

# Two American Picaras : Fanny and Oedipa

Belma Baskett

Although Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* and Erica Jong's *The Adventures of Fanny Hackabout-Jones* have received considerable attention since their publication, in 1965 and 1985 respectively, it has not been noted that they have anything in common. And, in fact, Jong's fiction is a ribald parody of John Cleland's eighteenth century picaresque *Fanny Hill*, while Pynchon's novel is a densely written, erudite post-modernist exploration of some of the literary dilemmas in a deconstructed world. Different as they are, however, the central character of each is a picara ; and despite their separate modes, each work is a notable addition to the picaresque tradition. Such a coupling is further substantiation that it is not easy to define the picaresque genre—or any genre, for that matter. Renée Welleck<sup>1)</sup> has remarked that such a definition will always describe an "ideal type" from which each work is a particular variation, an observation especially valid for the characteristic looseness of picaresque fiction. Accordingly, it should be helpful before turning to the Pynchon and Jong variations, to sketch briefly the historical development of the picaresque.

This innovation in literature first appeared in Spain during the sixteenth century, a time of great upheaval. When the Moors capitulated in Granada in 1492, after 700 years in Spain, the country had suffered long

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1) Renée Wellek & Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (New York ; 1949), p. 76.

through the conflict between the cross and the crescent. It has been argued that "social disruption invigorates literature."<sup>2)</sup> A sudden need for adjustment to vital and significant disruptions has always been a basis for good stories, as was the case in sixteenth century Spain. In these stories, the picaro or picara, achieves maturity through a long series of adventures in a period of social upheaval before the establishment of a new order. Among the original picaresque fictions is the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), translated into English a few years later. The picara as well as the picaro originated in Spain. The best known, although not the first<sup>3)</sup>, counterpart of *Lazarillo* was *La Picara Justina* (1603) by Francisco Lopez de Ubeda. The English picara appeared in the first half of the eighteenth century. Among the best known are *Moll Flanders* (1722) by Daniel Defoe and John Cleland's *Fanny Hill* (1749). Of lesser impact was *The Female Quixote* (1752) by Mrs. Charlotte Lennox. The picaresque form was soon adopted by American writers because the "complex and contradictory realities of the new Republic could be portrayed by the picaresque."<sup>4)</sup> Of especial note is Tabitha Tenney's *Female Quixotism*, modelled on Mrs. Lennox's book. Since then many heroines in American novels have been called picaras, but they have not exactly fit the description of the traditional picara, the main reason being that America has always been quite different from sixteenth century Spain and eighteenth century England as a land of plenty with vast spaces.

The classical period of the picaresque fiction was in the two hundred years following the middle of the sixteenth century, a time when the

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2) Frederick Monteser, *The Picaresque Element in Western Literature* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1975), p. 1.

3) The first probably was *La Celestina* (1499).

4) Cathy N. Davidson, *Revolution and the Word: The Rise of the Novel in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. 152.

Renaissance idea of the importance of the individual had taken firm hold. In the picaresque novel, the main character is there to act and the story follows his or her adventures. It is generally agreed that the basic characteristic of the picaresque is the episodic plot recounting these adventures. As important as the individual is, his encounters are fraught with peril. As the titular picaro of Mateo Aleman's *Guzman de Alfarache* sagely summarizes his lot, "Man proposeth one thing and God disposeth another, who would ever have dream't, that things would have fallen out as they do?"<sup>5)</sup> Because of the discrepancy between the picaro's efforts and the outcomes, everything that floats into range is a potential target for irony. Thus, social criticism through satire and irony is another characteristic of the picaresque. The decline of the genre after the middle of the eighteenth century has been explained by Robert Alter as follows: "The picaresque vision opposes the neoclassical rational order by a haphazard and spontaneous existence unfettered by social bonds."<sup>6)</sup>

In summary then, the picaresque novel is a loose episodic narrative centering on the adventures of one person. These adventures take this person on extensive travels and enable her to have unusual and interesting experiences. Usually the picara finds herself in a chaotic time and situation. Often she is threatened by hunger, poverty and criminal attack. With regard to the picara, sexual morality is especially important; virginity is valued highly. To save her virginity, or to get away from her seducers, the picara takes to the road. She usually has a female companion or servant as did Don Quixote in Sancho Panza. The picara is not a criminal but engages in some asocial, illegal, marginal activities. She survives on the margins of society, where she meets other marginal

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5) Mateo Aleman, *Guzman de Alfarache* (1599 & 1605), Mabbe's translation.

6) Robert Alter, *Rogue's Progress: Studies in the Picaresque Novel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), p. 94.

people. She is in a man's world which is selfish and often hostile. She relies on her wits ; devises tricks and uses male disguises to get out of tight spots. Putting on male disguises is an effective way of protecting herself. The reader is titillated because the reader and the picara know the disguise and the world does not thus attributing to her the kind of power she does not really have.

The picara's experiences help to raise her consciousness. Her economic situation improves from poverty to riches. At the end, usually the picara establishes herself as economically independent and free from male domination and other dangers. Her immoral acts and promiscuity are forgotten as soon as she becomes rich, therefore respectable. They are seen as mishaps beyond her control during her powerless years in poverty. Sometimes she gets married.

With the rise of the realistic novel, the picaresque form was eclipsed, but never really disappeared ; and many modern works seem to have picaresque characteristics. According to Stuart Miller, "... the picaresque novel, so often seen as a creature of its time, may have been ahead of its time ; perhaps only in the aestheistic climate of the twentieth century, devoid of security in this world or another, may the picaresque novel become what it really is."<sup>7)</sup> He goes on to say that "The picaresque tradition can be used as a fixed point to find our way through much of contemporary fiction."<sup>8)</sup> This insight is particularly relevant to two recent treatments of the picara, Jong's *Fanny* and Pynchon's *Oedipa*.

For origins, Jong's *Fanny* goes back to Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, Cleland's *Fanny Hill* and engraver and painter William Hogarth's *Moll Hackabout*. In 1749 Hogarth produced his well-known series called "The

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7) Stuart Miller, *The Picaresque Novel* (Cleveland : The Press of Case Western University, 1967), p. 110.

8) Miller, p. 134.

Harlot's Progress," a narrative series of engravings depicting a prostitute's downfall. Hogarth's work has often been classified with the work of such literary masters as Fielding and Richardson. In naming his "heroine" Moll Hackabout, he points back some two decades to Defoe's Moll, the first avowed anti-heroine in English literature. Just as clearly, the name of Jong's picara, Fanny Hackbout-Jones, is a take-off from these earlier picaras. But most explicitly, Fanny is a rewriting of John Cleland's *Fanny Hill*. Fanny herself claims to be writing the "True History of the Adventures of Fanny Hackabout-Jones" for her daughter so that the young woman will not be deceived by the earlier account of Fanny's life, *Fanny Hill: Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, by the "dastardly" John Cleland. This worthy, according to Fanny, was actually one of her least virile clients at Mother Coxtart's brothel, and, moreover, he omitted many important things about Fanny, or distorted the events he did write about.

Jong's book is solidly grounded in the English picaresque of the eighteenth century. In the "Afterword" to *Fanny*, she relates that in 1961 she took her first course in eighteenth century literature from a professor who encouraged students to write in imitation of writers whom they admired. Although she turned to other areas, her interest in this period continued. "But even as I wrote books like *Fear of Flying* and *How to Save Your Own Life*, and my first four books of poetry, I dreamt of writing a mock-eighteenth-century novel someday. Still, I wanted to wait until I was both free enough of the graduate student within me to do it light-heartedly, and yet calm enough in my own life to devote myself to the massive research I knew it would require."<sup>9</sup> She waited until 1980.

Although Jong's interest in the eighteenth century is obvious, she has

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9) Erica Jong, *Fanny, Being the True History of the Adventures of Fanny Hackabout-Johns* (New York : Signet, The New American Library, Inc, 1980), p. 532. Page numbers for subsequent quotations will be given in the text.

adapted the picaresque genre to serve late twentieth century purposes, a point which is obscured in Susan Dworkin's comment : "Jong once took a course in eighteenth century novel and liked it. Then she became a major novelist and was able to risk writing for fun alone. . . . She takes a vacation from her own voice and literary persona."<sup>10</sup> Actually, writing in an age of upheaval, in *Fanny* Jong is seriously concerned with the new norms that are emerging. She speaks for minorities in general, but especially for women and blacks. She also shows a typically modern attitude by being disrespectful to convictions heretofore held sacred. Thus Jong's Fanny can say, "If you can believe in a God why not believe in a Goddess?" Anthony Burgess has perceived Jong's significant accomplishment in calling Fanny "A genuinely original creation. Jong has gone further than Joyce. . . [she has] filled a gap in the great tradition of the picaresque novel. Fanny had to be written, and Erica Jong was the right person to write it." In the same *Saturday Review* article Burgess goes on to praise specifically Jong's use of language : "Linguistically, Fanny is a tower of strength." Indeed, Jong is clearly contemporary in her concern with language and the creative process. Fanny, a prolific writer in both prose and verse, speaks extensively on this point :

I wrote Tragedies in Verse and Noble Epicks, Romances in the French style and Maxims modell'd upon La Rouchefoucauld's. I wrote Satyres and Sonnets, Odes and Pastorals, Eclogues and Epistles. But nothing satisfied my most exalted Standards (which had been bred upon the Classicks) and at length I committed all my Efforts to the Fire. I wrote and burnt and wrote and burnt! I would pen a Pastoral thro'out three sleeples Nights only to commit it to the Flames! And yet were my Words not

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10) Susan Dworkin, "In Which the Author Hides Under the Skirts of an 18th-century Wench Thereby Indulging Herself and Us," *MS*, 9, 5 (November 1980), p. 45.

wasted, for ev'ry budding Poet, I discovered must spend a thousand Words for ev'ry one he saves, and Words are hardly wasted if, thro' one's Profligacy with 'em, one learns true Wit and true Expression of it (314-315).

As there are many such passages throughout the book, one cannot avoid thinking that she could have burned more.

Despite the linguistic achievement, it is doubtful that sheer bulk makes Fanny greater than Cleland's book. Its principal distinction lies in the force of the feminist message, which is the motif running through all sorts of adventures on land and sea. Most of the episodes are highly entertaining, but the mock-eighteenth century spelling, as well as the extravagant redundancies and repetitions just noted, may detract from the pleasure of readers primarily interested in Fanny's adventures, sexual or otherwise. Some literary extravagancies may be excused, however, because although basically Jong's Fanny is a traditional picara trying to survive, Jong has given her the additional dimension of trying to establish herself as a writer.

In comparing the two books, one of the most striking differences is in the use of explicitly sexual language in the later work. For a variety of reasons including free speech, free sex, women's liberation movements and such publications as *Playboy* magazine, contemporary mores permit all kinds of licence in the description of sexual matters. No acts, no words need to be censored. In comparing the language of Cleland with that of D. H. Lawrence, Peter Quennell has written that "Fanny Hill would have shuddered at *Lady Chatterley*. The actions described she would have taken in good part—she might possibly have complained, however, that Lawrence's sermon on the delights of sexual love had a somewhat nonconformist twang; but the roughness and coarseness of the dialogue she

would have found unspeakably offensive.”<sup>11)</sup> Both Fanny Hill and Lady Chatterley would have blushed at Fanny Hackabout’s language. The details given and the use of words once considered vulgar have only recently become acceptable in literary works. Jong has taken full advantage of this permissiveness. For example, she has devoted one entire page to a list of names for the female genitalia. Some are titillating, some suggestive, some crude, some obscene, some funny, some in bad taste—but none of them would have passed the stamp of pornography in an earlier age.

Being modelled on an eighteenth century heroine, Jong’s Fanny fits the description of a typical picara. Deflowered by her stepfather, she escapes on horseback, donning male clothing to disguise her sexual identity and enable her to continue her journey safely. Chapter VIII in Book I deals in great detail with the “Necessity for Disguises” and asserts the preferability, at all times, of being a man rather than a woman. She travels widely not only in England but to Africa and America, always accompanied by her loyal female servant. She meets other women in various walks of life; especially remarkable is her encounter with the “Wise Women” of witchcraft at Stonehenge. She meets a wide range of people on the margins of society—pirates, thieves, robbers, prostitutes. She encounters homosexuals and all manner of perversity. One important difference between her and the typical picara is that Fanny is an educated woman who not only wants to survive, but is determined to become accepted as a writer. She can keep her own in learned discussions with Alexander Pope, as later she can debate the nature of evil with a surgeon. She is avid for learning; she is initiated into the mysteries of witchcraft; she learns the joys of sailing as a “pyrate.” We are told Fanny

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11) Peter Quenell, Introduction to *Fanny Hill; Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, by John Cleland (New York : G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1963), p. xii.

is bent on the noble cause of "Self-Improvement" as well as the more pleasant one of "Entertainment." Jong's twentieth-century consciousness and feministic attitudes are especially apparent in the episode of Fanny's night in the woods with the "Wise Women" and her initiation into their sisterhood. Elsewhere she bewails the lack of great women as role-models for girls, whereas boys have great men of history to emulate. Also, in Book III, the chapter on birthing and midwifery and, later, her discussion of breast-feeding versus wet-nursing contain sophisticated feminist arguments. In sum, Fanny is an encyclopedic, scholarly work, painstakingly researched, seriously concerned with important ideas.

Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* is also an encyclopedic novel. But whereas Fanny is a long, extravagant, embellished work modelled on an eighteenth century picaresque novel, *The Crying of Lot 49* is a short novel packed with knowledge from every field of life and learning. Jong clearly explained her intentions and her method. Pynchon characteristically remains the "invisible" writer, personally as well as in terms of authorial voice. Given the many facets of his novels, critics have tried to fit his works into various categories, such as science-fiction, the absurd novel, detective story, etc. Robert Sklar has written that "V may be the first American novel of collage, an abstract composition put together with parodies of spy novels, political novels, adventure novels, decadent novels, romances, utopias and whatever other category the ingenious mind can find. . . ." <sup>12)</sup> Pynchon does not write in any distinct genre; he does not belong to any literary school, but is known for using and parodying various genres. I suggest that in *The Crying of Lot 49*, in addition to using other genres such as the detective story, the quest novel, the absurd novel, the adventure story, etc., Pynchon uses and parodies the picaresque genre.

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12) Robert Sklar, "The New Novel, USA : Thomas Pynchon" *The Nation*, 205, 9(September 25, 1967), p. 277.

Oedipa Maas, the central character, is a modern picara in many ways.

While living a sheltered life as a Southern California housewife, Rapunzel-like imprisoned in the tower, she learns that she has been made executrix of the will of her ex-lover, Pierce Inverarity. She gets in her car (not on her horse) and starts travelling on the super highways. Her travels are all in Southern California; she does not cross oceans and continents, but, then, traditionally it is possible for the picara's wanderings to be limited. For example, in *Female Quixotism* the picara stays within thirty miles of her place of birth. Oedipa's self-enhancing search for independence, adventure, opportunity and individualism, like any picara's, is merely disguised as a call to do her duty as executrix. Once started, curiosity and chance clues keep her going.

Although in the California of the 1960's virginity is not an issue, sex is still a saleable commodity. Inverarity, a capitalist tycoon, had made her his mistress and showed her the outside world—Mexico; now his will leads her to further exploration of the world, only South California, it is true, but a veritable microcosm of the whole world, or at least of America. As executrix her first encounter is with her co-executor, a lawyer named Metzger, and very soon it becomes a sexual encounter. In a parody of the traditional picara's defence against rape by donning male clothes, Oedipa puts on all the clothes she can lay her hands on. When Metzger suggests playing "Strip Botticelli," "Oedipa skipped to the bathroom, which

happened to have a walk-in closet, quickly undressed and began putting on as much as she could of the clothing she'd brought with her [one wanders if she had done it for just such an emergency] . Six pairs of panties in assorted colors, girdle, three pairs of nylons, three brassieres, two pairs stretch slacks, four half-slips, one black sheath, two summer dresses, half dozen A-line skirts, three sweaters, two blouses, quilted wrapper, baby blue peignoir

and old Orlon muu-muu. Bracelets then, scatterpins, earrings, a pendant. It all seemed to take hours to put on and she could hardly walk when she was finished. She made the mistake of looking at herself in the full-length mirror, saw a beach ball with feet, and laughed so violently she fell over, taking a can of hair spray on the sink with her. The can hit the floor, something broke and with a great outsurge of pressure the stuff commenced atomizing, propelling the can swiftly about the bathroom.”<sup>13)</sup>

The can bounces around until all the pressurized contents have come out and the pressure inside and outside the can are equal. This is often pointed out as Pynchon’s use of the concept of “entropy.” But it is possible to see the episode as a picaresque adventure analagous to the battle that Don Quixote, the archetypal picaro, had with the windmills. The scene is as grotesque and as hilarious as that of Cervantes. The can “hissing malignantly,” continues “its high-speed caroming,” as Oedipa cowers in fear : “The can knew where it was going, she sensed, or something fast enough, God or digital machine, might have computed in advance the complex web of its travel ; but she wasn’t fast enough, and knew only that it might hit them at any moment, at whatever clip it was doing, a hundred miles an hour” (p. 37). This is high-tech of the twentieth century as windmills were of sixteenth century Spain ; and Oedipa’s futility parallels that of Don Quixote.

Like Fanny and other picaras, Oedipa has a number of encounters with sexual perversity. Traditionally, as the picara’s fortunes rise, she can become selective in sexual partners ; and sometimes she marries. Oedipa, on the other hand, becomes celibate as the novel progresses. Although her affair with Metzger goes on for a period of time, later she

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13) Thomas Pynchon, *The Crying of Lot 49* (New York : Harper & Row, 1986), p. 36. Page numbers for subsequent quotations will be given in the text.

runs away from the inventor John Nefastis when he wants to have sex with her while watching television. She never goes back to her husband, who has also given up sex due to his having become a guinea pig for an LSD experiment. She does not have any more lovers. She has never had children, even though usually picaras yearn for motherhood and somehow manage to bear and eventually raise one or more children. As noted previously, Fanny has a daughter and the reason she is setting down her experiences is to tell her the "truth" about her mother and to warn her about men. The closest Oedipa comes to motherhood is when she holds a dying sailor in her arms. She is as "reluctant" to let him go "as if he were her own child" (p. 127). Catherine Stimpson says this scene "resembles a slum Pietà" and finds this expression of "psychological motherhood" evidence of Oedipa's moral growth.<sup>14)</sup> As the novel ends, she is said to be pregnant, but "Your gynecologist has no test for what she was pregnant with" (p. 175).

As she involves herself with the estate of Pierce Inverarity, Oedipa comes to think she has discovered an underground mail delivery system, which uses waste cans as mail boxes. She has no interest in anything except what she calls her "Tristero problem," Tristero being a rival mail delivery system in Europe which may have surfaced in America around the time of the Civil War. Obsessed as she is, Oedipa, in effect, is "pregnant" with this problem. The account of her condition makes complex use of Pynchon's well known erudition as well as his penchant for puns. Especially significant is his use of certain words that duplicitiously evoke sexual reverberations: *ierce* from Inverarity's first name; *mail*/male; *letter* in the mail/letter of the Word; and *Word* as seminal. Pynchon's use

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14) Catherine R. Stimpson, "Pre-Apocalyptic Atavism : Thomas Pynchon's Early Fiction" in *Thomas Pynchon : Modern Critical Views*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York : Chelsea House Publishers, 1986), p. 89.

of the Word he emphatically capitalized has been explained by Stimpson as being derived from "spermatikos logos." "The capitalization of 'Word' is vital: it is a translation, linguistically and conceptually, of the Greek 'logos,' an animating and renewing principle of reason in the cosmos. . . . Some theoreticians of Logos—the Stoics, the Jewish philosopher Philo, the early Christian apologist Justin Martyr—thought of the divine principle as germinating, seminal, the 'spermatikos logos.' Justin writes of 'the seed of reason. . . implanted in every race of man.' He mentions the 'spermatic word.'" <sup>15)</sup> With such mail/male piercing her and depositing such sperm, no wonder Oedipa is not pregnant according to nature; rather, Pynchon has used and parodied the female procreative process. Oedipa is not interested in a normal life as wife, mother, as woman. She has stopped being a wife; she no longer has sex; she is waiting for a revelation, she is waiting for "that magical Other who would reveal herself out of the roar of relays, monotone litanies of insult, filth, fantasy, love whose brute repetition must someday call into being the trigger for the unnamable act, the recognition, the Word" (p. 180).

It is interesting that no details are given of Oedipa's own birth. Fanny, like some other picaras, is a foundling; others are orphans. Oedipa is also an orphan in the sense that her parents are non-existent insofar as the novel is concerned. The picara is alone in the world, literally true of Oedipa. Unlike the usual picara, she never has a companion or servant. Also, there are no other women of any significance in the novel except brief mention of girl friends, female students and the nurse of her therapist. All of these women are in non-threatening female positions, submissive, unintrusive, accepting the status quo of the male-dominated world. After the therapist goes crazy, his nurse becomes anti-feminist, shrieking, "Too many nutty broads, that's what did it" (p. 133).

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15) Stimpson, p. 90.

The entire night when Oedipa wanders around, she encounters no women. As if to increase her solitude and alienation, the men in her life start dying or disappearing. Her lover is dead; her husband is lost to drugs; her therapist has gone mad; the play director she talked to has committed suicide. The picara is defined as being alone and alienated but never literally as Oedipa. This is a parody, *reductio ad absurdum* of one of the conventions of the picaresque genre.

“Gut fear” and female cunning are mentioned in the beginning of the book as positive feminine qualities; those attributes of the picara that get her out of tight spots seem to have deserted her as she is virtually shriven of her sex. Instead of gaining confidence, she is filled with doubts. She thinks she may be mad, paranoid, or hallucinating. Her adventures have “sensitized,” her; she sees clues everywhere. The picaresque genre is inherently ambiguous, but again the ambiguities in *The Crying of Lot 49* have been carried *ad absurdum*. Finally, all the clues may be part of a plot by her ex-lover, who threatened her the last time he telephoned with “a little visit from “The Shadow”” (p. 11).

The wanderings she starts as executrix of his will, the clues she finds and follows are all related to the large capitalistic empire built by Pierce. He symbolizes capitalism of the highest order with tentacles extending into every segment of society. In *The Rise of the Novel*, Ian Watt connects rhetorical indefiniteness, cosmological dislocation and wanderlust to the heated debates over the respective role of individuals and the state in eighteenth century England and, concomitantly, the beginnings of commodity capitalism.<sup>16)</sup> Pierce Inverarity has vast holdings in land, industry and business. His acquisitiveness is paralleled and parodied by Oedipa who has an incredibly large wardrobe, which she seems to be carrying with her, as evident in the scene with Metzger previously described.

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16) Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1967), pp. 83, 65.

Oedipa's role as executrix is to sort out Pierce's capitalistic acquisitions. Lukàcs,<sup>17)</sup> as well as Watt, tends to view the picaresque as a close literary analogue to the pathological condition of capitalistic alienation.

In the male-dominated capitalistic world of *The Crying of Lot 49*, Oedipa and the marginal individuals she meets on her wanderings are being exploited by the system. The marginal characters Fanny came into contact with were thieves, robbers, witches, pirates, etc. , the outcasts of her society. Oedipa meets the outcasts of modern California : the drug users, homosexuals, alcoholics, the dying, the deaf and dumb, and those who are looking for an alternate "mail" system—the drop-outs, the protestors. All this is a contradiction to the American dream and the democratic ideal that any man can succeed. Davidson writes that the American picaresque "borrowed from its Spanish antecedents a preoccupation with marginality, with extremes, with the most contradictory aspects of the society."<sup>18)</sup>

The picara's traditional position as witness and victim is true for both Fanny and Oedipa. Outside influences push them into their picaresque adventures ; they are victims of circumstance and a male-dominated world ; during their wanderings they witness unusual marginal events. As their adventures continue, both become less and less submissive and responsive as females. At the end, Fanny realizes her ambitions of social status and recognition as a writer. Oedipa also has a literary bent. After seeing a performance of *The Courier's Tragedy* by Richard Warfinger, she launches into bibliographic research on folio, quarto and other variant editions.

For Fanny, a literary career is her most cherished goal. Oedipa's

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17) Georg Lukàcs, *The Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge : MIT Press), pp. 70-93.

18) Davidson, p. 164.

interest in literature, however, is only a means to discover more about the Tristero. Oedipa has made the choice to be completely involved in the Trysterio—both spellings appear in the text—her tryst with tristesse, the marginal people whose unhappiness she witnessed has affected her so much that she is looking for an out to “The exitlessness of life.” She has learned to care, as shown in the scene where she embraces the dying alcoholic sailor. She has realized that she must take responsibility. Previously she has chastized herself for her lack of courage, for being “gutless” and letting things just happen. Her experiences have “sensitized” her to the needs of the marginal people. The “Word,” or message, she is waiting for may be something like the maxim of McClintock Sphere in *V*: “Keep cool but care.”

In the final analysis, as picaresque novels, both *Fanny Hackabout Jones* and *The Crying of Lot 49* provide a glimpse into a world that would be inaccessible to a typical person. Both picaras go from one unusual adventure to another, adventures which entertain and instruct the reader. Whether in the eighteenth century world of London or twentieth century California, the reader has an imaginative encounter with a larger and different world. Fanny is an eighteenth century picara with a modern feminist consciousness. She has learned to be “Wary of the Male Sex and to view ev’ry handsome Gallant and Man of Pleasure as a likely Robber of my Wits and Peace of Mind” (p.22). Oedipa looks up to Pierce Inverarity as her deliverer at the beginning of their relationship; this does not happen, for at the end of the novel she is still being controlled by him through his having made her the executrix of his will. The only time Oedipa directly expresses a feminine consciousness is when she reads the letter informing her of the will and she learns that she “had been named executor, or she supposed executrix” (p. 9).

At the end of the novel, Oedipa is waiting for the crying of Lot 49, the

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auction of Inverarity's stamp collection. She has achieved no apparent success in anything. However, she has become interested in the plight of the unfortunate, the misfits. She has learned to care and take responsibility. The moral precept that Fanny had to "avoid wickedness or indeed transform it into goodness" pales in comparison to the charitable attitudes Oedipa has developed; she is on the verge of transforming herself. Nothing is settled or definite, but such an ending to her story may be considered more sophisticated in terms of post-modernist expectations as articulated by Jorge Luis Borges: "that imminence of revelation that is not yet produced is perhaps the aesthetic reality."

In conclusion, it may be said that at the end of *Fanny*, Jong's picara has achieved social and literary success, her naturalistic adventures ended, her feminist attitudes firmly established, the thrust of the fiction completed. At the end of *The Crying of Lot 49*, Oedipa remains suspended, anticipating the resolution to her picaresque adventures which the ending of Pynchon's absurdist and essentially anti-feminist fiction withholds.

## 要 約

# 2人のピカラ：ファニーとエディパ

Belma Baskett

トーマス・ピンチョの『競売ナンバー49の叫び』 *The Crying of Lot 49* (1965) とエリカ・ジョングの *The Adventures of Fanny Hackabout-Jones* (1985) は出版されて以来、かなりの注目を集めているが、それらに共通の点があることにはあまり注目されていない。事実、ジョングの小説はジョン・クレンダの18世紀のピカレスク小説、『ファニーヒル』の野卑な風刺であり、一方、ピンチョンの小説は博学のポストモダニストが、崩壊した世界におけるいくつかの文学的ディレンマを探究したものである。しかし、この二つの作品は別々の様式にもかかわらず(それぞれの中心人物はピカラである)、ピカレスク小説の伝統の斬新な修正、補強を提供する。

目撃者、被害者としてのピカラの伝統はファニーとエディパの両方にあてはまる。外界の影響が彼女たちをピカレスクの冒険へと追いやり；彼女たちは環境と男性支配社会の被害者である；放浪の間彼女たちは異常でマージナルな出来事を目撃する。そして彼女たちの冒険が続くにつれて、二人のピカラは女性として従属的でなくなり外界に反応しやすくなる。

結論として、『ファニー』の最後では、ジョングのピカラは社会的、文学的成功をおさめ、彼女の冒険は完結し、彼女のフェミニストとしての姿勢は確立され、作品の目的は遂げられたといえることができるだろう。一方、『競売ナンバー49の叫び』の最後で、エディパは、不条理主義者ピンチョンの本質的に反フェミニスト的な立場が禁じるピカレスクの冒険の終結を予期しながらも、宙ぶらりの状態のまま終る。