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THE UNWINNING OF THE WEST: JOHN HAWKES'S *THE BEETLE LEG*

Throughout his various interviews and essays, John Hawkes has continually insisted on drawing attention to the comic elements in his fiction. By his own admission, one of the most important of these is the use of parody and the many ironic possibilities the mode makes available to him. While critics have acknowledged the use of the parodic mode in *The Lime Twig,* for instance, they have almost completely ignored this important aspect in Hawkes's second novel, *The Beetle Leg*. When they have considered this largely overlooked novel, scholars have stressed its mythic elements and attempted to define the work in terms of numerous fertility sagas.[1] Choosing to consider its parodic dimensions, I will demonstrate the ways in which Hawkes ironically manipulates the conventions of the Western novel in an attempt to question a variety of widely accepted assumptions the form implies about American life and culture.

Although the plot is primarily static, what action there is is set in an arid, Southwestern valley, where inhabitants have constructed an earthen irrigation dam. Camper, a former worker and now tourist, returns to Government City with his wife and child and joins the company of Luke Lampson, the brother of a man accidentally buried in the dam during construction. Paralleling these events is the return of an itinerant quack, Cap Leech, who, as his name implies, searches for patients he can parasitically exploit. He eventually encounters the law in the form of a man known only as the Sheriff, and together with two of the town's other citizens,

Harry Bohn and the Finn, the Sheriff, Luke, and Camper track down and ambush a group of marauding motorcyclists. As in most Westerns, *The Beetle Leg's* most immediately apparent feature is the setting, here a landscape of limitless desert. In a traditional Western such as Owen Wister's *The Virginian,* an equally limitless terrain implies a life of limitless possibilities, a location which John G. Cawelti argues would represent a "social environment in which the American dream could be born again."[2] Cawelti here defines a traditional mystique, one which views success and progress emerging from the conquest of a hostile environment. Hawkes, however, ironically inverts this process by showing the erosion of the Western life-style and its ideals.

In the western territory of *The Beetle Leg,* man's attempt to transform the desert into a garden has hopelessly failed, with the prevailing image being one of the Garden as Wasteland. Similarly, the dream of progress and development is converted into a nightmare of banality, sterility, and exhaustion, where a dominant sense of barrenness acts both as a backdrop to and as a mirror for the aimless lives struggling through this terrain. Instead of the forces of man and progress conquering and bettering the land as in *The Virginian,* the land is the conqueror in *The Beetle Leg,* and Hawkes clearly demonstrates this in the image of the moving, decaying, and devouring dam.

Early in the story the narrator mentions a breeze that comes from the "funnel of badlands," and the use of this Western cliché hints not only at an ironic narrative attitude but also succinctly describes an area that is evil beyond our customary expectations of the term, "badlands."[3] The location is a town named Government City, where an irrigation dam, which one character proudly refers to as "the cheapest earth filled dam in the western hemisphere," has been erected (26). Ironically, where once there were farms, trees, and grazing areas, there is now only an "infested range," and rather than bringing fertility and life to the area, the dam functions as an agent of destruction and a monument to human futility (28). The one man who has died since the community's founding was swallowed by a chasm in the dam during construction, and although inhabitants assure one another of the structure's security, the audience is fully aware of its instability.

Seismographs have "detected a creeping, downstream motion in the dam [as it] eased down the rotting shale a beetle's leg each several anniversaries" (67-68).

Additionally, yellow color imagery is used to emphasize the area's destruction; the earth, buildings, and even characters' teeth are associated with this color of decay. In fact the devastation is so complete that the narrator at one point notes that this is "a country from which the air had been exhausted," producing a "little purgatory" (99 & 103).

As the land is destroyed, so it destroys the inhabitants, and the disorders evident in the physical world are mirrored by the psychic disorders in the lives and personalities of the novel's characters. The Sheriff best exemplifies the debilitating effects of the landscape on personality by presenting himself as a rather lop-sided version of the traditional lawman in the work's introductory monologue. Following less the letter of the law than an astrological table, the Sheriff's beliefs spell doom for any living creature.

> Aquarius is poor. Sagitarius is poor. Virgo is a Barren Sign, it will produce no growth. The first day the Moon is in a Sign is better than the second and the second is better than the third. Seed planted when the Earth is in Leo, which is a Barren, Fiery Sign, will die, as it is favorable only to the destruction of noxious growth. Trim no trees or vines when the Moon or Earth is in Leo. For they will surely die. (7)

His complete faith in the sterility and futility of life dramatically defines the way he functions as the town's chief legal authority.

Obsessed with the suspicion that every man and woman is furtively running off to the nearest bush, car, or bed and "illegally" copulating, the Sheriff is disgusted by "them people too easy found doing things a man can't talk about, things that happened or not depending on whether you arrived five minutes early or five late" (8). Accordingly, he regards his job as one of prevention:

> There are other times when you have to step right in, when you are Sheriff or even Deputy, and catch hold of a bare shoulder or head of hair, keeping your face turned back so as it don't get bruised, and drag them off. Maybe you get splashed with a glass of beer or your hand gets bit, but they have to be broke apart. Fast. (11)

When called by one of the town's children to investigate a suspicious character who is merely sitting and staring at the river, the Sheriff is disappointed to find nothing illegal taking place. Nevertheless, the seated figure was "something to stare at for an hour or two" (14).

His most extreme attempt to frustrate fertility comes in his confrontation with a wedding party as they enter the neighboring Clare for the nuptials. The scene is an absurdly comic imitation of a high-noon shootout between the hero and the villain. The Sheriff moves with the laconic self-confidence audiences expect of the standard lawman, as he leans against a post, paring his nails and warning the interlopers to leave. When one of the exasperated party members exclaims, "But this here is a wedding," the Sheriff responds, "Don't matter. I don't care if the whole pack aims to rut" (90). After all, he later says, "This town's got a law" (90). The distortion here is monumental, as the principled loner, sworn to foster growth and stability in the town's rage against the wilderness, becomes Hawkes's prime agent for the death and extinction of civilization.

In the wedding party is the brother of the groom, Luke Lampson, who throughout the novel stands as an ironic antithesis to the traditional cowboy-hero. Except for his wardrobe, he is not really a cowboy at all; because the dam has destroyed the grazing lands, herds no longer wander here. Luke's job, like those of the work's other characters, is a purposeless and futile one; he spends his days sowing flower seedlings on the dam that is his brother Mulge's grave. The folly of this activity is especially striking because the dam "took Luke's seeding badly . . . where once bleak needles and spines had popped crookedly from the banks and a few flowers increasingly withered into the plain and disappeared, only the dust from the southward slope, swirling into the air, and a few animal bones and tin cans from a still deeper generation, survived" (66-67).

The particular emptiness of Luke's existence becomes more evident when one compares him with the classic cowboy-hero. Although he has the boots, the slow, silent demeanor, and the patient acceptance of life that characterized the Virginian, Luke is still not the "transcendent hero" that Wister created. Such a

figure has always embodied a code of conduct and honor, and Robert Warshaw carefully defines him as a man with

> an apparent moral clarity . . . [and] what he defends, at bottom, is the purity of his own image—in fact his honor . . . he fights not for advantage and not for the right, but to state what he is, and he must live in a world which permits that statement. The Westerner is the last gentleman . . .he presents an image of personal nobility that is still real for us.[4]

Neither Luke nor anyone else in this work embodies such moral clarity; like the land they inhabit, they are exhausted, lost, defeated.

But like every Western hero, Luke has his moment of violent confrontation with the so-called forces of evil and destruction; however, his moment amounts to a radical reversal of what the traditional hero experiences. Usually the hero is a man who shuns violence; he is a figure of extreme self-restraint.

> The most important implication of [the] killing procedure seems to be the qualities of reluctance, control, and elegance which it associates with the hero. Unlike the knight, the cowboy hero does not seek out combat for its own sake and he typically shows an aversion to the wanton shedding of blood. Killing is an act forced upon him and he carries it out with the precision and skill of a surgeon and the careful proportions of an artist.[5]

Luke is like the traditional hero in that he does not seek the violence out; it is accidental that he is even a member of the novel's absurd posse. Once the shooting begins, he is also similar to the Western hero in his reluctance to use a gun. However, the similarities end here, for his eventual use of violence is not disciplined or elegant. He is, one must remember, firing buckshot into an unarmed group of cornered motorcyclists. Where the classic cowboy-hero gives "a sense of moral significance and order to violence," this hero and his comrades create only chaos and achieve some motiveless form of revenge.[6] Neither hunters nor victims are in any way ennobled or purified through this senseless use of violence.

Luke's posse, which represents the primarily male relationships

of most Westerns, is actually a collection of malignant types. The relaxed camaraderie of a group of equals is replaced in *The Beetle Leg* with a network of coercion and intimidation. Harry Bohn is the nominative leader and his dominance stems less from some moral strength than the magnitude of his physical deformities. Other characters stand in bewildered awe of this man "by miracle born of a dead mother and thereafter in his youth . . . drawn to the expressionless genitals of animals . . . " (108). Bohn is a walking physical grotesque, having

> an old man's kidney . . . . tumorous girth and thickly dying wind, hardening on the surface of the armpits. Chest and shoulders were solidified against youth, bulged in what he assumed to be the paunch of middle age . . . . A few fingers were broken, snubbed . . . Bohn argued at, commanded his world and saw it under the pale of bitter years when imaginary friends die off. (55)

Only thirty years old, he commands a kind of fear and respect that a middle-aged patriarch might wield.

His hold is especially strong over Finn, "a crippled, ex-bronc rider," who hobbles about on a pair of white canes (54). Throughout the novel, the emaciated, cancerous Finn pleads that he must return home, because "I got things. Lots of things to do, Bohn" (54). But Bohn's control is absolute, and the two wander about the town until they meet Luke and Camper. The four of them then set off on an unsuccessful fishing expedition that culminates in their joining the Sheriff for the midnight attack on the motorcyclists.

Camper, too, is a comic distortion of yet another typical Western figure: the civilized outsider. Often this character is a woman, or failing that, a man who is either a dude or an Easterner, who for one reason or another comes to the West as an initiate to the bluff manners of frontier life. A classic example is the narrator in *The Virginian;* he is an Easterner who journeys periodically to Wyoming and gradually learns the complexities and beauties of the Western way of life from the strong, silent cowboy-hero. The outsider usually represents either an opposing way of life, or by means of his initiation, acts as a bridge between two opposing life styles.

Though he comes from another way of life, Camper is incapable of learning anything or mediating between opposing forces. He claims that he was once a laborer who worked on the dam and who has now returned to do some fishing and to marvel at the success of the project. He is paunchier than the cowboys, and his apparel of yellow sports shirt, flannel trousers, and yellow "sea-rotted sandals," covering white socks, clearly indicates his alternate lifestyle. Although he is the quintessential tourist and suburbanite, Camper proudly boasts, "I'm a hunter," but actually "feared through the night the footfall of the hunted" (97 & 109).

As a representative of civilization, he brings what are really the worst aspects of the so-called civilized culture. When a rattlesnake bites his child, Camper explodes in anger because he "can't take a leak without kicking up a pack of rattlers" and because his wife cannot find a radio station to his liking. While the child lies stricken and Luke draws the venom from the wound, Camper sits back and swats biting mosquitoes, swearing, "This country's hell on a man" (28). Later, after the child has been put to bed and he accidentally meets Luke again in a bar, Camper confesses, "I've got to have those steerhorn boots of yours . . . . Got to. They've been on my mind ever since you fixed up the kid . . . . You don't need them like I do . . . " (98).

Instead of standing for an alternate way of life that could offer values the West lacks, Camper is as sterile as the landscape he stumbles into. His disregard for his child's injury and for his wife's reluctance to stop in Government City demonstrate a complete lack of concern for those he supposedly loves. He is selfish, foolish, and utterly incapable of any empathetic understanding. Ultimately, it is his callous selfishness which is a reflection of a culture that has emotionally and morally fallen apart and that has created the nightmare that is this West.

Another Western convention is presented in the figure of Ma, widow of the buried Mulge Lampson and a woman who acts as an ironic imitation of the hard-working, unselfish, long-suffering pioneer female. In sharing a shack with Luke and his Indian mistress, Ma taciturnly accepts a life of ministering to others and never to herself. Her obsession with the ghost of her dead husband, a husband who on his wedding night slept with another

woman, is grimly ironic. Mulge, one learns, is the focus of attention for a town that ignored him in life; in death, he has become a hero and tourist attraction. The town's barber covets the few relics of Mulge's existence: a straightedge razor with a chipped handle, a shaving mug, "a bottle of tonic and septic [sic] pencil" (71). Dispossessed of his presence in both life and death, Ma guards a handful of pictures that inarticulately record their relationship.

> Ma had all the photographs of his effects. It was the best she could do. She wrote on the backs of them:
> "I remember this one, remember it well."
> "Bought in Clare for twenty-five cents. I didn't take to the color. Right off."
> "Cut 1 lb. fish fresh as it buys to four pieces . . . " (72)

She also honors Mulge's memory by nocturnal vigils at his grave. While the novel's other characters move through the town and around the lake, Ma awkwardly plods her way over the dam's surface, searching with a divining rod for the lost body. Hers is a kind of holy mission; she walks on "sacred ground," and "she sanctified an immane [sic] body of land and depended on the divining rod" (116). But like the other characters, Ma is a lost figure whose efforts are simply futile, futile because she fails to discover Mulge's body and because she has no conclusive evidence of its position in the dam. Donald Grenier aptly describes Ma and the other characters' comic significance when he writes:

> The beauty of this grim humor is that it makes us aware of the unbelievable boredom of these people, of the sheer uselessness of their lives. Cut off from larger concerns, they reduce the world to a dirt mound in the middle of the desert so that the center of their reality becomes an unmarked grave.[7]

The conditions of boredom and uselessness are especially telling in the context of a Western novel. Boredom is not usually the emotional state of those living on the borders of society and savagery, as *The Virginian* shows. And while uselessness might describe the lives of bandits, thieves, or outlaws, it certainly does not characterize those pioneers who risked everything to advance the

cause of civilization and test the American ethic of social progress and personal success.

Travelling into town in a red wagon that is both office and home, Cap Leech stands as the novel's quasi-Indian. Although referred to as a doctor, he is more a corrupted version of the stock Medicine Man. Lacking the qualities of the noble savage, Leech is a grotesque combination of primitive and civilized man, and being neither doctor nor medicine man, he is, as the narrator at one point says, "a midnight vivisectionist in a cat hospital" (146).

Perhaps because of his ambivalent nature, Leech possesses an incredible and sinister omnipotence in this world. He is a figure obsessed with his mortality, living in a twilight world between life and death, "a man who had been anesthetized, against whose chest villagers of forty years had spit their brains" (40). With his sinister powers and ether-permeated clothing, Leech manages anesthetically to overpower and control the Sheriff, in fact, "to put them all to sleep, to look at their women if he wished, to mark their children" (129).

He has learned his craft by "searching coal bins for the ruined," pulling the teeth of unsuspecting children in deserted alleys, and "practicing among those without chance of recovery, doomed, he felt, to submit" (122). Responsible for "fishing" the body of Harry Bohn from his mother's corpse in an operation that "was more abortive than life saving," Leech ultimately practices a decadent skill, one thriving on dominance, victimization, and the creation of new human grotesques such as Bohn.

One of the better examples of his malevolent domination appears in his appointment with Luke's Indian mistress, Maverick. The extraction of an absessed tooth begins slowly as Leech examines, carefully, his tools, then the victim. He steadily applies the ether and finally begins the probing. As the description builds, it grows clear that Hawkes renders this extraction increasingly in sexual terms; this is both a tooth extraction and an obscure form of rape.

> The Indian, in a last bodily defense, slightly bulged some muscles, loosed others, and secreted from licentious scent spots and awakened nodes, a sensation of difference marvelous as anything he had ever seen. The captive, still watching him with unchanged eyes, generated like an

> octopus the ink of desire . . . . He pulled and the lower half of the Mandan's face followed the swing of his arm, then back again, elastic, cross-eyed, an abnormal craning of the skull to the will of its tormentor, stretched sightless over the shoulder with each plaguing timeless yawl. Leech pulled in waltz-like arcs, now breaking the pressures of motion to apply a series of lesser, sharp tugs which caused the Indian's head to nod obstinately up and down and one knee, wide and soft, to fold slowly backward into the privy bronze stomach. (148-49)

Because of his perverse surgical methods, Leech is a curious combination of Indian and white man, outsider and resident. Although he does lead a nomadic existence, he was at one time a part of this community and still holds considerable influence here. At the close of the work, there is the suggestion he is the father of the Lampson brothers, and whether the relationship is more spiritual than physical, it is clear that Luke and Leech see one another as son and father. In addition to this kinship, Leech is the adoptive parent of Harry Bohn. After performing the gruesome operation that ushers Bohn into the world, Leech abducts the baby and ends any legitimate practice of medicine. Both father and son are human monstrosities, and each exercises a strange and terrifying authority. Grenier sums up Leech's significance by noting:

> The good ole "doc" of the standard Western, one of the familiar banalities which Hawkes joyfully turns inside out, becomes the chief instrument of disease and negation. Births turn out to be living abortions, and we begin to suspect that in Hawkes' version of the Western there will be no final triumph of good guys over bad—the characters whose evilness and sterility come naturally will not be punished in the end. It is simply the way things are. Movie-land morals have no place in the nightmare part of reality.[8]

Nonetheless, there is a form of triumph, though a perverse version of the conquest of good over evil. Such a conquest appears in the guise of the customary shootout where the victims are outlaws who have been annoying the townspeople. The renegades are known as the Red Devils, a gang of hoodlums who supplant horses and cowboy attire with motorcycles and black leather uniforms. Their name, Red Devils, invites associations with savage, roving Indian hordes; however, there is nothing to indicate they are red, Indian, or for that matter, even human. One critic suggests that

> The Red Devils haunting the men of the novel are ghosts from an American past when the Red Indians were destroyed by men with the technological power of gunfire. Although the Red Devils do not promise a restoration of that past, their motorcycle gang is a comic image of the return to a tribal, nomadic life after the existing culture, obsessed like the sheriff with the stability of law and order, is demolished.[9]

As Camper's wife stares out the hotel window, she falls under the gaze of these voyeurs, and the following passage graphically describes their semi-human condition.

> The creature continued to watch. It was made of leather. Straps, black buckles and breathing hose filled out a face as small as hers, stripped of hair and bound tightly in alligator skin. It was constructed as a baseball, bound about a small core of rubber. The driving goggles poked up from the shiny cork top and a pair of smoked glasses fastened in the leather gave it malevolent and overflowing eyes. There was a snapped flap on one side that hid an orifice drilled for earphones. Its snout was pressed against the screen, pushing a small bulge into the room. (53)

When not found lurking in the shadows of the town's homes and buildings, some of the gang are incarcerated for allegedly "scratching" a dog. At the same time the remaining members disrupt the town dance by driving their cycles in circles through the street. As quickly as they enter, they leave in a tight formation and thundering cloud. In the end it appears that this incident, as much as their physical appearance and their ubiquity, is the cause of their persecution.

However, in this novel the classic moral opposition between the townspeople and the outlaws is neither clear nor absolute. The killings are really a nocturnal hunt in which the Sheriff and his charges set off to redress some unexplained wrong. There is a sense of utter inevitability to these killings, and as they prepare for the battle, the Sheriff explains, "Kill most anything tonight . . . . Bound to. In Saggitarius [sic]" (155). Together the posse and the motorcyclists enact the ritual attack on the wagon-train, as the Devils circle the pickup truck and are fired upon. The orgy of violence ends when Luke pulls the rifle to his chin and either shoots himself or has the gun backfire, though neither is made expressly clear. "He could feel the eruption under his nose before he

squeezed; he fell back with the mistake, the searing, double dinosaurian footfall of the twin bores" (158). Because they are "equally full of savagery and death," neither group is elevated by or purged through this use of violence.[10] This is, as Frederick Busch notes, a wild, mass form of suicide, where "people are murdering a part of life because all life is intolerable."[11]

It is a commonplace of the Western that the hero dislikes violence for its own sake and never takes part in gratuitous forms of slaughter. But in Hawkes's Western wasteland, peopled with those who have not moral imperative or justification, violence is a form of empty sport. The force used originally by settlers to tame and shape the land is thoroughly perverted here. Instead, violence becomes a means of ridding the community of a menace that is a threat in appearance only. The Sheriff admits as much before the showdown when he dismisses the Red Devils as "harmless"; they are, he notes, incapable of posing any significant threat.

In terms of its plot, *The Beetle Leg* further imitates the classic Western, presenting the familiar pattern of action as one of flight and pursuit. The most widespread and perhaps least obvious form of pursuit involves the town's worship of and obsession with the dead man, Mulge Lampson. Nearly every character, in one way or another, refers to or ponders the loss of this man and the possible significance his death holds for them. Ma is the most visible of these searchers, but they all seem to share roughly similar motives in their questioning. As we have seen, most of them are concerned with Mulge's death because there is nothing else to do and because their lives are completely sterile. In their boredom they have elevated Mulge to some semi-mythical level and view him as a kind of talisman for their communal fortunes. The search for Mulge is, then, a search for their own significance and for the fortunes the future holds for each of them.

A second group is pursuing Cap Leech. Although it is never certain exactly why they are following him, it appears they fear the outsider and his questionable powers. The Sheriff initiates this pursuit but is overcome when the two figures meet. Later, as Leech extracts the Mandan's tooth, a gang forms outside the medical tinker's wagon and threatens him if he fails to appear. Their threats culminate in the unhitching of Leech's horse from the

wagon, upon which they sit the crippled Finn, in a travesty of his former profession as a wild bronc rider.

A third form of pursuit is the most obvious: the chase and eventual showdown with the fleeing invaders. This is a grisly, ironic transformation of the classic confrontation of the forces of good and evil, culminating less in a shootout than in an ambush of unarmed victims. Involving none of the noble characteristics which mark the true Western confrontation, this encounter leaves hero and villain morally and physically victimized by their actions.

A final, common Western convention involves the sense of epic grandeur that surrounds the landscape and the actions of those who inhabit it. There is usually a "special openness of topography of the Great Plains and western desert [that] has made it particularly expressive for the portrayal of movement."[12] The immensity and beauty of the landscape frequently add a sense of majesty to the actions of the characters, and there is a characteristic lyricism often pervading the descriptions of these areas and the action that takes place in them.

Befitting this, *The Beetle Leg* deals with the vastness of an expansive terrain, but once again Hawkes creates an important difference. While there are moments of attack, flight, and pursuit, the novel lacks any vigorous linear action. Instead, there are prevailing senses of repetition, suffocation, and finally paralysis surrounding all actions and lives. Rather than elevating characters and their activities, this landscape debilitates and weakens them; the aridity of the setting strikingly reflects the aridity of character and moral purpose.

It should now be evident that by choosing the parodic mode, Hawkes creates what one critic calls "a wilful distortion of the entire form *and* spirit" of the Western tale, and through the careful exaggeration of various conventions he fashions a new version of the frontier experience.[13] By reexamining and reevaluating the distinctly American myth of cultural and technological progress implicit in most Westerns, Hawkes presents a "vision of America's disintegrating technological culture. [He] imagines the culture as caught in a weird sort of evolutionary process."[14] Consequently, *The Beetle Leg* stands as a kind of fictional post mortem for a dream and ideal that once established and defined a country and

its culture. In writing such a novel, Hawkes seems to be asking his audience to look deeper into the myth of the frontier and see that in this case the "Winning of the West" actually represents not only a destruction of the land, but, more importantly, a desperate waste of human spirit and imagination.

For in the world of *The Beetle Leg* man has lost the ability to create anything new or lifegiving; his machines and activities produce only waste and decay. What the novel defines, then, is a cultural "devolution," as Lucy Frost states, that is biologically symbolized by the subhuman forms of the Red Devils, Cap Leech, and Harry Bohn. Thus both man and his culture are running down to states of exhaustion, apathy, and destruction, and the myths and codes of the old West are finally too old to offer anything fresh or invigorating in Hawkes's modern desert wasteland.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Two such approaches are Chapter 3 in Frederick Busch's *Hawkes: A Guide to His Fictions* (1973) and Lucy Frost's "The Drowning of an American Adam: Hawkes' *The Beetle Leg*," *Critique*, 14, 3, (1972), 63-74. In his treatment in *Comic Terror*, Donald Grenier mentions some of the novel's parodic elements; however, he prefers to discuss the cinematic rather than the literary Western.

[2] John G. Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1976), p. 225.

[3] John Hawkes, *The Beetle Leg* (New York: New Directions Books, 1951), p. 24. Further citations are from this edition and noted parenthetically.

[4] Robert Warshaw, "The Westerner," in Sheridan Baker, ed., *The Essayist* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1977), pp. 332-333.

[5] John G. Cawelti, *The Six-Gun Mystique* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1972), p. 59.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

[7] Donald Grenier, *Comic Terror* (Memphis: Memphis State University Press, 1973), p. 114.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 109-10.

[9] Lucy Frost, "The Drowning of an American Adam: Hawkes' *The Beetle Leg*," *Critique*, 14, 3 (1972), p. 69.

[10] Grenier, p. 118.

[11] Frederick Busch, *Hawkes: A Guide to His Fictions* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1973), p. 57.

[12] Cawelti, *The Six-Gun Mystique*, p. 42.

[13] J. G. Riewald, "Parody as Criticism," *Neophilologus*, 50 (1967), p. 127.

[14] Frost, p. 67.