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MICHAEL FIELD'S DIONYSIAN POETICS

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MICHAEL FIELD'S DIONYSIAN POETICS

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Arts Degree

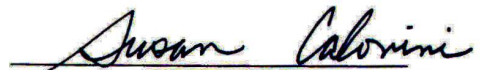
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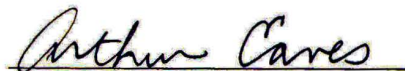
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ABSTRACT

This thesis will concentrate on the effect the god Dionysus had upon the lives of Katherine Bradley and Edith Cooper who wrote under the name of Michael Field. This effect can be seen and shown through their poetry, their drama and their lives as seen through their daily journals. Dionysus has a presence in most of their work, even after their conversion to Catholicism, and deserves a more in-depth study. By quoting from Michael Field's works, scholarly research, and use of their biographies, this thesis will show how Dionysus had a major impact in their lives.

From the beginning their work is filled with Dionysian references. Their first volume of poetry "Long Ago" was published in 1889 and was inspired by Sappho's fragments. Mary Sturgeon says of that volume of poetry, "Truly pagan the work is, whether in its sunny aspects or its dark ones" (91). Their first play entitled Callirrhoe is also about the god Dionysus with a heavy focus on his followers the maenads. From this point forward we see their lifelong love affair with Dionysus. Even as late as 1913 after their conversion to Catholicism, they published their next to last volume of poetry entitled "Mystic Trees" and within this volume of poetry there is a deep love of nature, a joy and ecstasy for the physical world which is more associated with the pagan than the Christian religion.

Scholars such as Mary Sturgeon and Angela Leighton have written small amounts about Michael Field's Dionysian point of view; however, a long and scholarly work has yet to be done in this area. Michael Field's love and adoration for Dionysus let them lead a unique lifestyle for the era in which they were born. This thesis will show how influential the Dionysian effect was upon Michael Field's lives and works.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

To outsiders who knew nothing about the private lives of Katherine Bradley (1846-1914) and her niece Edith Cooper (1862-1913), these Victorian playwrights and poets, who wrote as one under the pseudonym Michael Field, must have seemed like ordinary middle-class spinsters. To those who were invited into their inner sanctum, however, they appeared to be something far more interesting, daring, and unusual – something akin to the Bacchic maenads that they admired. Logan Pearsall Smith states in his book Reperusals and ReCollections, that he once had the honor of being asked to the Fields' home:

The strangeness of these visits was weirdly heightened by what seemed at first their commonplace characters. One received a politely worded invitation to afternoon tea, or to high-tea in the evening; one went by trains or bus to Richmond; one rang the suburban bell, and found in the little house an aunt and niece of pleasantly old-fashioned primness.... One felt at first as if one might almost be taking tea in Cranford; but this was the maddest of illusions. Never in Cranford was heard talk like their talk when once inspiration fell upon them. (91)

This inspiration together with their vivid imaginations set them apart from other Victorian writers of their day. They lived during a time when even the female monarch of their country, Queen Victoria, believed women were intellectually inferior to men. She once stated, “woman’s devotion is always one of submission which makes our poor

sex so very unenviable” (Abrams, The Victorian Age 1719). Michael Field as women and writers were not submissive and they were unique because they derived much of their inspiration from the Dionysian spirit. “Their writing was not tame; inspired by Greek drama and by Sappho, befriended by Pater and Browning, they wrote of Bacchic tragedy and bliss and portrayed themselves in their writing as oracular women, ravished by the Muse” (Laird 98).

For Smith, each visit with Michael Field was a “precious experience” (92), and although he was young at the time and didn’t realize the full scope of their lives and writing, he was happy to have been a part of it. As Smith had tea with them, he writes, they would fall into “a kind of chant” as though they were under a spell of sorts, and then they would “resume the aspect and airs of the disinherited princesses, the tragic Muses, the priestesses of Apollo, the Pythonesses upon their tripods, the Bacchic Maenads” which he goes on to tell us they really were because, “there were no limits to their imagination” (91). Through use of the feminine, they created their own world separate and unique from the social time period in which they lived. By connecting with Dionysus’ maenads, they found a freedom not normally seen among Victorian women. In their writing, Michael Field uses maenads, not as wild and wicked temptresses, which is how they appear in the masculine traditions, but as strong-willed, independently-minded women who lead by example. In a time period when women were more decoration than substance, this was particularly daring.

In this paper, I will describe the use of the maenad figure and Dionysian themes in the poetry, drama, and lives of Michael Field. Further, I will show how Dionysian religion, in the broadest sense, influenced their life choices and, in particular, their work.

Michael Field spent a lifetime writing about the joys found through Dionysus and the maenads which gave them an escape from the strict moralistic society in which they were born. By examining their poetry and their first play Callirrhoë, this paper will show the influence of Dionysian beliefs upon Michael Field, both privately and publicly.

CHAPTER II

The Maenad in the Masculine Tradition

The maenads of ancient mythology were women who followed the Greek god Dionysus, later called Bacchus. Dionysus is often referred to as the god of women. The word “maenad” literally means “mad woman.” Some stories about the maenads say that in their wild frenzy they would tear animals apart and devour the raw flesh. Other stories insist they were wild, insane, and completely unreasonable. They are represented in art and literature as being crowned with vine leaves, clothed in animal skins, carrying a staff of ivory, and dancing with wild abandonment in conjunction with primitive nature.

The problem with these stories is that they are told and written by male authors. If no men were allowed to participate in the rituals of the maenads, then where did men get their stories? Perhaps the most famous story about maenads written by a man is Euripides’ play The Bacchae (406 B.C.E.). In this play, he has men hidden “by the leaves among the undergrowth” ready to “set [them]selves in ambush” (723-4), but when one of the maenads comes near their hiding place and the men attempt to seize her, she cries out and they run, “barely missed being torn to pieces by the women” (734). The telling and then the re-telling of this story must have been particularly disturbing to a patriarchal society. The fact that women could and would lose control of their emotions until they were in a wild frenzy surely jeopardized the hierarchal order of Greek society.

In The Bacchae Pentheus, the ruler of Thebes, cannot accept or even tolerate Dionysius because he leads women and takes them off to do “some strange mischief” (214). When Dionysius offers Pentheus the chance to see what the women really do, at first Pentheus is thrilled, until he learns he must dress as a woman, at which point he

states, “I would die of shame” (826). In Greek society, any association with the feminine was unacceptable. Therefore, Dionysian ecstasy is full of danger as far as Pentheus and the men who follow him can see. Euripides’ play not only affirms this outlook but is generally accepted as enforcing patriarchal society as normal and anything outside of that as abnormal.

Other sources of information about the maenads come from Pythagoras (6th century B.C.E.), best remembered as a mathematician but who also believed and taught a religion we only now know of as a mystery cult which included the god Dionysus. Although we have no writings left by Pythagoras himself, others wrote of his teachings. Homer talks briefly of Dionysus in The Iliad in Book VI when he mentions Dionysus as the wine of god who is afraid and seeks shelter with the sea-nymph Thetis (200). This Dionysus is a very different god from Euripides’ Dionysus in The Bacchae. For the warriors of The Iliad, Dionysus is the god of wine and honey, but not necessarily the fearless god who leads women astray.

According to Ross Kraemer in her book Maenads, Martyrs, Matrons, and Monastics, Plutarch (45-125 C.E.) in his work Moralia in a chapter entitled “On the Bravery of Women” who tells the story of the local village women protecting the maenads in the market place from the soldiers. According to Plutarch, one morning after a long night of “Bacchic frenzy wandering at night” the women arrived in town. They were tired and “sober reason had not yet returned to them,” so they laid themselves down in the marketplace and fell asleep. Wives of the local men as well as wives of the soldiers present in the market-place gathered around the sleeping maenads in order to hide and protect them. Later on in the story these same women accompany the maenads

back to the border to safety (32). Plutarch, though not normally seen as an advocate for women, obviously liked this story enough to include it in one of his greatest works.

Titus Livy (1st century B.C.E.), a Roman historian wrote in his work entitled The Annals of Rome XXXIX that the maenads were evil and treacherous. He wrote that the maenads would come into towns and cities and take “devoted” women from their husbands, fathers, and sons, and turn them into “debauchers” who became “fanatical” women. He speaks of them as though they were horrific monsters out to destroy everything in their way. If any women were admired by Livy, they were not Dionysian worshippers who had “their senses dulled by wakefulness, wine, noise, and shouts at night” but women who locked their doors at night and stayed away from the wild and frenzied maenads (Kraemer 247-256).

These writers did not reveal their sources; therefore, one cannot know for certain the authenticity of their stories. What is known is that the Dionysian culture was talked about and carried forward and then picked up by one of the great philosophers of the 20th century, Friedrich Nietzsche. In 1872, he wrote and published, A Birth of Tragedy, showing two different thought processes in the Greek view of tragedy. These two different ways of viewing tragedy are symbolized by Apollo as the rational god, and Dionysus as the natural god. Nietzsche’s view of Dionysus is closely linked with Michael Field’s view of the god.

Nietzsche called this view “suprapersonal,” which merely means going beyond the level or context of the personal. This, of course, ties in with the maenads’ orgiastic rituals where the women would lose their sense of self and follow their desires. In other words, what happens to an individual on a personal level is not important. What is

important is combining oneself with the greater community (world) and joining in a unity of the self with the natural world. Nietzsche tells us that this loss of self can be both terrifying and joyful. "Terror and ecstasy are two poles of the Dionysian intoxication" (37).

Further, Nietzsche states, "every artist is an imitator... either an Apollonian artist in dreams, or a Dionysian artist in ecstasies" (5). Michael Field definitely falls into the category of the Dionysian artist. For example, Michael Field did not write just one play regarding Dionysus but two. They wrote numerous poems about Dionysus, but more importantly, most of their poems incorporated a natural theme which was obviously the essence of their lives. The cycle of life is seen over and over again throughout their work.

CHAPTER III

Dionysian Themese in Michael Field's Poetry

In their personal letters, they often referred to themselves as pagan and/or maenads. They kept a shrine in their backyard to Dionysus. Most of all, their Dionysian spirit was conveyed in their poetry through images of nature, natural cycles, and the god Dionysus himself. On the cover of their book of poems entitled Long Ago (1889) there is a profile view of a Greek woman with a garland twined throughout her hair. The maenads wore garlands and other various parts of nature in their hair and clothing. Hair and vine became entwined in their poetry, as in the following: "Hair the vine itself, in braids / On the brow – Thus Bacchus wades" (3-4). The above two lines are from Michael Field's poem "Marriage of Bacchus and Ariadne." Here we see Bacchus himself wearing the vine in his own hair, just as his followers the maenads did. Indeed, his braided hair is vine-like. The vine in pagan times was a thing of divinity. References to the vine, flowers, trees, and things of nature are pervasive in their work.

In another poem entitled "Sanctuary," they talk about entering their "little room," which is their sanctuary where they have "learnt" and "worshipped" over the years, but the Dionysian aspect is the way they speak of the vines and ivy that grow around this space.

These the last vine-boughs bursting into bloom

And these the last red-ivy leaves we pull,

Iacchus, for the wreathing of thy thyse

The years have been for better & for worse. (7-10)

A thyrs is an ancient wand-like instrument carried by Dionysus that was wrapped with vines and ivy. Iacchus is another name for Dionysus. Treby states in Music and Silence that this fragment of a poem was written in anticipation of a move to a new house (118). One can see they will be sorry to leave their little sanctuary where their pagan gods wrapped the house in ivy and they had lived like a happily married couple, “for better and for worse.”

In Act III of their play entitled The World at Auction there is a hymn in chant form which Edith in their journal stated should be read with “rapidity, almost violent chant” (Treby, Uncertain Rain 135) during the performance.

March! Let fly your jests like arrows,

Slay with laughter,

Slay with hatred,

With the tongue and with the voice.

March! Our pleasure is a passion

Keen to strive and keen to conquer,

While audacious to enjoy. (64-70)

This was later published separately as a poem entitled “Dithyramb for Pylades.” It is a long poem, but obvious from the selection above is the enjoyment and satisfaction Michael Field received from their maenadic sisterhood and worship. Michael Field grew up in a world where women were characterized as weak and passionless. They wrote literature where women were powerful and full of passion. Further, they incorporated these women into their own lives. They could not and would not adjust to the role

society laid out for them; therefore, they made up their own set of feminine behavior rules and found their own role models as they went along.

The worship of Dionysus is the worship of nature as well. The maenads were known to have worshipped deep in the forest, perhaps for two reasons. One would be that they would be very difficult to locate if they were hidden well enough and the other is that this would be their secret, sacred part of the world, where as women they were free to act as they pleased. In the spirit of the maenads, "Michael Field created a lush, teeming world with Nature at its zenith, as if to celebrate the tactile fullness of the female body" (Vicus 92). Poems such as "Our Myrtle is in Flower" reflect this world:

Our myrtle is in flower:

Behold Love's power!

The glorious stamens' crowded force unfurled,

Cirque beyond cirque

At breathing, bee-like, and harmonious work;

The rose-patched petals backward curled,

Falling away

To let fecundity have perfect play. (1-8)

The Victorians believed each and every type of flower had a message to convey. The myrtle symbolized love, so how perfectly it fits the poem. As the myrtle is blooming, love is in power, and just as one would rise up to meet a lover, so the stamen rises up to meet the bees. Bees have long been associated with the Greeks and in particular with Dionysus. In The Bacchae the maenads caused the earth to "flow with wine" and "run with the nectar of bees" (141-2); further, they caused "pure honey" to come "streaming

from their wands” (711). Charles Segal adds, “[Dionysus] was said to have invented honey” (31). Walter Pater wrote in Greek Studies: A Series of Lectures:

Coleridge, in one of his fantastic speculations, refining on the German word for enthusiasm – *Schwarmerei*, swarming, as he says, “like the swarming of bees together” – has explained how the sympathies of mere numbers, as such, the random catching on fire of one here and another there, when people are collected together, generates as if by mere contact, some new and rapturous spirit, not traceable in the individual units of a multitude. Such swarming was the essence of that strange dance of the Bacchic women: literally like winged things, they follow, with motives, we may suppose, never quite made clear even to themselves, their new, strange romantic god. Himself a woman-like god – it was on women and feminine souls that his power mainly fell. (53)

As Michael Field so aptly put it, “fecundity” is to “have perfect play” when the bees come to “love” and cross-pollinate the flower. To revel in the delight of flowers and bees is to celebrate the natural spirit of Dionysus.

Bees and honey are often a subject for Michael Field’s intensely sensual poetry.

In “Pan Asleep,” they depict a highly erotic scene in which

the bees are numbering

The fox-glove flowers from base to sealed tip,

Till fond they doze upon his slumbering,

And smear with honey his wide, smiling lip. (6-9).

In a poem entitled "Onycha," they write of a type of shell which is said to give off a flower-like scent. Michael Field implies in their poem that the shell holds secrets like treasures to be found. Before it was a shell, they state that "she was a flower, & heard the wild bee's hum" (5). Bees become a fond memory in their poem "Noon," where they are remembering a pleasant afternoon the week prior. In this poem, "the bees of honey drink, / Suck the deep bosom of the day" (8-9) during a summer day at noon. In "July," which they call the "month between the swath and sheaf" (1), there are "pollen-coloured blooms whereon / Bees are voices we can hear" (6-7). In approximately 1867, Katherine wrote a poem for Edith entitled "Lindensong," which she dedicated as "Written for my Edith, in remembrance of the home she loves." In this poem, nature along with bees brings back happy memories.

Only a line of lindens
 To feed the twilight air
 From honey-breasts half drained by the bees,
 Who murmur on in a satiate ease,
 'Mid hives of the wider green:
 To fill the air with the lulling scent
 Of odorous prodigal blooms unseen. (23-29)

Although most of the poems which reference bees are of happy and carefree times, there are a few with a more serious tone. In December of 1903, Michael Field wrote a sonnet entitled "Embalmmment" late one night. In this sonnet, there are references to Queen Marianne, "As the Asmonean queen perpetually / Embalmed in honey, cold to thy delight" (5-6), and Lizzie Siddal, "golden hair sprung rapid in a tomb" (14) but with a

Dionysian spin. There is speculation that Queen Marianne was embalmed but it is unlikely she was embalmed in honey. Since honey was the nectar of the gods, Michael Field honors Queen Marianne by embalming her with honey in their poem. The reference to Siddal has two possibilities. One is that the burial and then the exhumation of her body by her husband Dante Gabriel Rossetti, which had reached mythic proportion by the year 1903, was merely used as a cultural reference. Another is that Michael Field saw Dante in the part of Dionysus and Lizzie as a maenad saved by her god, or in Lizzie's case destroyed by her god.

Another untitled poem written in 1907, states:

Wild was the honey thou did'st eat;

The rocks and the free bees

Entombed thy honeycomb.

Take thou our gifts, take these:

No more in thy retreat

Do we attend thine ears; no more we roam

Or taste of desert food;

We have beheld thy Vision on the road. (1-8)

By the time the above poem was written in 1907, the poets were well into their Catholic years. It would appear from this poem that they were reminiscing about the "wild" honey they used to taste when they were "free bees." Since they are no longer in Dionysus's "retreat," their roaming days and the taste of the "desert food" are gone, but not forgotten. The next poem clearly shows that Michael Field was Dionysian until the end. In the poem "Unbosoming" love is in the form of an iris "full of seeds."

The love that breeds
 In my heart for thee!
 As the iris is full, brimful of seeds,
 And all that it flowered for among the reeds
 Is packed in a thousand vermilion-beads
 That push, and riot, and squeeze, and clip,
 Till they burst the side of the silver scrip,
 And at last we see
 What the bloom, with its tremulous, bowery fold
 Of zephyr-petal at heart did hold:
 So my breast is rent
 With the burthen and strain of its great content;
 For the summer of fragrance and sighs is dead,
 The harvest-secret is burning red,
 And I would give thee, after my kind,
 The final issues of heart and mind. (1-16)

The reproductive section in this poem, like in the poem "Our Myrtle is in Flower," is here for all to see, but Michael Field uses it slightly differently. Each of the two poems presents a flower as a world within a world. Each tiny, delicate thing within nature is as important a part of the life cycle as humans or any other living creature. "Such reproductive imagery packs the poem with a Keatsian sense of elemental reality" (Leighton Victorian Women Poets 233). Michael Field takes the Dionysian spirit of nature literally and gives it life within their work.

From their work, it can be assumed that Michael Field believed in order to be a maenad, one must be female, reject societal mores, and love nature. “In Greek mythology the bacchantes (maenads)... symbolized an inversion of the normal civic and familial order. They were women... forgetting their wifely duties...” (Zaidman 355). How perfect for two Victorian women who rejected marriage, children, and other norms of their own society to build a shrine to Dionysus in their backyard. Although Bradley and Cooper did not run half-dressed through the English suburb where they lived, through their writing they could completely and totally immerse themselves in becoming maenads, women embracing life. A good example of this is in the following untitled poem. Michael Field describes Dionysus hiding in the forest until he “booms out” his “Evian note” which is a reference to the maenad call of Evoe. This Evoe would be shouted by the maenads “during their drunken maraudings” (Treby 39). As “nature’s fond, liberating God” the maenads would have flocked to him and joined in sisterhood so different from their domestic duties.

‘Twas in his wanderings far from native Thrace
 I saw him – in a secret, leafy place:
 Spring was just flashing out; black poplars stood
 In golden leafage ‘gainst the ilex-wood,
 From wh: he issued, on his brows a scowl
 Of anger at Athene’s haunting owl,
 And sat him down & brooded, till an oak
 Pushed its young saplings toward him, & he broke
 The sunny twigs & smiled; I knew him then –

Nature's fond, liberating God, & when
 Solemn from grassy-pillowed, gurgling throat
 He boomed out on the air his Evian note,
 Prompter than echo's voice my blood replied,
 I sprang convulsive up the mountain-side. (1-14)

"I sprang convulsive up the mountain-side" is certainly maenadic, as is "I saw him – in a secret, leafy place," since the maenads held their worship ceremonies within the densely forested areas. The rest of the poem shows the celebration the maenads would have had once together and with their god Dionysus.

Easeful he shouted- from the forest height
 A sudden, lovely, clamorous concourse bright
 Leapt to his side- no vision, no vain dream.
 I felt within the vital madness teem,
 To join that fearless band; not even could Love
 Though as a strong wind rushing from above,
 So clear a passage for the spirit free,
 As then my quickened senses made for me:
 Eyesight & hearing with a finer lust
 And apprehension were endowed, & just
 As Dryope at threshold of her beech
 Stood with lips growing human- out of reach
 The great train through a rock fissure wound;
 I woke alone on the sun-broidered ground. (15-28)

Without a second thought the maenads go to “his side” immediately and join their “fearless band” of fellow maenads. Michael Field gives us the sense of adventure associated with these meetings when they state all their “senses quickened.” After a wild night of fun with the maenads, they wake “alone” but with their vivid memories.

They wrote eight volumes of poetry during their lifetime and much of it deals with the spirit of the maenads, love of nature, and their own unique perspective of the world at large. The main bulk of their work, however, is in drama and it deals with tragedy. In fact, their biographer, Mary Sturgeon, calls Michael Field a “tragic poet” (114). They wrote plays about Attila the Hun, Queen Mariam, Tristan, Henry II’s mistress Rosamund, Mary, Queen of Scots, and many other characters drawn from the Greek as well as English and Scottish histories. The one this paper will deal with is entitled Callirhoe: A Drama. “The story of Callirrhoe comes from Pausanias; but our poet has modified the original by basing the motive of the plot upon the origin of worship of Dionysus” (Sturgeon 120-1). It is a exciting play which lets the Dionysian spirit of Michael Field shine through it.

CHAPTER IV

Dionysian Themes in Michael Field's Play Callirrhoë

Field's first play Callirrhoë: A Drama (1884) is about Dionysus and the maenads.

Sturgeon states:

one may think to spy an influence from Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* in their *Callirrhoë*, but it is necessary to walk warily even here. For the genius of Michael Field, uniting as it does the two principal elements of art, Dionysian and Apolline, is therefore of its nature an illustration of Nietzsche's theory. They needed no tutoring from him to reveal their nature, for they knew themselves. Nor did they need prompting to the primary spiritual act of the tragic poet. From the beginning the philosophic mind lay behind their artistic temper. (31)

It is true that Michael Field did not need "tutoring" from Nietzsche to reveal their Dionysian nature, as the play makes their Dionysian spirit obvious. But they were far more Dionysian than they were Apolline. The play opens with maenads sleeping on the steps of the Temple of Bacchus. As they begin to wake, they "spring from slumber as a wild beast springs / Forth from its lair" (I. I. l. 9-10). Coresus, the Dionysian Priest, arrives to tell them "To—night there is high revel in the hills, / Mystic assembly in the deep recess" (I. I. l. 14-15). They have set the stage for their Dionysian play.

The protagonist Callirrhoë is loved and worshipped by the Dionysian priest. She loves him in return but refuses to marry him because she cannot give up her own gods for

the new god he serves. She is afraid of hurting her father and family by changing to a new religion. Michael Field shows Callirrhoë honoring patriarchy by doing what her father and brother believe to be best for her, instead of following her own heart. Yet she is called over and over again to seek renewal in the forest. Her best friend, Nephele, has been seduced by the maenads. “The wondrous creature, threw her spells on me” (I. I. l. 26), says Nephele, and “then she drew me, in caressing arms” (I. I. l. 29). But to Callirrhoë all that seems to follow Nephele afterwards is shame and death. Callirrhoë takes this as a warning to young women of what will happen when they follow Dionysus.

As twilight nears, Callirrhoë has been thinking about what Coresus told her about his god and she wonders,

What if this new god

of the warm vineyards and the budding trees

could draw her trembling spirit to the brink?

It cannot be;

Else had our fathers known and worshipped him.

I reverence my father’s old grey head;

I reverence antiquity, the hoar

Aspect of time. What folly to revere

The headstrong, blustering present, Time’s untrained,

Immodest youth! (I. II. l. 235-244).

Callirrhoë is tempted by the freedoms that come with the maenadic lifestyle but she is still restrained by society, family, and “reverence” for “antiquity.” Michael Field was

equally familiar with the choices women faced. They, like Callirrhoë, realized a traditional lifestyle would leave them little, if any, freedom.

In Dionysian style, throughout the play Callirrhoë seeks the ever-renewing energy of the earth.

The twilight falls

In showers of darkness. She will tell me all

The mystery of the effulgent night,

Up in the bluer dark among the stars,

Will Nephele. (II. II. l. 223-7)

Yet when earlier Nephele comes to Callirrhoë in a state of distress because she had followed the maenads, Callirrhoë is shocked to see Nephele and asks her:

What means these crimson vine- leaves round they feet,

My Nephele? Why is thy hair unbound,

Thy polished cheek rent with bramble scar,

And they bright lips discoloured? What! In tears? (I. II. l. 9-12)

Nephele begs Callirrhoë to “hide me in they gown; / It is so perilous and grief and a shame” (I. II. l. 13-14). Callirrhoë loves Nephele too much not to help her. After hiding Nephele, she is curious about this “Deliverer of women from their toil” (I. II. l. 151) who has seduced her friend. Further, she is dissatisfied with her lot in life.

I’m tired of spinning! In the viny sweeps

Of sunshine on the hills, if a god lurk,...

Do they so ill to flee to him for joy? (I. II. l. 149-150; 153)

She asks herself if the only thing meant for her in this life is to “simply spin” (I. II. l. 155)? Within herself she realizes she needs more out of life than the work she has been given as a woman and her duty to serve her father and brother. Daily she has a “longing for the hills and ecstasy” (I. II. l. 159). Further, she is aware that what men get and obtain from life is far superior to what women get and obtain. “For him, the sunshine and the song; for her, / The virgin lip and the inviolate shade” (I. II. l. 166-7). Bradley and Cooper realized the same truth within their lifetime. When they published this play under the pseudonym of Michael Field, “the *Spectator* announced ‘the ring of a new voice, which is likely to be heard far and wide among the English-speaking peoples’” (Donoghue 39). However, once it was revealed that the writer was two women instead of a single man, the sales of this work and future ones plummeted, and never again were they praised in the press. Michael Field like their protagonist Callirrhoë was caught between two worlds. One world is the sphere for women, in which society dictates they should be domestic, marry and have children, obey their elders, particularly the male elders, and be the caretakers of the home. The other world is strictly reserved for men. It is a world of work, accomplishment outside the home, freedom to come and go as one pleases, and the ability to make decisions for oneself. Michael Field writing their play Callirrhoë were able to state their own needs and desires through the voice of the protagonist.

Callirrhoë leaves Nephele hidden within her home and seeks out the Dionysian priest to ask him to leave her dear friend alone. But this priest, Coresus, speaks to the very soul of Callirrhoe when he asks her:

say if servitude

Be not your daily portion. Can you set

Your limbs free to the rhythm of your soul? (I. III. l. 25-7)

Callirrhoë does not know how to answer Coresus, so he tells her to:

Be brave, Callirrhoë;

Ask yourself have you not a deeper need

Than the stale rites of customary gods

Can satisfy? (I. III. l. 34-7)

Callirrhoë like Michael Field has deeper needs, but she is afraid of the unknown. The play speaks volumes when Callirrhoë answers:

I oft have longed

For speech with the dark sea and glittering hills,

For stories of the world, for wider care

And love of creatures other than myself. (I. III. l. 39-42)

Michael Field's love of nature, as seen in their poetry and journals, shows through clearly in the above passage. Shortly thereafter Callirrhoë makes another statement that seems to be obviously the voice of Michael Field, "all art is ecstasy, / All literature expression of intense / Enthusiasm" (I. III. l. 64-6). In 1892, Michael Field took a trip to Europe to visit the various art museums and galleries, i.e., The Louvre, The Academia of Venice, The Uffizi, and The Städel'sche Institute at Frankfurt. After viewing the famous art works of these places, they wrote poetry describing what they saw. In the preface of this book of poetry, Sight and Song, they wrote:

The aim of this little volume is, as far as may be, to translate into verse what the lines and colours of certain chosen pictures sing in themselves; to express not so much what these pictures are to the poet, but rather what poetry they objective incarnate. Such an attempt demands patient, continuous sight as pure as the gazer can refine it of theory, fancies, or his mere subjective enjoyment. (v)

That "art is ecstasy" is obvious when one reads the poems written of the viewing of various artworks. They write of Mercury dancing "on a toe" (1) in the "sunshine" (5) in Watteau's L'Indifférent and after viewing Correggio's Venus, Mercury and Cupid, they have Venus "of bright oak-boughs" (l. 3). In writing of da Vinci's Drawing of Roses and Violets, their love of nature bursts through in the poetry:

LEONARDO saw the spring

Centuries ago,

Saw the spring and loved it in its flowers-

Violet, rose:

One that grows

Mystic, shining on the tufted bowers,

And burns its incense to the summer hours. (1-7)

Michael Field writes of the nature da Vinci saw as the same nature they love and worship. They can see vividly in his picture and their mind the violets and roses mystically growing and shining for all to see. Later in that same poem they identify with da Vinci when they say of his artwork, "Flowers he chose should never after fade" (34)

because in the Dionysian world of the forest, things do not die but are constantly in a cyclic state of renewal. They feel da Vinci must have understood this to be able to draw and paint as he did. In Callirrhoë one can see the same enthusiastic cyclic state going on:

To the red bower
 of oleander, by the forest—stream,
 Where thou and I in girlish solitude
 So oft have hidden for sweet conference. (I. I. l. 17-19)

In these lines, Nephele is explaining where she was when the maenads found her. Although Nephele and Callirrhoë are grown women now, the same “red bower” of oleander is there that was there when they were young girls hiding away. This theme is repeated later in the play when Callirrhoë remembers all the times the forest has kept her secrets and her safe:

Where purple arbut—boughs encompass her,
 In safest silence, or the bosky oak
 Lets not a sigh escape. (I. II. l. 162-4)

These types of places run throughout Michael Field’s works and lives.

Callirrhoë and Nephele, like Michael Field, connect and identify with the plant and animal life of the forest. This is at the very heart of the Dionysian religion. “No other god of the Greeks is as widely present in the monuments and nature of Greece and Italy, in the ‘sensuous’ tradition of antiquity, as Dionysos” (Kerenyi xxiv). They reach back to an earlier time.

In the religion of Dionysus one of many modes of primitive tree-worship, which, growing out of some universal instinctive belief that trees and

flowers are indeed habitations of living spirits, is found almost everywhere in the earlier stages of civilization. (Pater 3)

Callirrhoë, like Michael Field, must make a decision whether to stay with the old ways or join the new energized lifestyle of the maenads. Even after Nephele has converted, Callirrhoë is afraid and rejects Coresus. "She would not love / A Bacchic priest, she said. Because I serve / Religion" (I. IV. l. 93-5). When she refuses to marry Coresus, in a fit of anger he asks Dionysus to call down a plague on her city, and people begin to die. The citizens of Calydon ask their oracle what to do, and he responds that Callirrhoë will have to be sacrificed unless another will sacrifice himself for her.

At first it appears no one else will give his life for Callirrhoë. Then two are willing to die for her, but neither of them is her father or her brother. Michael Field makes it clear that although Callirrhoë sacrificed many times in the play for her male relations, they will not do the same for her. At first it Callirrhoë's nurse from childhood, Demophile, who steps forward and says, "Oh, stop! I am come / to die, d'ye hear, to die instead of her" (III. V. l. 28-9). In the end Coresus comes forward and kills himself, thus making the ultimate sacrifice for Callirrhoë.

My god, my god! she's white as holy milk

They pour on other altars; thine must have

Wine. I am dark, and liker wine than she.

I'll keep thy ritual! Behold, I pour!

[*Stabs himself.*] (III. V. l. 159-162)

This is the first time during the play that Coresus has been worthy of Callirrhoë's love. In Michael Field's world, men are not worthy merely because they are

male; they must be extraordinary to be worthy of a woman's love. After Coresus' death, Callirrhoë says, "I am his Maenad, I alone believe" (III. V. l. 168). Just as Coresus is now worthy, so Callirrhoë now understands the true meaning of his life and spirituality. Callirrhoë stands before her townspeople and says:

Swear that here

In condemnation of your petty lives

There shall be mighty passions solemnized

By masque and chorus, that all men may learn

The wealth of such emotion as empowers

To deed like this. All hail, Coresus, hail! (III. V. l. 177-182)

Michael Field embraced passions and emotions and spent their lives writing and living them. Like Callirrhoë there were many hard choices for them to make but the sacrifices were worth the gain. "Edith observed in her diary... that women needed to create, one way or another: 'They must be mothers in body or brain... The child or the Poem!'" (Donoghue 58). For Michael Field the poem won out.

Callirrhoë: A Drama is packed with the pleasures of sisterhood and the freedoms of the forest, yet these are not the only pleasures given to the play. "The ideal of pleasure for its own sake, sexual or pagan, is the impulse behind much of Michael Field's best work" (Leighton 214). It comes then as no surprise to find a lesbian scene in the play when Nephele dies. Callirrhoë is distraught over her death. She cannot believe the change that has come over the body of Nephele in death.

How different from that fair Bacchic sleep

From which thou once did'st wake, my Nephele,

This hideous lifelessness! Ye gods! instead

Of the bright laughter of the dreaming lips

A grim is on the sharp, shrunk mouth (II. IV. l. 1-5)

As Callirrhoe grieves over Nephele's changed body and what to do, she says:

but first

My lips shall touch the cheek that lies against

My white robe like a tawny withered rose.

She'd cry to think my lips

Loathed her that once delighted in her mouth.

There, there!

[*kisses the corpse*] (II. IV. l. 12-16)

Little did they know when they wrote this play that Edith, the niece, would die of cancer before her aunt. Katherine was her caretaker throughout the three year ordeal and years before had written the following poem to Edith:

A Girl,

Her soul a deep-wave pearl

Dim, lucent of all lovely mysteries;

A face flowered for heart's ease,

A brow's grace soft as seas

Seen through faint forest-trees;

A mouth, the lips apart,

Like aspen-leaflets trembling in the breeze

From her tempestuous heart,

Such; and our souls so knit,

I leave a page half-writ-

The work begun

Will be to heaven's conception done,

If she comes to it. (1-14)

Michael Field's own passions, emotions, and loves must have been tied up in this play. Especially poignant to them would have been the death of Nephele and the last kiss given her by Callirrhoe. "Instinctively, both poets seem to have known that the inspiration for their best work lay in a fellowship, both emotional and professional" (Reynolds 489).

This play then is more than just a re-telling of a myth; it is Michael Field's re-invention of a myth. They give the power to the women in the play. Unlike Euripides, these women are not to be feared, but respected. Callirrhoë has the status of a saint. At the beginning of the play she is bound by patriarchal laws and society, but once Coresus makes the ultimate sacrifice for her, she realizes her full power. Michael Field's maenads are not women who are threatening but free women enjoying life. In this play, men do not have to bring the out-of-control women to their senses because the women are the primary ones in the play who are sane and sensible.

Mary Sturgeon states in her biography of Michael Field, "She infused the play with the spirit of Dionysiac worship because that spirit was her own" (122). This spirit becomes more and more obvious through the works. Walter Pater says in his essay "The Bacchanals of Euripides,"

It was in the neighbourhood of Pella, the Macedonian capital, that the worship of Dionysus, the newest of the gods, prevailed in its most extravagant form – the *Thiasus*, or wild, nocturnal procession of Bacchic

women, retired to the woods and hills for that purpose, with its accompaniments of music and lights, and dancing. (52)

Michael Field takes this spirit and lives it and “when one remembers the spiritual truth that was implicit in the cult of Dionysus... there is peculiar appropriateness in such a subject for Michael Field’s first essay in drama” (Sturgeon 122).

CHAPTER V

Dionysian Themes in Michael Field's Life

For the better part of their lives, the writers kept a daily journal, which they called "Works and Days." At the British Library there are "over thirty volumes of unpublished journals and letters" (Donoghue 8). Spanning a forty year period, these journal entries tell the lives of the two women who wrote as Michael Field. Several scholars have read these journals and been kind enough to pass that information on for the rest of us.

Personally I have not been fortunate to read their journals in the original, but thanks to many scholars, I have some knowledge of what they contain. The information within the journals is invaluable to the study of Michael Field's lives and works.

Emma Donoghue read these journals and letters and wrote a biography of Michael Field entitled We Are Michael Field. In her book, she relates many anecdotes from their journals along with serious matters which relay quite a lot about the Dionysian spirit of Michael Field. For example, they set up a shrine to Dionysus in their backyard by which "they gardened in a spirit of pagan delight." Further, they would "pose Whym (their dog) asleep at the foot of the altar for a photograph" (107). Altars in celebration of Dionysus and/or ancient goddesses were common. "The point of establishing altars is to impress upon the deeper levels of the mind how powerful and dynamic feminine energy can be" (Monaghan 24). After reading Donoghue's biography, it is so delightful to know they led their lives by the same spirit in which they wrote. In fact, Dionysus seems the perfect god for two female poets known under a male pseudonym to love and worship. After all, Dionysus was also the patron god of song, poetry and drama.

The scholar and author Angela Leighton read Michael Field's "Works and Days" and states, "The gossipy energy and wit of the journal and the strange, if erratic originality of the poetry, point to, if not exactly 'genius', as Browning put it, at least to poets of considerable dedication and gift" (VWP Writing Against the Heart 211). Their adult lives were spent in scholarly endeavor and writing. They would allot time each day for their drama and poetry, while each night they would take time to write down the day's events in their journals. They wrote "nothing for the popular press, they aspired instead to produce literature in its highest traditional forms" (Laird 98), which included poetry, drama and Greek plays.

Nietzsche tells us that the job of the chorus in Greek plays was to "excite the minds of the audience to such a pitch of Dionysian frenzy, that, when the tragic hero appears on the stage, they do not see in him an unshapely man wearing a mask, but they see a visionary figure, born as it were of their own ecstasy" (28). This Dionysian frenzy can be seen in Callirrhoë: A Drama and many of the poems discussed earlier in this paper. Their Dionysian nature can also be seen through their journal entries and personal letters. Further, Nietzsche's statement ties in nicely with Leighton's theory in Victorian Women Poets Anthology: "In some sense the fiery Whym Chow (who once, on a visit, killed Kipling's pet rabbit) personifies the amoral energy of the Dionysiac impulse" (488). Just as they could bring their audience to see "a visionary figure," so Whym Chow became a "visionary figure" to Michael Field.

Whym was the love of their lives. He arrived at a time of bereavement, just when their house was lacking a male centre.... They

wrote poems about him... They came to see him as a life force, a little sun god, a 'Bacchic cub.'

In the Michaels' passion for Whym Chow, the very English tradition of devotion to pets met fashionable Hindu ideas about the sacredness of animals. 'I suppose our new love of animals is a desire to get into another kingdom' Katherine wrote perceptively. Whym was not so much a substitute child as a friend who would never let them down, who would love them as mutely and spiritually as their dead... Edith called him 'My Love's familiar' (the name for a witch's animal companion). (Donoghue 97)

Whym Chow also appears in sacred guise in their poetry, as in the following:

O God, no blasphemy

It is to feel we loved in trinity...

O symbol of our perfect union, strange

Unconscious Bearer of Love's interchange. (l. 3-4; 17-18)

These lines come from their poem entitled "Trinity," written in 1906 at about the same time as an unfinished, untitled poem that opens with, "Little one, we three / Live in Trinity" (Treby Music & Silence 169). Michael Field's belief that the two of them plus their dog were equivalent to a new divinity must have shocked their Catholic Priests. Treby's thoughts on this particular poem are, "One can well imagine the various 'holy' fathers who were to come, blenching at Henry's [Edith's] novel theology; yet it makes as much sense, if not more, as their own" (Music & Silence 169). It would appear that traditional Christianity never took full root in Michael Field.

Whym Chow died in the month of February and was buried beneath the altar of Dionysus in the garden. According to Donoghue, the funeral service “was an eclectic service that included one of John Gray’s Catholic poems; Katherine wore a black hat with horse plumes.... they began writing an entire book of poems, published years later in an edition entitled Whym Chow: Flame of Love” (122). These poems for Whym Chow show not only the three of them as “mystic trinity” but also portray Whym Chow as lover and mentor to the two women. In “Whym Chow Flame of Love XXV,” Whym is portrayed richly and godly:

I want you in your great magnificence
 Of Eastern calm, holding your rage in fence
 Of roses and of jasmine and of grapes:
 Or when in sun and wind you ran,
 Flashing a joy to me such as escapes
 From spirits of untameable, far span,
 Who sometimes mingle in a poet’s mirth. (40-50)

This poem could easily be read as written to a lover instead of a dog. “I want you in your great magnificence” and “Flashing a joy to me... From spirits of untameable” is widely erotic. Michael Field’s passions and emotions were never calm or quiet though, no matter who they were for. For them, their dog was as much a companion as any human could ever be.

In another poem, similar to the above, entitled “Whym Chow Flame of Love XXVII,” the emotions of the author along with their Dionysian spirit show their attachment and love for their dog.

When at the Door of Death,
 The white door with the knocker of coiled snakes,
 Shall I not cease even from my struggling breath,
 Will not my voice stand by my heart that quakes,
 And call, as life heaves from its mould to dust,
 Call, call for thee: but listen dumb
 If there is breeze of little breath up-thrust
 Against the other, or happy thrum
 Of little feet upon the inner floor? (l. 1-9)

This poem also has pagan tendencies with the “coiled snakes” and life changing “its mould to dust.” It is known that the maenads wore snakes wrapped around their head in honor of Dionysus. It seems that when looking to be consoled and get through their grief over Whym’s death, they once again reached for their Dionysian belief. Michael Field wrote over thirty poems for Whym Chow after his death and each one is racked with emotion and pain.

Treby states there were “two significant entries in their journal for late March,” one month after the death of Whym. The first entry is “I order crimson rose-bushes to put above our Little Fellows’ grave” and the second is “the gardener made a thick rose-bush bed over his grave... even the maids say there is something new to live for” (Uncertain Rain 190). Again the Dionysian Michael Field pays tribute to their pet companion, as they did everything in their life, through poetry and nature.

Their Dionysian natural view of the world supported them through other personal tragedies. James Cooper, Edith’s father and Katherine’s brother-in-law, died on a

mountain hike in Switzerland. His body was not recovered for several months due to inclement weather. Their initial response to his death was to write an elegy for him entitled "Invocation" which speaks to him as though he were a ghost, "O lingering ghost, still keep thy tryst with me!" (4) and incorporates the forest and heaven into one, "Love, leave thine azure heaven, the woods are brown / Wizard, tempestuous, sheltering, full of night – come down" (14-15). As Leighton writes, "The danger, exhilaration and Dionysiac sensuousness of the woods are a better place for meeting the dead than among the azure consolations of the sky" (VWP Writing Against the Heart 220).

Months later they wrote a poem called "The Forest" which describes his death and the change of seasons as he lay in the forest.

He lay asleep, and the long season wore:
 The forest shadows marked him limb by limb
 As on a dial: when the light grew dim
 A steady darkness on the spiny floor
 He lay asleep. The Alpine roses bore
 Their latest blooms and withered at the rim:
 The harvest moon came down and covered him,
 And passed, and it was stiller than before.
 Then fell the autumn, little falling there
 Save some quick-dropping fir-cone on the mould,
 Save with the ebbing leaves his own white hair;
 And the great stars grew wintry: in the cold
 Of a wide-spreading dusk, so woodmen say,

As one asleep on his right arm he lay. (1-14)

According to Donoghue, "Edith gradually became convinced that her father had not simply lost his way, but been lured higher and higher by his wife's ghost" (96). Death is never simply death for Michael Field. Nothing ends, everything returns to the beginning for them. Their Dionysian zest for life lived on through personal tragedies and all.

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

Despite their drive and talent, their love of nature and each other, it was far from a perfect time to be two women writing and publishing. Bradley and Cooper did not wish to publish under their own female names because they understood the restraints which would be placed upon them because of their gender. Taking a man's name in order to publish "seemed the best way for a woman writer to get her work noticed and to be taken seriously on universal themes" (Donoghue 36). The work first published under the name of Michael Field "got rave reviews," and "he" was compared to "everyone from Shakespeare to Swineburne" (39). As long as their work was thought to be written by a man, the praises continued, much to the delight of the writers. Sturgeon states it is "amusing now to read the praises that were lavished upon Mr. Field upon his first appearance" (27). This all came to an end in the year of 1884, when Robert Browning let it slip to others that Michael Field consisted of two women. Bradley wrote to him urging him to "set the critics on a wrong track" because both she and Cooper knew once the critics were aware of the fact that they were female and not male, the praise and accolades would stop.

Angela Leighton says their Dionysian spirit was both "a strength and a limitation... that the cost and pain of women's experience, with all its forbidden fruits and sexual falls, is hardly ever counted" (Victorian Women Poets 204). Their poetry is passionate and at times erotically charged, as in, "Her hand the thigh's tense surface leaves, / Falling inward" ("The Sleeping Venus" 62-3), which most certainly must have had their critics screaming in outrage or, worse, the fate that befell their poetry, neglect.

But like the maenads they continued their spiritual journey, which for them meant to write for anyone who might be interested and probably, most importantly, for themselves. They wrote of love, pagan joy, lust, nature, and just about anything that caught their fancy.

Several critics believe the best poetry Field wrote were their love poems where their Dionysian spirit shines through. One in particular has garnered more attention than others, a poem entitled, "Prologue:"

It was deep April, and the morn
 Shakespeare was born;
 The world was on us, pressing sore;
 My Love and I took hands and swore,
 Against the world, to be
 Poets and lovers evermore,
 To laugh and dream on Lethe's shore,
 To sing to Charon in his boat,
 Heartening the timid souls afloat;
 Of judgment never to take heed,
 But to those fast-locked souls to speed,
 Who never from Apollo, fled,
 Who spent no hour among the dead;
 Continually
 With them to swell,
 Indifferent to heaven and hell.

This is a beautiful poem believed to have been written by Katherine for Edith. The theme is the two of them as one against the world. Together they are invincible. They will have a great time when they “laugh and dream” on “Lethe’s shore.” The ultimate pagan joy can be found in this lesbian “marriage” poem which vows that as long as they are together, nothing else matters. They will not take “heed of judgment,” and in the end they are “indifferent to heaven and hell.” Their work and lives were substantial and beautiful. They had a “creative force akin to that of Emily Bronte or of Byron, and is tamer than their wild genius only in appearance” (Sturgeon 241). If a spirit can live on through subsequent generations like a Jungian archetype, then this poem shows the maenadic spirit passed down to Michael Field. Their pagan joy on the shores of the dead to “laugh and dream” is Dionysian to the core. This poem represents an intense, emotional attachment of two women who believed that their love and spirit could not be broken but would survive and be joyful in life and death.

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Statement of Critical Principles and Influences

This thesis concentrates on Michael Field's various works to include but not limited to their play Callirrhoe: A Drama, their poetry, their journals, and their lives in order to establish that they revered and lived in the spirit of Dionysus. To date there has been criticism written about their lifestyles, i.e., whether or not they were lesbians and lovers with a lot of focus on their love poetry. Other criticism has been written on the effects Sappho's writing had upon them, while some critics have focused on Walter Pater's influence, which admittedly was substantial upon their work. With the exception of Angela Leighton, little has been written about the effect of the god Dionysus upon their works and lives and even Leighton only has a couple of essays on the subject. This thesis wishes to explore through their works and research that aspect of their lives.

I first learned of Michael Field through my Victorian Poetry Graduate class as we read several of their poems from The Broadview Anthology of Victorian Poetry. In a mere seven lines, the editors of said Anthology summed up Michael Field's lives and works before choosing eighteen of their poems to showcase in the anthology. Even with so little information, I knew when I read "Drawing of Roses and Violets," "The Birth of Venus," and "Death, men say, is like a sea" in the anthology that this was a poet I needed and wanted to know more about.

Upon attempting to locate more work by Michael Field, the most readily available book was the biography written by Emma Donoghue. It was a quick and easy read but with enough details and substance to keep me coming back for

more. After reading Donoghue's biography, I managed to locate a used book store in New Mexico and get a copy of Mary Sturgeon's 1927 biography of Michael Field. Then my search brought me to Ivor Treby. Fortunately, he has taken it on himself to see that many of their hard to find and never before published poems get into print. I now own three of the four books he has published of Field's works.

My thesis is a feminist view of what motivated Michael Field to become lifelong admirers of the god Dionysus. In order to do so, there had to be some understanding of the historical time period in which they lived as well as the lifestyle they chose to lead. Logan Pearsall Smith's work was invaluable in painting a picture of them and the effect they had on those around them. By reading their works which included their poems, plays, and as much of their journals as possible, it quickly becomes clear that the Dionysian spirit is everywhere. Their lifestyle led me to them but their work keeps me coming back.

Angela Leighton's Victorian Women Poets Anthology really sparked the Dionysian idea for the thesis. Although there is only a two and one half page introduction to Michael Field with one paragraph of that devoted to what Leighton calls their "best work" which "invokes as its muse the classical Bacchus" (488), that is the point that made me realize what exactly I wanted to write about in my Michael Field thesis. After which I researched Leighton's other Anthology Victorian Women Poets Writing Against the Heart which has a whole essay on Michael Field. Leighton concentrates in her essay on how Michael Field

is outside the whole Victorian time period in their works, but she brings their natural spirit or as she dubs it “idea of the Vast Bacchanals” (213) into this essay which again inspired me to go in the direction of the Dionysian spirit within Michael Field.

Annotated Bibliography

- Abrams, M. H., Ed. "The Woman Question: The Victorian Debate about Gender." The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Victorian Age. Vol. 2B, 7th Ed. (2000): 1719. An interesting article on how Victorians felt about women in general and in particular about their roles as writers.
- Dellamore, Richard. Victorian Sexual Dissidence. (1999). Dellamore is a professor of English and head of Graduate Programs at Trent University. This book discusses the Victorian period in terms of homo/hetero, patriarchal/feminist, and masculine/effeminate constructs.
- Euripides. The Bacchae. Euripides V: Three Tragedies. Eds. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore. (1968): 142-220. This text is used as a comparison to Field's Callirrhoe. The Bacchae is probably the best known story about the maenads, and thus a good reference.
- Field, Michael. Sight and Song with Underneath the Bough. (1993). Sight and Song (1892) and Underneath the Bough (1893) were originally published separately in small volumes. They were published again in 1993 but are currently out of print. Sight and Song contains poems about artwork they viewed while on the continent. Only 150 original copies of Underneath the Bough were printed; therefore, I feel very fortunate that I have been able to obtain a copy. The poems in Underneath the Bough are mainly personal and give us insight to the thoughts and feelings of the women

behind the pseudonym.

Kerényi, Carl. Dionysus Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life. (1976).

Kerényi is a professor of classics in Hungary and is known as one of the founders of modern studies in Greek Mythology. This book was invaluable to my research. I gained insight and knowledge into the god Dionysus and his followers. This book traces the career of the followers of Dionysus from his origins in the Minoan culture to the Dionysian religion of Greece.

Laird, Holly. "Contradictory Legacies: Michael Field and Feminist Restoration."

Women CoAuthors. (2000): 81-96. Holly Laird is a Professor of English at the University of Tulsa and also editor of the journal Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature. She has previously written several essays on Michael Field. In this essay, Laird focuses on how two women writing under a single pseudonym should be read differently from a single author or even read differently from a male or female author. For Michael Field, Laird shows how the duality working as one made their writing more radical and open and gave them a freedom they might not have otherwise found. This is an interesting and thought-provoking essay, but it did not tie in closely with my thesis; therefore, I did quote from Laird but not extensively.

Leighton, Angela and Reynolds, Margaret. Victorian Women Poets: Anthology.

(1995): 487-509. This is primarily an anthology of poetry written by an assortment of women poets of the Victorian Age with one section devoted

to Michael Field. At the beginning of Field's section there is a short essay (2 ½ pages long) regarding their lives and works. The primary focus of the essay is to show Michael Field's paganism, in particular, associated with Bacchus and how they invoked the classical gods often in their work

Leighton, Angela. "Michael Field." Victorian Women Poets: Writing Against the Heart. (1992): 202-243. Angela Leighton is a Professor of English at the University of Hull who has written several books and co-edited Victorian Women Poets, which includes a chapter on Michael Field.

In this particular book, her argument in the essay "Michael Field" is that Michael Field is actually outside the Victorian women's tradition because of their writing style; their decadence; and their lack of female sentimentalism and political causes, which influenced other female Victorian writers. I found this essay to be particularly helpful to me when writing my thesis and I returned to it again and again.

Monaghan, Patricia. The Goddess Path. (2000): 231-236. This author is a faculty member at DePaul University where she teaches literature. I used this book solely for the purpose of the information regarding the maenads. There was little information I could use in this book as it is primarily a personal guide for today's woman to find their own goddess within.

Nietzsche, Friedrich. The Birth of Tragedy. Ed. Stanley Appelbaum. (1995).

This book deals with Greek Tragedy in the view of Apollo versus Dionysus. Apollo represents restraint while Dionysus represents passion. I read this book in order to explain Nietzsche's view of the Dionysian and

incorporate it into my thesis.

Pater, Walter. Greek Studies: A Series of Lectures. (1983): 1-79. Pater was a Victorian essayist and critic. His influence upon Michael Field was substantial. In this book, his chapters cover Dionysus; the bacchanals of Euripides; the myth of Demeter and Persephone; Hippolytus; the beginnings of Greek sculpture; and Greek art. The first two chapters on Dionysus and the bacchanals were of great importance for my Thesis. Several scholars argue that Field had to have read Pater's essay on Dionysus and the bacchanals which shows in their own work, and I agree.

Segal, Charles. Dionysiac Poetics and Euripides' Bacchae. (1982). This is a very detailed and well researched book on Euripides' play The Bacchae. Segal's description of Dionysus and his explanations of the same were quite informative and useful for my research.

Smith, Logan Pearsall. Reperusals and Re-Collections. (1937): 85-97. Smith was American born, attended Oxford and afterwards lived in England. He actually dined and socialized with Michael Field when they were older and he was still young. This book contains chapters on Jane Austen, Montaigne, Madame de Sevigne, and various other subjects. Of most interest for my thesis was the chapter on Michael Field. It is written eloquently and intimately. Without Smith's remembrances of times gone by, an insight into the lives and psyches of Michael Field would have surely been missing.

Sturgeon, Mary. Michael Field. (1922). This is one of only two biographies written about Michael Field. Sturgeon wrote this particular biography when many people were still alive that had personally known Michael Field. It is insightful and well written with the primary focus being on Michael Field's works, especially the tragedies. Included in this book is a section about their lives, their poetry, and their drama. This book was invaluable to my research and writing of my thesis. The depth of knowledge I obtained from Sturgeon was very helpful in my pursuit of information regarding Field.

Treby, Ivor C.. Music and Silence: The Gamut of Michael Field. (2000). Treby is an English poet who is attempting to bring back the long neglected poetry of Michael Field. He has currently published four books with Field's works in them. He states at the beginning of each book, "Chosen, annotated, but *not* edited." The poems in these books are incredible. Some have never before been published. He adds anecdotes from their journals and private letters. He quotes scholars like Leighton and Laird in his footnotes. He gives a historical perspective to the poems. He never changes anything the poets had written in their poems or journals, though. In this particular book, there are 254 annotated poems, most of which had never been printed before. Personally, I owe a debt of gratitude for the three books I used in my research.

---. A Shorter Shirazad. (1999). See above Treby reference.

---. Uncertain Rain: Sundry spells of Michael Field. (2002). See original Treby

explanation.

Vicinus, Martha. "The Adolescent Boy: Fin-de-Siècle Femme Fatale?"

Victorian Sexual Dissidence. Ed: Richard Dellamora. (1999).

This book discusses the Victorian period in terms of

homo/hetero, patriarchal/feminist, and masculine/effeminate.

This particular essay by Vicinus focuses on the misogynist

culture of the Victorian age and that it was not women who were

predatory but men who sought out young boys. For my thesis, I

was primarily interested in how she situated Michael Field's Dionysian

nature within the male homosexual culture she describes.

Zaidman, Louise Bruit. "Pandora's Daughters and Rituals in Grecian Cities."

A History of Women: From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints

Eds. Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot. (1992): 355-360. This is a

wonderful series of books about the history of women. In this particular

volume there is a small section subtitled "Dionysian Women" which was

informative and helpful in my research.