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Charles A. Beirnard

**Rebelling From the Right Side: Thomas Carlyle's Struggle
Against the Dominant Nineteenth-Century Rhetoric**



Thomas Carlyle's break from the dominant rhetorical paradigm of his age is of interest to contemporary students of rhetoric and literature for several reasons. It is noteworthy because it represents in the domain of persuasive prose a rejection of the previous century's theoretical canons akin to the one undertaken by English romantic poets three decades earlier, and like the rebellions of the poets it represents an effort to widen the province of his art. It is also relevant to our current interest in a "paradigm shift" in rhetorical theory and practice, for many of the shortcomings Carlyle found in the dominant paradigm of his day are paralleled in the inadequacies found by recent assessments of today's rhetorical paradigm, assessments which encourage a shift from a rhetoric of management,¹

¹A recent discussion of the tradition of rhetorics of management is James A Berlin, "Richard Whately and Current-Traditional Rhetoric," *College English* 42 (1980), 10-17.

from a tyranny of form in the critical essay,² from male rhetoric,³ and from a traditional grammar of style, or Grammar A.⁴

The Bastille assault in Carlyle's revolution was his *Sartor Resartus* of 1831. Carlyle revealed the tenets of the theory behind *Sartor's* rhetoric in writings which defend the completed work against criticisms and in writings of his literary apprenticeship which anticipate *Sartor*. A pair of letters responding to critiques of *Sartor* by John Sterling⁵ and R.W. Emerson⁶ contains Carlyle's identification of his opponents in the dominant paradigm and suggest several key elements in his own rhetorical theory. Complementing these letters to disclose fully the theory underlying the choices of rhetorical strategies in *Sartor* are several earlier review-essays and letters which show Carlyle developing from German sources the literary persona which emboldened him to write the revolutionary *Sartor*.

The thrust of the critique of *Sartor* by John Sterling is that the manner of the book is a barrier to the effect of its matter. After acknowledging that *Sartor* contains truths about the oneness of life, the omnipresence of beauty, the differences between the actual and the ideal, and the necessity of duty, Sterling turns to questioning whether its method effectively fosters acceptance of these ideas by readers. Evaluating *Sartor* by criteria derived from his classical education and from contemporary stylistic canons, he finds the book to be wanting in objectivity, clarity, correctness, and taste. Rather than adhering to the ancient precept of having all of its parts objectively related to "one *external* principle, *Sartor* subjectively dwells on the imagination and invention of an individual playing upon infinity to produce a "multitude of peculiar associations and relations" connected only by "the bond of personality." Carried to excess, this

²Keith Fort, "Form, Authority, and the Critical Essay." Reprinted in W. Ross Winterowd. *Contemporary Rhetoric: A Conceptual Background with Readings* (New York, 1975), pp. 171-83.

³Thomas J. Farrell, "The Female and Male Modes of Rhetoric," *College English* 40 (1979), 901-21. Farrell does not encourage a shift; he acknowledges those who do, and he analyzes the characteristics of both rhetorical modes.

⁴Winston Weathers, "Grammars of Style: New Options in Composition," *Freshman English News* 4 (1976), 1-18. A subsequent quote from this article will be cited parenthetically.

⁵Carlyle's exchange of letters with Sterling is reprinted in *Sartor Resartus*, ed. Charles Frederick Harrold (New York, 1937), pp. 307-18. References to these letters and to *Sartor Resartus* use Harrold's edition and will be cited parenthetically.

⁶Joseph Slater, ed., *The Correspondence of Emerson and Carlyle* (New York, 1964), pp. 98-100; 103-4. A subsequent quote will be cited parenthetically.

subjectivity violates the canon of clarity, for the capriciousness of the book's "rhapsodico-reflective form," sentence structures, and "strange heterogeneous combination and allusion" will render its ideas opaque to readers. Standards of correctness and taste held by readers will also frustrate the reception of ideas, for these canons are violated by the barbarisms, the constant iteration, the German compoundings, the sentence inversions, and the over-use of figures which mar the book's style.

Although Emerson's evaluation of *Sartor* is rooted in a different tradition than Sterling's—by calling his comments a "homiletic criticism" Emerson suggests that he holds a Puritan conception of art as moral teaching—it follows a similar pattern. Emerson, too, praises *Sartor*'s truths, which he calls "prophetic." But as did Sterling, Emerson finds *Sartor*'s form and style to be inappropriate for conveying its "treasure." Rather than submitting to the moral duty of his artistic calling by attuning his genius to men's ears, Carlyle has willfully given it license to express itself in oddity, drollery, and grotesquerie. To Emerson, the serious consequences of this inappropriate choice of vehicles is that it prevents *Sartor*'s wisdom from reaching readers, the mass of whom are "uncritical truth-seekers."

From their respective traditions, Sterling and Emerson bring to bear upon *Sartor* a shared belief in a pragmatic conception of art. They view *Sartor* as "something made in order to effect requisite responses in readers" and they criticize its author for having failed to adjust the character of his work to "the nature, the needs, and the springs of pleasure in the audience."⁷

Carlyle's response to Sterling concentrates on defending the language and style of *Sartor*; in so doing, Carlyle reveals that he is consciously innovating in thought as well as language and suggests that the theory behind his innovations has mimetic-expressive coordinates⁸ rather than pragmatic ones. The novelty of his ideas in *Sartor* (the Clothes Philosophy derived from German thought), Carlyle argues, necessitated his creation of new words: "If one has thoughts not hitherto uttered in English books, I see nothing for it but that you must use words not found there, must *make* words—with moderation and discretion, of course." Whether Carlyle is construing the location of "thoughts" to be "in here" (the mind of Teufelsdröckh) or "out there" (the dynamic material-spiritual world envisioned by the Clothes Philosophy), language must be chosen so as to accurately represent them, an expressive tenet in the first case, a mimetic one

⁷M.H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp* (New York, 1958), pp. 20-21.

⁸See Abrams pp. 42-6 for mimetic theories in which what is imitated is transcendental and pp. 21-6 for definitions of expressive theories.

in the second. Neither orientation looks to an audience's "springs of pleasure," such as the canons of correctness, clarity, and taste in the reader John Sterling.

In his second justification of *Sartor*'s language, Carlyle goes over from defending his own practice to attacking the standard spoken for by Sterling:

But finally, do you reckon this really a time for Purism of Style: or that Style (mere dictionary style) has much to do with the worth or unworth of a Book? I do not: with whole ragged battalions of Scott's-Novel Scotch, with Irish, German, French, and even Newspaper Cockney (when "Literature" is little other than a Newspaper) storming in on us, and the whole structure of our Johnsonian English breaking up from its foundations,—revolution *there* as visible as anywhere else! (317)

Interpreting "Johnsonian English" narrowly, as W.K. Wimsatt does,⁹ Carlyle here rejects Johnson's idea of a stabilized and pure English lexicon.¹⁰ But his phrasing suggests a broader scope for Carlyle's revolution: "whole structure" also seems to refer to characteristic Johnsonian sentence patterns and habits of thought reflected therein. Carlyle thus sets himself in opposition to a structure which Wimsatt describes as typically declarative and reflective of logical thinking. Often combining abstract philosophical diction with antitheses to posit tight logical distinctions, frequently employing parallelism and periodicity to reflect carefully-aligned, settled reasoning and to relate premises to conclusions. In the sentences of *Teufelsdröckh* and the *Editor*, Carlyle revolts against these structures and their habits of mind, as shall be seen, in accordance not just with the mimetic and expressive purposes suggested in this letter but with a pragmatic one as well.

In his reply to Emerson, Carlyle is more explicit about one of the coordinates suggested in the letter to Sterling (for Emerson's letter had asked him for the theory of his rhetoric in *Sartor*), and he again reveals a major representative of the rhetorical paradigm he is revolting against:

With regard to style and so forth... You way well that I take up that attitude because I have no known public, am *alone* under the heavens, speaking into speaking into friendly or unfriendly space; and only, that I will not defend such attitude, that I call it questionable, tentative, and only the best that I, in these mad times, could conveniently hit upon. For you are to know, my view is that now at last we have lived to see all manner of Poetics and Rhetorics and Sermonics, and one may say generally all manner of *Pulpits* for addressing mankind from, as good as bro-

⁹W.K. Wimsatt, *The Prose Style of Samuel Johnson* (New Haven, 1937), p. 143n.

¹⁰Johnson announces this ideal in the "Preface" to his *Dictionary*, wishing "that signs might be permanent, like the things which they denote," and contending that "every language has...its improprieties and absurdities, which it is the duty of the lexicographer to correct or proscribe."

ken and abolished: alas, yes! if you have any earnest meaning which demands to be not only listened to, but *believed* and *done*, you cannot (at least I cannot) utter it *there*, but the sound sticks in my throat, as when a solemnity were *felt* to have become a mummery; and so one leaves the pasteboard coulisses, and three unities, and Blair's Lectures, quite behind; and feels only that there is *nothing sacred*, then, but the Speech of Man to believing Men! *This*, come what will, was, is, and forever must be sacred; and will one day, doubtless, anew environ itself with fit modes, with solemnities that are *not* mummeries (103-4).

Carlyle reveals to Emerson that *Sartor* was written in accordance with a personal theory of rhetoric arising from his conviction that certain conditions faced the modern speaker. If times are "mad," a speaker can no longer rely on sharing a common set of assumptions with an audience; accordingly, the traditional arts of speaking are outmoded and ineffectual guides to right artistic practice. Bereft of knowable audience as a coordinate, Carlyle's rhetoric turns toward a different one: the criterion for right performance is not external but internal, residing in the artist's own feeling of propriety. The success of speech is to be judged by how sincerely it reflects the inner state of the speaker. And by foregrounding (with capitals, underlining, and exclamation point) his corollary belief that "there is *nothing sacred*...but the *Speech of Man* to believing Men!," Carlyle suggests another aspect of his standard of right performance: to satisfy the speaker's inner sense of sacredness, speech must be not just sincere but inspired, an emotionally heightened spontaneous outpouring of the speaker's deepest beliefs. Taken together, these statements suggest that one fundamental tenet in Carlyle's theory of the speaker's art is an expressive one, "in which the artist himself becomes the major element generating both the artistic product and the criteria by which it is to be judged." But though the theory suggested here shifts coordinates away from the pragmatic one used by Emerson and Sterling to judge *Sartor*, it does not exclude audience from the artistic transaction: the "Speech of Man" is to "believing Men," and Carlyle adumbrates his belief here that the expressive "Speech" of *Sartor* might have a pragmatic power of working on readers (the "demand") which pragmatically effects changes (from listening to believing and doing).

In declaring to Emerson that his own expressive-pragmatic rhetoric "leaves...Blair's Lectures quite behind," Carlyle again in the rejoinders identifies a figure in the then-dominant paradigm against which his own rhetoric struggled. Indeed, Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*¹¹ was the paradigm: the most influential rhetoric of the latter half

¹¹James L. Golden and Edward P.J. Corbett, eds, *The Rhetoric of Blair, Campbell, and Whately* (New York, 1968). Subsequent Blair references from this edition will be cited parenthetically.

of the 18th century, it dominated the first third of the 19th century as well by virtue of its having passed through fifty editions by 1835.¹²

The fundamental difference between Carlyle's rhetoric and Blair's is the latter's pervasive assumption about the nature of man, so tacit in the *Lectures* that Blair frames the assumption as an apposite synonym for "man": "Whenever a man speaks or writes, he is supposed, as a rational being, to have some end in view."¹³ With this premise, Blair's advice to speakers about rhetorical invention, choosing modes of appeal, arrangement, and style is everywhere informed by his view of human reason, its powers and limitations.

To Blair, human reason operates in the domain of an external order of ideas upon which the uniform understandings of speaker and listener can concur: "Truth, which is the object of reason, is one" (43). Blair's faiths that the power of reason is facile and the access to truth is ready are evident in several of his recommendations about rhetorical invention and arrangement. Convinced of the superiority of modern minds over those of the ancients, Blair calls "superfluous" the use of the topical system of invention which classical rhetoricians felt necessary to aid the mind in the discovery of arguments; instead, he urges speakers to "lay aside their common places" and apply reason's power of "profound meditation" directly to their subjects (118-19). His confidence that what the orator discovers through "profound meditation" will be congruent with what audiences find convincing is suggested by his heuristic for selecting arguments: "Every speaker should place himself in the situation of a hearer, and think how he would be affected by those reasons which he purposes to employ for persuading others" (119). This confidence extends to Blair's advice on arrangement. After pointing out that there are two methods of arranging arguments, he unhesitatingly recommends the method which presumes that well-meditated ideas will readily win conviction: rather than using inductive arrangement (by which conclusions are "stolen upon" hearers), speakers should use deductive order, wherein "the point to be proved is fairly laid down, and one argument upon another is made to bear upon it, till the hearers be fully convinced" (119).

Blair's faith in the primacy of reason carries with it the corollary that to be effective discourse must match the nature and needs of the rational mind. While his rhetoric does find limited place for such non-rational transactions as the power of sublime obscurity to affect the imagination and the ability of figurative language to activate emotion and fancy so as

¹²Edward P.J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* (New York, 1971), p. 623.

¹³Quoted in Wilbur S. Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500-1700* (Princeton, 1956), p. 654.

to enliven ideas, Blair's advice on choosing modes of appeal, managing the parts of a discourse, and fashioning a style is governed by his corollary.

Blair acknowledges the three Aristotelian modes of appeal, but his recommendations drastically subordinate ethical and pathetic appeals to logical ones. Showing little interest in appeals based on the speaker's ethos, Blair argues at length that appeals to reason must far outweigh emotional appeals in a modern speaker's discourse. Conceding that "the impassioned manner of ancient orators" and Aristotle's recommendation that orators study men's passions attest to the recognition the ancients gave to this mode of appeal, Blair nonetheless strongly cautions against following the precedent of the ancients. First, he warns, modern taste has grown cool and so would find any imitation of the impassioned manner of ancient orators by a modern speaker to be "injudicious" (103-04). Then, emotional expression fails to meet a fundamental need of hearers' minds, for heated expression is always prone to run into confusion and disorder (104), whereas "to the hearers, order in discourse is absolutely necessary for making any proper impression" (102). Finally, Blair asserts, pathetic appeals have less intrinsic and lasting effects than logical argument. On these bases, Blair advises arranging the discourse so that pathetic appeals are both posterior and subordinate to logical ones: "if we expect any emotion which we raise to have a lasting effect, we must be careful to bring over to our side, in the first place, the understanding and judgment" (123). So emphatically does Blair believe that reason has elevated modern speakers above their ancient counterparts that at one point he reduces the number of appeals recognized by the ancients as legitimate to one and defines his rhetoric exclusively in its terms: "True rhetoric and sound logic are very nearly allied" (33).

Blair's conception of the nature and needs of the rational mind also informs his recommendations to speakers about the management of their arguments. He conceives of reason as an instrument which is rigorous and precise in analysis and classification but weaker in powers of synthesis. Hence he endorses the practice of announcing the partitions of a discourse beforehand, for these signals aid the mind in its natural bent for dividing and grouping: "Laying down heads," Blair says, "meets the nature and needs of the hearer's minds, for the mind best apprehends what is clear and best attends to that which is introduced beforehand" (113). His five rules for division likewise are governed by his concept of the mind as an analytic instrument. Rule 1 directs that "the several parts into which the subject is divided be really distinct from one another; that is, that no one include another" (104). Failure to divide in conformity with the mind's demand for distinct genus/species differentiation "involves the subject in indistinctness and disorder," with the consequence that hearers will "find themselves little affected by what is spoken" (114). Similarly, when laying down rules for the management of the argument section of a speech, Blair begins with a rule addressed to the mind's need for distinct categorization.

The speaker must "avoid blending arguments confusingly together, that are of a separate nature...those classes or arguments which are addressed to different principles in human nature [should be kept] separate and distinct" (120).

This concept of mind appears again in Blair's prescriptions about style. Examining style under the heads of perspicuity and ornament, Blair emphasizes that the former is of fundamental importance, "a quality so essential in every kind of writing, that for want of it, nothing can atone" (67). Perspicuity fulfills the writer's first object: "to make our meaning clearly and fully understood, and understood without the least difficulty" (67). It is in his discussion of precision, "the highest part of the quality denoted by perspicuity," which in turn is the most important feature of good style, that Blair explicitly states that a style is good insofar as it accords with his view of "the nature of the human mind" (69). The mind, Blair says, "never can view, clearly and distinctly, above one object at a time. If it must look at two or three together, especially objects among which there is resemblance or connection, it finds itself confused and embarrassed" (69). Precision, from *praecidere*, "to cut off," means to prune superfluities "so as to exhibit neither more nor less than an exact copy of his idea who uses it." Should writers have either an indistinct idea which they attempt to hone to clarity by multiplying words or a distinct idea which they attempt to ornament through circumlocution or diversifying synonyms, the result will be a loose style which frustrates the rational mind's demand to view one object at a time (69).

In these letters to Sterling and Emerson, Carlyle names figures who suggest features of the dominant rhetorical paradigm which he opposed, but the letters only adumbrate his own theory of rhetoric. Yet his writings before *Sartor* and in the book itself show that his revolutionary rhetoric was not just "hit upon," as he tells Emerson, but prompted by well-developed ideas.

In his literary apprenticeship as reviewer of German thought and literature for the British reader, Carlyle in his 1827 essay "The State of German Literature" approves of certain German ideas in ways that imply that he has himself embraced them as foundations for his artistic theory. Among the Germans, he says, Poet and Philosopher alike claim as their province an invisible world beyond sense and matter; knowledge of this world cannot be gained by empirical faculties or understanding, nor can it be communicated by logic and argument.¹⁴ The Literary Man perceives that this "Divine Idea" pervades the visible world, which is its manifestation and symbol, and he makes it his duty to act as faithful interpreter of this Idea, showing it forth in the forms which will enable it to be discerned by the mass of men from whom it is ordinarily hidden (*Works*, XIII, 56).

¹⁴*Complete Works of Thomas Carlyle* (New York, 1901), XIII, 80.

When in this essay he turns from this transcendental conception of the Literary Man as seer and faithful interpreter to discuss the problems facing the vatic artist, Carlyle demonstrates that his artistic theory has another coordinate than the mimetic-expressive one. The writer whose subject belongs to "the invisible and immaterial class" faces enormous difficulties in being understood by readers so

He must devise new means of explanation, describe conditions of mind in which this invisible idea arises, the false persuasions that eclipse it, the false shows that may be mistaken for it, the glimpses of it that appear elsewhere; in short, strive, by a thousand well-devised methods, to guide his reader up to the perception of it; in all which, moreover, the reader must faithfully and toilsomely co-operate with him, if any fruit is to come of their mutual endeavor (*Works*, XIII, 70).

The theory Carlyle outlines here has both mimetic-expressive and pragmatic coordinates. The fundamental requirement is that the artistic form be oriented toward and faithfully show forth the Divine Idea. But the artist must also be attuned to audience, using such forms as will make the Idea accessible and such methods as will lead readers to share in the perception of the invisible. Even then, the artist's success ultimately depends on the reader's sympathetic and cooperative willingness to replicate the artist's struggle for insight into the Divine Idea.

By 1828, Carlyle has shifted the responsibility for eliciting cooperative struggle from reader to artist, making it a criterion of excellent artistic performance, and he has deepened the value he sees in an artist's ability to prompt mutual perception in readers. Evaluating Goethe's *Faust* by his mimetic-expressive transcendental coordinate, Carlyle finds this work to be truly the product of a Literary Man: arising out of "earnest meditation" by the "gifted eyes" of a "deep and noble soul," *Faust* embodies a "true point of vision" into the "stupendous All" (*Works*, XIII, 146-8). But his special praise goes to the "proper form" with which Goethe has "managed" the poem, a mode which Carlyle judges "proper" by his evolving pragmatic criterion. *Faust's* parabolic form, he says, is excellent in its power to enlist readers' deep and active cooperation, out of which activity comes clearer and clearer participation in the vatic artist's insights. By its ability to activate such participation, an elicitive form is seen by Carlyle as having two further values. It engages readers in an activity which is inherently moral, for, as Carlyle says, "Everywhere in life, the true question is, not what we gain, but what we do...it is not what we receive, but what we are made to give, that chiefly contents and profits us." And such a mode elicits so close a sharing of the author's vision by the audience that the noumenous insight almost becomes the readers' own: "We love it the more for the labour it has given us: we almost feel as if we ourselves had assisted in its creation" (*Works*, XIII, 146).

Sartor Resartus is the product of Carlyle's turning from criticism to original authorship using the transcendental and pragmatic tenets he had developed during his apprenticeship. His belief that his vatic powers have

developed sufficiently to enable him to succeed as a literary artist guided by transcendental coordinates is found in a letter of late 1829 in which he declares his plan to strike the "style" of "prophecy" in the upcoming year.¹⁵ Eight months later he writes to Goethe that he intends to turn from the derivative work of criticism to original composition and that the product will very likely be "strange" because his mind ferments with "natural supernaturalism" (*Letters*, V, 152-4).

In statements both surrounding and within *Sartor*, Carlyle shows that concerns for audience also guided the making of his book. In the letter to Goethe, Carlyle indicates that his original creation has a pragmatic intention: it will be "Writing from the heart and if possible to the heart" (*Letters*, V, 153). A notebook entry written after the completion of his book also shows that *Sartor* was written with a pragmatic aim and a method suited to that aim. Suggesting that his purpose had been to "spread abroad reverence over the hearts of men," Carlyle identifies the "oratory" of "Teufelsdröckh" as the means he had used to that end. *Sartor* itself not only confirms Carlyle's purpose of "spreading reverence" through prophetic oratory but also specifies the kinds of appeal through which he sought this effect: "O British Reader," says the Editor, "if...Teufelsdröckh, and we by means of him, have led thee into the true Land of Dreams; and through the Clothes-Screen [and] thou lookest, even for moments, into the region of the Wonderful, and seest and feelest that thy daily life is girt with Wonder, and based on wonder, and thy very blankets and breeches are Miracles,—then art thou profited beyond money's Worth" (*SR*, 269-70).

These are statements of Carlyle's revolutionary concept of prophetic-pragmatic rhetoric which informs *Sartor Resartus* and sets it against the paradigm of its day. By naming as his pragmatic goal the bringing of the reader to a state of Wonder—a state of belief arising out of a shared perception of the worldview embodied in the Clothes Philosophy—Carlyle rejects the aim of rational conviction emphasized in Blair. Where Blair stressed logical argument and perspicuous style as means to his primary rhetorical end, Carlyle indicates that his appeals are aimed at feeling and seeing, the former suggesting the traditional ethical and pathetic kinds, the latter denoting a kind of appeal which Blair no more than mentions but which is paramount in Carlyle's rhetoric. Orientation toward the faculty of seeing, the imaginative intuition, the inner spiritual eye, is the primary basis for Carlyle's revolution against the dominant paradigm's ideas of style and arrangement.

As the main vehicle for Carlyle's persuasive appeals, Teufelsdröckh's speech is given a style by which Carlyle sought to attest to the authority of

¹⁵*The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle* (Durham, N.C., 1976), V, 43.

this figure's ethos as an inspired seer, to body forth the nature of the invisible world which the prophet sees, and to engage the readers' emotive and imaginative-intuitive powers. These aims are the bases for Carlyle's rebellion against established style, for they are fulfilled neither by Johnson's orotund, abstract declarations of pre-formulated logical constructs nor by Blair's perspicuous, plain style. Where Johnson's sentences declare, Teufelsdröckh's run a complete range of moods in short compass. In his first reported speech (*SR*, 21), he asserts that he has seen a noumenous one beneath the phenomenal many ("I see it all...that living flood"), then asks a rhetorical question to engage the reader ("whither is it going?"), then exclaims prophetically that the answer lies in the invisible world ("From Eternity, onwards to Eternity!"), and concludes with an exclamatory question which applies the insight to the material world ("These are Apparitions: what else?"). With this range of moods within one sentence, Teufelsdröckh's speech aims at attesting to his inspired, visionary state; at revealing the dynamic nature of the unity hidden beneath multiplicity; and at engaging the emotions and imagination of readers.

Where Johnson's rotund periods and predilection for clausal balance and antithesis reflect a rational concern for relating premises to conclusions and making logical discriminations, Teufelsdröckh's sentences war against settled logical formulation, instead aiming at widening and deepening readers' vision while dramatizing the seer's own. Teufelsdröckh's sentences tend to string out curt units of sense by apposition and coordination, hurrying readers over heterogeneous phenomena to surprise them with the discovery of a hidden affinity or identity. Where Blair's rule of perspicuity commands that objects be kept discrete lest the rational mind be confused, Teufelsdröckh's additive sentences demand that the differentiating intellect lose its hold to allow the imaginative intuition to use its esemplastic power.

Blair was inclined to distrust figurative language, apparently fearing that its appeal to the wayward emotions and imagination might distract the reason's attention to argument.¹⁶ Teufelsdröckh's speech is a constellation of metaphor through which readers are led to reach the climactic cosmic symbols of "Natural Supernaturalism" in Book III. Metaphor and symbol are at the heart of Teufelsdröckh's style, for these figures powerfully accomplish all of the purposes of his style overall. They testify powerfully to his ethos as a seer, for only with profound spiritual insight into the underlying noumenous One do all material things become at once metaphoric and symbolic (metaphoric in relation to each other, symbolic in relation to the One). Figures also attest to the nature of the world by bodying forth

¹⁶Blair (p. 79) saw figurative language as the natural means of expression in primitive states of language and culture, when men are governed more by passion and imagination than by reason. The language of his day, he felt, had reached the stage of refinement wherein "perspicuity and precision are more studied".

the omnipresence of the one each time a similarity-beneath-difference is invoked by a figure. And by apposing and coordinating diverse figures and images, Teufelsdröckh's speech elicits from readers both their participation in acts of perceiving the fundamental interconnectedness of things and their exercise of the only faculty capable of enabling them to share the seer's insights, their imaginative intuitions.¹⁷

Carlyle's rebellion against the rhetorical paradigm's ideas of arrangement also follows the promptings of his prophetic-pragmatic theory. While Blair's advice on arrangement was oriented toward what the rational mind found "natural" and easy to grasp, Carlyle's arrangements at both micro and macro levels in *Sartor* are simultaneously addressed to engaging readers' imaginative intuitions and to frustrating the efforts of their logical faculties to find coherence. The arrangements in *Sartor* are based both on Carlyle's pragmatic tenet of leading his audience to a perception of the invisible through elicitive forms which demand use of those faculties by which the invisible can be perceived and on his prophetic objective of fostering belief by bodying forth the unseen in a forcefully expressed, noumenous prophetic vision.

By Carlyle's use of the ordering fiction¹⁸ of the British editor and his internal *donnée*, the editing task of progressively bring order and light out of the chaos and darkness of *Die Kleider* and Teufelsdröckh's autobiographical fragments, Teufelsdröckh's ideas are unfolded so as to doubly frustrate readers yearning for narrative or logical coherence. The unsystematic order in which Teufelsdröckh's thoughts are presented in the whole book is determined by Carlyle's strategic choice of fictions: the Editor is presented as an "English intellect" (SR, 8) confronted with "a very sea of [German] thought" who is thereby constrained to present Teufelsdröckh's ideas as they become "lucid and lucent" to him (SR, 11). And the order of ideas in any given extract selected by the Editor is itself

¹⁷For Teufelsdröckh's claim that a metaphorical style effects reader engagement, see *Sartor Resartus* p. 73 and Harrold's note 3.

¹⁸For the rhetorical advantages Carlyle gained by using fictions in *Sartor*, see Gerry H. Brookes, *The Rhetorical Form of Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus,"* (Berkeley, 1972), especially pp. 63-79. This study is in accord with Brookes' thesis that "*Sartor Resartus* is a form of persuasive essay" (p. 8) in which an implied orator (p. 63) uses the fictions of the Editor and Teufelsdröckh in varied and effective ways to persuade readers to belief in the ideas of the Clothes Philosophy (p. 171). However, in arguing that *Sartor* is an essay, not a novel, Brookes questions the coherence and significance of a pattern which this study and others find to be integral to Carlyle's persuasive strategy: a pattern of growth through experience with Teufelsdröckh's ideas and autobiography by the Editor. Critics who find significant patterns of development in the Editor include G.B. Tennyson, *Sartor Called Resartus* (Princeton, 1965), pp. 175-82; and Albert J. LaValley, *Carlyle and the Idea of the Modern* (New Haven, 1968).

inaccessible to readers' intellects, for Carlyle creates for Teufelsdröckh the persona of an inspired prophet who expresses his insights in fragments which exfoliate in emotional and imaginative patterns rather than in logical ones. The fragmentary orders arising out of the fiction of the editing situation serve as an elicitive form, prompting readers to seek insight through active imaginative and intuitive effort.

To encourage and school readers in this active participation, Carlyle poses the Editor as mediating bridge between them and Teufelsdröckh's visionary opinions and life. By endowing the Editor with a morally attractive ethos ("Truth is our divinity" [SR, 14]), and by having him initially react to Teufelsdröckh in ways which readers would find natural (the task of understanding will be beset with "difficulties" [SR, 9-14]), Carlyle invites readers progressively to extend their sympathy to the Editor and to cooperate with him in his struggle to perceive Teufelsdröckh's meanings. As fragments of Teufelsdröckh's strange compendia are disclosed in the order in which they become accessible to the Editor's purview and comprehension, his reactions shift from judgment to sympathy,¹⁹ and his exhortations to readers encourage a similar change and ever-profounder attentiveness. As the Editor's perceptions deepen, he increasingly elects to arrange his materials in climactic patterns which move from the phenomenal surface to noumenous insights.²⁰ These arrangements not only testify to the Editor's growing powers of seeing and feeling but also condition readers to follow and engage in the making of the meanings of the Clothes Philosophy.

Though opaque to Blair's notion of the faculty of reason, these arrangements serve both Carlyle's pragmatic and prophetic objectives. By eliciting from readers progressive exercise in using their power of imaginative intuition, this power is strengthened—intuition is quickened by experience (SR, 51). As intuition increasingly quickens in the Editor and, by Carlyle's design, in readers, new and more profoundly and abstrusely prophetic materials can be confronted and struggled with until their meanings are perceived. This elicitive arrangement is used in each of *Sartor*'s three books to bring readers to the state of readiness which will enable Teufelsdröckh's deepest insights to achieve their effects. Each book is structured so as to lead Editor and readers to the climax of a pro-

¹⁹Tennyson, pp. 176-82.

²⁰A paradigm of this recurrent patten is "Characteristics" (I,iv). The Editor here is free to order his recollections about Teufelsdröckh in any way he wants. He chooses to arrange his impressions in a climactic insight pattern which evidently emerged from his working with imaginative intuition on his body of recollections: his description of Teufelsdröckh begins with the surface Old Clothes of the Professor's relations with "good society" and progressively penetrates to the concluding insight that the "cipher-key" to Teufelsdröckh's spiritual essence lay in his laugh.

foundly noumenous prophetic insight which bodies forth the invisible in the visible. "Pure Reason" in Book I, "The Everlasting Yea" in Book II, and "Natural Supernaturalism" in Book III are climactic prophetic visions which will, in Carlyle's strategies of disposition, be accessible to readers whose intuitions have been quickened by the experiences provided by the pragmatic rhetorician's arrangements. Access to prophetic vision encountered in this manner cannot but have a profound impact on earnest readers who have faithfully attended, for, in Carlyle's view, "We love [insight] the more for the labour it has given us."

Carlyle's rhetorical rebellion in 1831 has interesting parallels with challenges to the dominant rhetorical paradigm of our day. As do those who currently object to practitioners of Blair's managerial rhetoric, Carlyle denied that rhetoric's province was constrained to reason and a logical arrangement of arguments addressed to it and to taste and a perspicuous style addressed to it; instead, he extended the appeals of his rhetoric to address the emotions surrounding his readers' deepest interests²¹ and the faculty of imaginative intuition which the dominant paradigm ignored. Just as Keith Fort recently challenged the rationalist assumptions and resultant form of the critical essay by suggesting that they might arise from an epistemological self-deception, Carlyle directed his rhetorical appeals toward other capabilities in readers on the *assumption* that reason was a deceptive, self-reflecting faculty. Similarly to the way current proponents of a "female" rhetorical mode favor persuading indirectly, implicitly, unanalytically, additively, Carlyle rejected Blair's and Johnson's rhetorics of formulation and, instead, persuaded through a generative rhetoric of experience. Finally, just as Winston Weathers today recommends that writers apprise themselves of the resources of an alternate grammar style, a Grammar B, Carlyle, for his persuasive ends, put the conventional stylistic grammar of his day to the use of undercutting its own assumptions (as when he has the Editor deride Science with a fractured Johnsonian period at the beginning of *Sartor*) and created an alternate style as a bridge between readers and his revivifying world view. In fact, Weathers' justification of Grammar B almost precisely reflects the bases of Carlyle's rhetorical revolution:

Many writers believe that there are "things to say"...that simply cannot be effectively communicated via a traditional grammar; that there are "things to say" in a...socially complex, politically and spiritually confused era that simply cannot be reflected in language if language is limited to the traditional grammar; that the "conventions" of language in the traditional grammar are so much a product of certain thought processes, certain world views, certain notions about the nature of man and society that the conventions force upon much of our content a compromise, a qualification, an unwanted prevarication (4).

²¹See Brooke's analyses of Carlyle's strategies for evoking feelings, pp. 132-72.

Carlyle would only have changed "unwanted" to "intolerable."

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