

Blifil as Tartuffe: The Dialogic Comedy of *Tom Jones*

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Article:

Many modern interpreters of Fielding's novels, reading his declaration in the Preface to *Joseph Andrews* that "a comic Romance is a comic Epic-Poem in Prose," emphasize the epic or the romance as the basis of his achievement.¹ However, Homer Goldberg's assertion that "*comic* is clearly the most significant element of Fielding's formula" receives considerable support from Fielding's own words.² In *Tom Jones*, for example, the narrator identifies himself as a "Writer whose Province is Comedy, or that Kind of Novels, which, like this I am writing, is of the comic Class."³ Goldberg, like other scholars who follow such leads, finds Fielding's comic prototypes in narratives by Cervantes, Scarron, Le Sage, or Marivaux rather than in British or European drama. Few readers heed Andrew Wright's advice: "Fielding's knowledge of French drama—he translated *La Médecin malgré lui* and *L'Avare*—is perhaps underestimated in reckoning the extent and quality of his preparation as a dramatist for the writing of the novels he was to come to."⁴ As Wright implies, the plays of Molière especially deserve greater attention as part of Fielding's self-conscious dialogue with comic tradition in *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*.

One recent attempt to move critical discourse in this direction is Richard Keller Simon's *The Labyrinth of the Comic: Theory and Practice from Fielding to Freud*. Simon argues that the design of *Tom Jones* is "a multiplication of comic literary structures that Fielding takes from Molière, Congreve, and the comic tradition more generally. . . . There are explicit references to these sources throughout the novel. In Molière's *The Miser* . . . Valère must pretend to urge Elise to marry Anselm, at Harpagon's urgings, to maintain his own deceit. In *Tom Jones* Tom must pretend to encourage Sophia to marry Blifil, at Squire Western's urgings." Furthermore, Simon continues, "In the basic plot of a typical Molière play, an unreasonable father attempts to prevent the marriage between a headstrong son or daughter and the true object of their love, until a *raisonneur* . . . brings about the happy ending." From this plot, he concludes, Fielding creates a "truly extravagant form," by doubling and inverting the paradigm.⁵

Such reflections of *The Miser* in *Tom Jones* disclose Western as a rural image of avarice, no longer foregrounded so prominently, and highlight typical elements of the comic plot, though they are almost as typical of New Comedy as of Molière's.⁶ This analogy also recalls Robert Alter's suggestion that role playing in *Tom Jones* is "presented not as the expression of an existential dilemma but as a Molièresque masquerade of deceptions in which the face of nature, though hidden, is always there behind the mask to be revealed."⁷ However, *The Miser* seems unlikely to be the principal Molièresque text within the text of *Tom Jones*. The analogy of Western with Harpagon wrenches the novel's plot out of shape by making the wrong family the center of the action. I propose to describe instead the presence of a *Tartuffe*-like action in the novel, which permits the recentering of Allworthy's family and thus provides a better perspective from which to examine Fielding's juxtaposition of his comic mimesis with that of Molière. The presence of *Tartuffe* in *Tom Jones* attests, as well, to the significance of the comic in the novel.

Fielding, like French eighteenth-century imitators of *Tartuffe*, was attracted by the position of the hypocrite in family life.⁸ In the comic action of *Tom Jones* he presents several pious hypocrites, the brothers Blifil, the Dr.

and the Captain, and the two tutors, Thwackum and Square, all of whom impose on Allworthy much as Tartuffe deceives Orgon in Molière's play.' But young Blifil, apparently "sober, discreet and pious beyond his Age" (123), is the central Tartuffe figure in this comedy of character, the genuine heir of the brothers and the apt pupil of the tutors. Piety conceals Blifil's plans to disrupt Paradise Hall, to steal his half-brother's inheritance and keep him imprisoned, much as Molière's impostor persuades Orgon to disinherit Damis and has Orgon himself arrested. Like Tartuffe, who schemes to seduce Orgon's wife Elmire and marry his daughter Mariane, Blifil plots to marry his half-brother's beloved Sophia, after which he will add "Triumph to Lust" in "rifling her Charms" (346). Allworthy, being a benevolent man, is not so willful a dupe as Orgon, but he is, nevertheless, duped and cannot see the hypocrisy around him.¹⁰ Only the providential discovery of Blifil's treachery, like the king's insight into Tartuffe's character, permits a comic ending.

The essential feature of Molière's comedy is not, however, its action; according to W. G. Moore, its principle and symbol is the mask. As Moore observes, "Molière has turned the mask into a symbol of much more than a vice or defect that adheres to a man. It is a symbol of cleverness, art, skill on which a man prides himself, but which may well run counter to his real self. The struggle to keep the mask in place, to achieve one's end, becomes a struggle between art and nature, craft and habit, intelligence and character."¹¹ The characters' discussion of the mask in Tartuffe shows how self-consciously Molière uses it. Cleante asks Orgon why he cannot distinguish between true piety and hypocrisy:

How do you fail to see it, may I ask?
Is not a face quite different from a mask? Cannot sincerity and cunning art,
Reality and semblance, be told apart?¹²

Elmire allows Tartuffe's attempted seduction in Orgon's presence for a calculated purpose: "I shall employ sweet speeches in the task / Of making that impostor drop his mask" (121). The reader's laughter arises from the discrepancy between such characters' awareness that Tartuffe's mask is a mask and from Orgon's determination not to see that it is.

Not surprisingly, then, from his first words Tartuffe assumes the mask of piety: "Hang up my hairshirt, put my scourge in place, / And pray, Laurent, for Heaven's perpetual grace" (82). He readily evokes the language of humility—"call me the chief of sinners"—and of purity—"Cover that bosom, girl. The flesh is weak, / And unclean thoughts are difficult to control" (83). He intones religious blessing: "May Heaven, whose infinite goodness we adore / Preserve your body and soul forevermore" (85). He expresses righteous indignation: "You needn't try to provoke me; it's no use. / Those who serve Heaven must expect abuse" (158). When Orgon bestows his estate on Tartuffe, which he will use "For Heaven's glory," the hypocrite announces his Christian forgiveness of the angered, dispossessed son more than once: "Forgive him, Lord, as I've already done" (103).

Again, Sir, let me say that I've forgiven
Damis, and thus obeyed the laws of Heaven;
But I am not commanded by the Bible
To live with one who smears my name with libel. (111)

Tartuffe drops his mask in moments of lust but even then applies the language of piety, "a pure and deep emotion, / A fervent zeal" (87), to a different object.

Blifil's mask is similar to Tartuffe's. Though readers such as Martin C. Battestin have correctly associated him with prudence, as a sham embodiment of the virtue Tom must learn,¹³ Blifil speaks the language of piety more often than the rival language of virtue, which disappears completely along with Square in the later books of the novel. Early in the novel Fielding identifies "the decent Reverence" with which Blifil learned Thwackum's Christian doctrine: "for he had got by Heart, and frequently repeated his Phrases, and maintained all his Master's religious Principles with a Zeal which was surprising in one so young" (133). After a boyhood in which he flatters each tutor ("With one he was all Religion, with the other he was all Virtue" 1134), Blifil is

more often associated with Thwackum, whose zeal for justice he shares. The simile comparing Blifil to “a Popish Inquisitor” (345) underscores their resemblance.

Whether lamenting Sophia's confinement of her pet as “unchristian” (160), calling Tom's fornication with Molly “wicked” (258), or convincing Allworthy to let him court Sophia by proceeding “to discourse so wisely and religiously on Love and Marriage” (285), Blifil never drops his mask. Fielding does give readers glimpses behind it, revealing, for instance, the perversity and sadism underlying the moderation of Blifil's appetites (see, for example, Book VI, ch. 4 and Book VII, ch. 6). Sophia sees very early the egotism behind the mask, and her father, instinctively, cannot abide Blifil's pious cant (see Book IV, ch. 4-5). Thwackum and Square seem to be playing a game of mutual deception with him. As in *Tartuffe*, only the crucial character, Allworthy, cannot see that the mask is a mask. Therefore, the hypocrite can continue his impersonation until the moment of his defeat, asserting, even as Allworthy discovers his intervention in Tom's imprisonment, that he acted from compassion: “surely my dear Uncle will forgive the Effects of the most amiable of human Weaknesses” (932).

Perhaps the fullest demonstration of Blifil's pious mask is the scene in Book VI, when he summarizes evidence against Tom for Allworthy's benefit and his own. He begins with this apology: “You know, Sir. . . I never disobeyed you; but I am sorry I mentioned it, since it may now look like Revenge, whereas, I thank Heaven, no such Motive ever entered my Heart; and if you oblige me to discover it, I must be his Petitioner to you for your Forgiveness” (307). Then he announces the charges:

In the very Day of your utmost Danger, when myself and all the Family were in Tears, he filled the House with Riot and Debauchery. He drank and sung and roared; and when I gave him a gentle Hint of the Indecency of his Actions, he fell into a violent Passion, swore many Oaths, called me Rascal, and struck me. . . . I am sure . . . I have forgiven him that long ago. I wish I could so easily forget his Ingratitude to the best of Benefactors; and yet, even that, I hope you will forgive him, since he must have certainly been possessed with the Devil. (307-08)

For the beatings he and Thwackum received following their interruption of Tom and Molly, Blifil, *Tartuffe*-like, also expresses forgiveness: “that I have long forgiven, nay I prevailed with Mr. Thwackum to forgive him too, and not to inform you of a Secret which I feared might be fatal to him” (308). The mask, as in Molière's play, is one of language, of words which signify piety in its absence and require the utmost perspicuity to interpret correctly. In fact, Fielding earlier associated the concept of the mask with hypocrisy in “An Essay on Knowledge of Characters of Men,” where he calls sanctity “the true Mark” of hypocrisy and asserts that hypocrites are “enabled to perpetrate their Villainies under this Mask.”¹⁴

Both Molière and Fielding provide defenses against actual or possible misreading of the hypocrite's mask of piety, for it is subject to more than one interpretation, as their characters demonstrate. It can be read as ridiculing not only hypocritical piety but also excessive piety, such as actions by those less consciously deceptive than *Tartuffe* or Blifil, whose excesses imply corresponding defects. As W. D. Howarth points out, *Tartuffe* “was objected to by sincere churchmen of all shades of opinion—and surely with every justification”; for, he continues, “Molière is not only ridiculing the beliefs of real-life bigots . . . he is making a forceful statement by comic means about habits of thought common to bigoted thinkers in every age, people who use the authority of Church . . . as the justification for anti-social attitudes or inhuman activities.”¹⁵

In the Preface to *Tartuffe*, printed after the play had been attacked as one “that offends piety,” Molière, ironically perhaps, addresses his defense “Especially to the truly devout.”¹⁶ He argues that comedy “corrects men's vices by means of agreeable lessons,” and that satire is a more effective deterrent to vice than “a serious moral statement” (308). Furthermore, Molière urges,

If one takes the trouble to examine my comedy in good faith, he will surely see that my intentions are innocent throughout, and tend in no way to make fun of what men revere; that I have presented the

subject with all the precautions that its delicacy imposes; and that I have used all the art and skill that I could to distinguish clearly the character of the hypocrite from that of the truly devout man. (307-08)

However, characterizing Tartuffe with his mask of piety has compelled Molière, in order to satisfy the demands of probability, to use pious language that may cause readers to misinterpret his intention. This usage he defends: “I have been attacked for having placed words of piety in the mouth of my impostor. Could I avoid doing so in order to represent properly the character of a hypocrite? It seemed to me sufficient to reveal the criminal motives which make him speak as he does” (308). Howarth argues that the Preface is too defensive in posture to represent Molière's theory of comedy.¹⁷ The Preface does, however, implicitly assert comedy's license to ridicule, when Molière declares, “One must either approve the comedy of *Tartuffe* or condemn all comedy in general” (308). Whatever its theoretical status, its use as a certain type of discourse, appended to a certain type of comedy, makes it of significance in reading *Tom Jones*.

Fielding, like Molière, wants, or claims to want, readers to interpret his ridicule of hypocritical piety in one way. In chapter 4 of Book III, having already introduced the characters of Mr. Square “*the Philosopher*” and Mr. Thwackum “*the Divine*” in the preceding chapter (123) and anticipating an instance of Blifil's hypocrisy in subsequent paragraphs of this one, Fielding presents “*a necessary Apology for the Author*” (128). This brief commentary, though following a different line of argument, functions like the Preface to *Tartuffe*. Fielding, too, concerns himself with “Men who are warm in the cause of Virtue or Religion.” Though he may be misinterpreted as “endeavouring to cast any Ridicule on the greatest Perfections of Human Nature,” instead, he insists, he merely represents “two of their false and pretended Champions” (128-29). Fielding may be ironically overstating his innocence; the defensive tone of his remarks may, like Molière's, conceal hostility toward excessive piety in revealed or natural religion and toward those who use such piety, whether consciously or not, to rationalize anti-social or inhuman acts.

Fielding's justification for his comic characterization follows in the next two paragraphs:

Indeed, I doubt not but this Ridicule will in general be allowed; my chief Apprehension is, as many true and just Sentiments often came from the Mouths of these Persons, lest the whole should be taken together, and I should be conceived to ridicule all alike. Now the Reader will be pleased to consider, that as neither of these Men were Fools, they could not be supposed to have holden none but wrong Principles, and to have uttered nothing but Absurdities; what Injustice, therefore, must I have done to their Characters, had I selected only what was bad, and how horribly wretched and maimed must their Arguments have appeared!

Upon the whole, it is not Religion or Virtue, but Want of them which is here exposed. Had not *Thwackum* too much neglected Virtue, and *Square* Religion, in the Composition of their several Systems; and had not both utterly discarded all natural Goodness of Heart, they had never been represented as the Objects of Derision in this History. (129)

The critical vocabulary of this passage—“Ridicule” (used twice, as noun and verb), “exposed,” “Objects of Derision”—marks it as a discussion of a Molièresque kind of comedy, whose characters are not “Fools” who utter “Absurdities.” This comedy, instead, portrays vice, which “utterly” departs from goodness, exposing it to derisive laughter. In the interest of its realism, such comedy must present “many true and just Sentiments,” which do not ridicule true piety but are necessary to demonstrate its absence in a probable manner. Not to include such speeches would result in characters too “maimed” to be found in a “History.” Like Molière, however, Fielding allows the demands of his mimesis to rationalize any covert ridicule of excessive piety.

With this advice on how to read it, the presence of a Molièresque text discloses several features of *Tom Jones*. It emphasizes the novel's heritage in comedy. It illustrates Fielding's belief in the efficacy of negative examples.¹⁸ It also allows the author to provide the reader with pleasures in “the Art of Contrast” (*Tom Jones*, 214), created by Fielding's introduction of “actual pieces of literature . . . which parallel the action of the novel” and which

direct the reader “toward an awareness of the different possibilities of representing reality in art.”¹⁹ But Blifil, though prominent in Books III—VII and XVI—XVIII, is not the focal character. Fielding brings to the center of his action the *adulescens* more peripheral in *Tartuffe*. Furthermore, the imperfect Tom Jones (like Allworthy, Western, or even Partridge) is both ridiculous **and** likeable. In this Tom resembles the protagonist of Charlotte Lennox's *The Female Quixote* and her Cervantic prototype, Don Quixote, whose authors Fielding praises for “that Care which both have taken to preserve the Affection of their Readers for their principal Characters in the Midst of all the Follies of which they are guilty.”²⁰

Tom Jones includes comedy of this more benevolent kind, created by the alliance of the comic with good nature, that Stuart Tave calls “amiable humor.”²¹ “Amiable” is the term Fielding applied to his sister's first novel in a preface describing as “always necessary to Works of this Kind . . . that the main End or Scope be at once amiable, ridiculous and natural.” Accordingly, he faults those “Comic Performances” that “set before us the odious instead of the amiable.”²² Its amiableness differentiates Fielding's comedy from Molière's in the way that Goldberg remarks about a similar comic dramatist: “The stipulation of amiability as an essential attribute of the comic romance fable . . . distinguishes Fielding's sympathetic mode of comedy from that of Ben Jonson, in which the foibles of affectation are exposed through the machinations of rogues and schemers.”²³

John Traugott, on the other hand, judges *Tom Jones* an example of “the best possibilities of . . . sentimental comedy.” Fielding is able to find “sentiment not at all incompatible with a true comic spirit” because of the “beneficent though paradoxical interpenetration of sentiment and worldliness” in his text. The worldliness of the narrator's irony distances “this core of meanness at the center of Fielding's conception of life” and balances the “sentimental] innocence, spontaneity, energy, and especially appetite, in his privileged hero and heroine.”²⁴ The need for sentiment, which Traugott believes the novel evokes in the reader, is another explanation for the amiableness of the novel's comedy, a version of Tave's union of comedy with good nature. Fielding depends on the reader's intellect and feeling to ridicule hypocrisy and exemplify good nature, even in the midst of folly.

The novel's dedication makes this approach to comedy evident. Fielding's assumption that “it is much easier to make good Men wise, than to make bad Men good,” leads to this conclusion: “For these Purposes I have employed all the Wit and Humour of which I am the Master in the following History; wherein I have endeavoured to laugh Mankind out of their favourite Follies and Vices” (38). This comedy is corrective, but it places less emphasis on satiric exposure of error to readers through negative examples than on the humor and laughter which enable them to sympathize with the follies of the protagonist and to adjust their own perceptions and feelings after witnessing the comic action.

In *Tom Jones* comedy of character exists within or alongside more amiable comedy. In the invocation to Genius in Book XIII, where he links Molière to other favorite comic writers, Fielding moves knowingly between these kinds of comedy. He asks Genius to

Remove that Mist which dims the Intellects of Mortals, and causes them to adore Men for their Art, or to detest them for their Cunning in deceiving others, when they are, in reality, the Objects only of Ridicule, for deceiving themselves. Strip off the thin Disguise of Wisdom from Self-Conceit, of Plenty from Avarice, and Glory from Ambition. Come thou, that hast inspired thy *Aristophanes*, thy *Lucian*, thy *Cervantes*, thy *Rabelais*, thy *Molière*, thy *Shakespear*, thy *Swift*, thy *Marivaux*, fill my Pages with Humour; 'till mankind learn the Good-Nature to laugh only at the Follies of others, and the Humility to grieve at their own. (685-86)

The shifts in this commentary—in techniques from ridicule to humor and laughter, in topics, from self-conceit, avarice, and ambition to good nature and folly—reflect the codes between which Fielding's comedy moves. The comedy which strips off disguise through ridicule to expose error, in the manner of Molière—or of Swift, Rabelais, Lucian, and Aristophanes—is present in Fielding's text. Fielding also places there a comedy of amiable laughter, the comedy of Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Marivaux, in which the protagonist's errors provide sympathetic as well as satirical examples to readers.

In Fielding's comedy, once the hypocrite is exposed, the erring blocking character like Allworthy can ask forgiveness from the error-ridden protagonist—"O my Child. . . how have I injured you!" (959). Allworthy can also celebrate their triumph over error and the protagonist's "natural Goodness of Heart," the trait absent from the hypocrites described in the "Apology for the Author": "I am rejoiced, my dear Child . . . to hear you talk thus sensibly; for as I am convinced Hypocrisy (good Heaven how have I been imposed on by it in others!) was never among your Faults, so I can readily believe all you say. You now see, *Tom*, to what Dangers Imprudence alone may subject Virtue (for Virtue, I am convinced, you love in a great Degree)" (959-60). Tom can forgive Allworthy: "The wisest Man might be deceived as you were, and, under such a Deception, the best must have acted just as you did" (959). Forgiveness is a repeated word in Blifil's pious vocabulary, but only those with "natural Goodness of Heart," like Tom and Allworthy or Fielding's implied reader, can forgive.²⁵

The resolution also resembles Shakespearean "comedy of forgiveness," as described by Robert Grams Hunter; in Shakespeare's problem comedies and tragicomedies the abundance of evil and weakness in his central characters emphasizes the need for charity in those who must forgive them. As Hunter observes, "Only the erring protagonist's contrition and his forgiveness by those he has wronged save the fabric of this world of comedy from destruction." The inclusion of this kind of comedy may help in interpreting the final book of *Tom Jones*, where forgiveness of Tom's folly is necessary to produce the happy ending. The comedy of forgiveness illustrates another aspect of amiableness, for "such drama invites us to forgive the sins of others, not because we (unlike them) are good, but because we (like them) are not good."²⁶

The presence of such "comedy of forgiveness" also suggests how Fielding's comedy emerges in the novel from the dialogic relationship of Shakespearean and Molièresque comedy, and of those with other kinds of comedy, written by the authors listed in the invocation to Genius above and some not identified there, such as Congreve or Jonson. M. M. Bakhtin argues that in the comic novel "canonized genres," like epic or romance, are "dialogized, permeated with laughter, irony, humor, elements of self-parody."²⁷ In *Tom Jones* the canonized kinds of comedy undergo such reprocessing, through Fielding's inclusion of self-conscious, sometimes stylized versions of comedies by Molière and others. "Perhaps more than any major writer," Sheridan Baker comments, Fielding can be observed "working and reworking literary conventions into living paradigms."²⁸ The Molièresque comedy of *Tartuffe* is one of the texts "reworked" in *Tom Jones*, one of the canonized styles in the dialogue Fielding conducts with the comic tradition. Its presence in the novel contributes to Fielding's creation of his own "living paradigm" for comic fiction.

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NOTES

1. *Joseph Andrews*, ed. Martin C. Battestin (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1967) 8. Among notable readings of Fielding's novels as epics is Battestin's *The Moral Basis of Fielding's Art: A Study of Joseph Andrews* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1959), which argues that Fielding's "devices of parable and allegory in correlating subject and action" follow "neoclassical epic theory" (88). Sheridan Baker ("Henry Fielding's Comic Romances," *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters* 45 [1960]: 411-19) and Henry Knight Miller (*Henry Fielding's Tom Jones and the Romance Tradition*, ELS Monograph Series, no. 6 [Victoria: English Literary Studies, 1976], offer important readings of the novels as romances. In stressing his moral seriousness, Battestin and Miller create a somewhat gloomy Fielding. For instance, Battestin asserts that Fielding "reminds us more of Bunyan or Fénelon than of Scarron, Le Sage, or Cervantes" (89). Miller also eschews the influence of these comic authors in favor of "the norm of the 'serious' romance as a mode of narrative" (12).
2. *The Art of Joseph Andrews* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1969) 8. On the significance of comic form in *Tom Jones* see Baker, "Fielding and the Irony of Form," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 2 (1968): 138-54; William B. Guthrie, "The Comic Celebrant of Life in *Tom Jones*," *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 19 (1974): 91-106; and James E. Evans, "Comedy and the 'Tragic Complexion' of *Tom Jones*," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 83 (1984): 384-95.

3. *Tom Jones*, ed. Battestin and Fredson Bowers (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1975) 743. Subsequent quotations are cited parenthetically.
4. *Henry Fielding: Mask and Feast* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1964) 59.
5. *The Labyrinth of the Comic: Theory and Practice from Fielding to Freud* (Tallahassee: Florida State UP, 1985) 69, 70.
6. Harold C. Knutson demonstrates the heritage of New Comedy in *Molière: An Archetypal Approach* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1976).
7. *Fielding and the Nature of the Novel* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1968) 78.
8. W. D. Howarth, "The Theme of *Tartuffe* in Eighteenth-Century Comedy," *French Studies* 4 (1950): 113.
9. The importance of hypocrisy in *Tom Jones* is not surprising given Fielding's statement in the Preface to *Joseph Andrews* that affectation, arising from vanity and hypocrisy, is "the only Source of the true Ridiculous." Fielding finds greater comic pleasure in representations of hypocrisy: "for to discover any one to be the exact Reverse of what he affects, is more surprizing, and consequently more ridiculous, than to find him a little deficient in the Quality he desires the Reputation of" (*Joseph Andrews*, ed. Battestin, 7, 8-9).
10. Allworthy's structural parallel with Orgon may invite increased attention to the squire's folly and some laughter at his expense, not usually permitted by readers such as Sheldon Sacks, who calls him a "fallible paragon" (*Fiction and the Shape of Belief: A Study of Henry Fielding with Glances at Swift, Johnson and Richardson* [Berkeley: U of California P, 1967] 110-11). Allworthy seems to combine functions of Molière's dupe and his *raisonneur*; but, as N. A. Peacock suggests, even the *raisonneur* may be a comic figure rather than an exemplar of wisdom ("The Comic Role of the Raisonneue in Molière's Theatre," *Modern Language Review* 76 [1981]: 298-310).
11. *Molière: A New Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1949) 42.
12. *Tartuffe*, trans. Richard Wilbur (New York: Harcourt, 1963) 27. Subsequent quotations are cited parenthetically.
13. "Fielding's Definition of Wisdom: Some Functions of Ambiguity and Emblem in *Tom Jones*," *ELH* 35 (1968): 200.
14. *Miscellanies, Volume I*, ed. Henry Knight Miller (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan UP, 1972) 167-68.
15. *Molière: A Playwright and His Audience* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982) 201, 203.
16. Preface to *Tartuffe*, trans. Haskell M. Block, *Comedy: Meaning and Form*, ed. Robert W. Corrigan, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper, 1981) 307. Subsequent quotations are cited parenthetically.
17. Howarth, *Molière*, 165.
18. According to J. Paul Hunter, Fielding judged negative examples to be more effective because "the principle of repulsion" provides a "surer psychological strategy" for readers than attraction (*Occasional Form: Henry Fielding and the Chains of Circumstance* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1975] 119).
19. Alter 102-03.
20. *The Criticism of Henry Fielding*, ed. Ioan Williams (London: Routledge, 1970) 192.
21. *The Amiable Humorist: A Study in the Comic Theory and Criticism of the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1960).
22. Fielding, *Criticism*, 265.
23. Goldberg 14.
24. "Heart and Mask and Genre in Sentimental Comedy," *Eighteenth-Century Life* 10 (1986): 122, 129, 126-27.
25. See John Preston for a discussion of Fielding's creation, "by means of the plot," of "a reader wise enough to create the book he reads" (*The Created Self: The Reader's Role in Eighteenth-Century Fiction* [London: Heinemann, 1970] 113).
26. *Shakespeare and the Comedy of Forgiveness* (New York: Columbia UP, 1965) 245, 244.
27. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Holquist (Austin: U of Texas P, 1981) 6-7.
28. "Fielding: The Comic Reality of Fiction," *The First English Novelists: Essays in Understanding*, ed. J. M. Armistead, *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 29 (Knoxville: U of Tennessee P, 1985) 135.