97.

<sup>5</sup> Irwin Gopnik, A Theory of Style in Richardson's Clarissa (The Hague: Mouton, 1970), p. 107.

<sup>6</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, p. 395; John Dryden, "Of Dramatic Poesie: An Essay," Essays of John Dryden, ed. W. P. Ker (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), I, 101-02.

<sup>7</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, p. 396; Ira Konigsberg, Samuel Richardson and the Dramatic Novel (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968), p. 100.

<sup>8</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, p. 396.

<sup>9</sup> Walter Allen, The English Novel: A Short Critical History (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1954), p. 37.

<sup>10</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, p. 397.

<sup>11</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, p. 397.

<sup>12</sup> George Sherburn, "Samuel Richardson's Novels and the Theatre: A Theory Sketched," PQ, 41 (1962), 327; Konigsberg, p. 104; Walter Raleigh, The English Novel, 5th ed. (New York: Scribner's, 1905), p. 142.

<sup>13</sup> Konigsberg, p. 105.

<sup>14</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, p. 410.

<sup>15</sup> Kinkead-Weekes, p. 143.

16 Arnold Kettle, An Introduction to the English Novel (London: Hutchinson House, 1951), I, 68.

17 Konigsberg, pp. 106-13. I follow Konigsberg throughout the following discussion of three techniques of the epistolary style. Kinkead-Weekes, p. 406; Godfrey Frank Singer, The Epistolary Novel: Its Origin, Development, Decline and Residuary Influence (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), p. 85. These two critics also mention the dramatic soliloquies in Clarissa.

18 Konigsberg, p. 113; Kinkead-Weekes, pp. 433-43; T. C. Duncan Eaves and Ben D. Kimpel, Samuel Richardson: A Biography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 246.

19 Konigsberg, p. 113.

20 Konigsberg, p. 113.

21 Kinkead-Weekes, pp. 403-04.

22 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 242.

23 Kinkead-Weekes, pp. 404, 460; Sherburn, "A Theory Sketched," p. 327.

24 Konigsberg, p. 107.

25 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 242.

26 George Sherburn, "'Writing to the Moment': One Aspect," Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature, ed. Carroll Camden (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 201.

27 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 404.

28 Konigsberg, p. 114.

29 Konigsberg, p. 115.

30 Konigsberg, p. 115.

31 Konigsberg, p. 115; Kinkead-Weekes, p. 409.

32 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 453.

33 William J. Palmer, "Two Dramatists: Lovelace and Richardson in Clarissa," Studies in the Novel, 5 (1973), 10.

- 34 Palmer, pp. 9-11.
- 35 Palmer, p. 9.
- 36 Palmer, p. 9.
- 37 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 215.
- 38 Palmer, p. 13.
- 39 Palmer, p. 12.
- 40 Kinkead-Weekes, p. 251.
- 41 Palmer, p. 16.
- 42 Leo Hughes, "Theatrical Convention in Richardson: Some Observations on a Novelist's Technique," Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Literature, ed. Carroll Camden (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 240; Joyce M. S. Tompkins, The Popular Novel in England: 1700-1800, 2nd ed. (1932; rpt. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961), pp. 352-53.
- 43 Leo Hughes, pp. 240-41; Sherburn, "One Aspect," pp. 205-07.
- 44 Leo Hughes, pp. 246-49; Aaron Hill, The Works of the Late Aaron Hill, Esq., 2nd ed. (London: n.p., 1754) IV, 339-86.
- 45 Sherburn, "One Aspect," pp. 210-02.
- 46 Konigsberg, p. 117.
- 47 Eaves and Kimpel, p. 244.
- 48 Leo Hughes, pp. 242-43.
- 49 Leo Hughes, pp. 244-46; Nancy Bradfield, Historical Costumes of England, 2nd ed. (1938; rpt. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1958), pp. 119-21.
- 50 Samuel Richardson, Clarissa: Preface, Hints of Prefaces, and Postscript, Augustan Reprint Society Pub. No. 103 (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1964), p. 6.
- 51 Konigsberg, p. 102.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that Richardson makes several references to plays both in his correspondence and in Clarissa itself, there has been little scholarly examination of Clarissa in terms of the influence of the drama. Most critics who write about Richardson or Clarissa mention its affinities with drama; yet only a few have analyzed this influence in any detail. Too, no one work deals with all areas in which the drama affected the work, and none deals with Clarissa exclusively. Some attempt to show that Richardson saw his work as tragedy and defended it in terms of eighteenth-century theories of tragedy; some point out that its characters, plot, and theme are similar to those in English drama from the Restoration through the first twenty-five years of the eighteenth century; others deal with Clarissa in terms of the techniques of play writing that are evident in the novel.

The most comprehensive study of the similarities between Clarissa and the theater is Ira Konigsberg's Samuel Richardson and the Dramatic Novel. It begins with Richardson's contact with drama through his work as a printer and through his friends, most of whom were connected in some way with the

contemporary stage. Also of help in understanding Richardson's knowledge of the theater in these early years are McKillop's Samuel Richardson and Eaves and Kimpel's Samuel Richardson: A Biography. Other than Kinkead-Weekes, who compares Clarissa to the heroines of sentimental plays, Konigsberg is the only critic who explores the parallels between the characters, plots, and themes of Clarissa and sentimental drama. Konigsberg also devotes a chapter to the influence of tragedy and tragic theory upon the composition of the novel, an influence mentioned briefly by McKillop and Eaves and Kimpel in their books. Finally, Konigsberg examines Richardson's use of techniques of the playbook.

A second critical work useful in examining Clarissa in terms of drama is Margaret Anne Doody's A Natural Passion. The importance of this work is in its analysis of Clarissa's close relation to Restoration tragedy. Chapter Five "Tyrannic Love and Virgin Martyr: Tragic Theme and Dramatic Reference in Clarissa," compares characters in the novel and in heroic tragedy as well as citing specific lines in the plays that are similar to lines in the novel. It is Doody's thesis that the themes of heroic drama supply the design of Clarissa.

A third book which is beneficial in looking at Richardson's novels in terms of dramatic influence is Samuel Richardson: Dramatic Novelist by Mark Kinkead-Weekes. His



Chapter Ten, "The Novel as Drama," treats the features of Clarissa that make it dramatic and, therefore, different from other works of epistolary fiction. It is he also who points out Lovelace's similarities to Restoration rakes and Clarissa's likeness to the heroines of sentimental plays. Kinkead-Weekes believes that there is a stage tradition behind each of Richardson's characters. Anna, for example, is modeled on the witty lady of Restoration comedy, and Belford is the reformed rake in the style of the man of feeling of Steele and Lillo.

Of course, Richardson's correspondence is important in a study of the influence of drama on Clarissa, as are the preface and postscript to the novel. Also worthwhile are the notes on suggested prefaces and postscripts contained in Clarissa, Preface, Hints of Prefaces, and Postscript. All these are helpful in proving that Richardson himself was aware that he was creating a dramatic novel.

Further, there are several articles that have proved invaluable to this study. The best are George Sherburn's articles, "Samuel Richardson's Novels and the Theatre: A Theory Sketched" and "'Writing to the Moment': One Aspect"; William J. Palmer's "Two Dramatists: Lovelace and Richardson in Clarissa"; and Leo Hughes's "Theatrical Convention in Richardson: Some Observations on a Novelist's Technique."

All of these articles concentrate on dramatic techniques which Richardson used in the composition of the novel.

Finally, a careful reading of the unabridged novel itself provides ample examples of the impact of the play-script upon the work. It provides examples of dramatized scenes, some of which are so like drama that connectives and notation of gesture and movement are absent. Too, there are in the novel many references to the contemporary theater.

The importance of the influence of drama upon Clarissa is that it allows the reader to experience the action, usually inward action, directly rather than simply to watch or experience through an authorial filter. It helps to produce a fiction that is happening in a dramatic present. This present-tense method is what makes Clarissa different from other epistolary novels, and it is the influence of dramatic techniques which made the novel new in prose fiction. Though there is no stage, the novel approximates the circumstances of the theater. What makes a novel or any work dramatic is that it is told by living voices in the present, and Clarissa fulfills this requirement. Here the author speaks in the voices of his characters; he becomes each of his protagonists; consequently, the reader feels he is living through the action as it happens.

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