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THE ALIGARH JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

Aligarh Muslim University

Editor:
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Editorial Notes

Analogical thought, it may be suggested without much philosophical refinement, is perhaps more common than one would ordinarily be willing to accept. Thinking in terms of unconscious parallels is pervasive and may generally be found to determine the direction of one's urges and thus be operative in giving shape to thought and creativity. It would only be platitudinous now to say that broad holistic perceptions of similitudes of experiential patterns and not any objective analysis of 'facts' were responsible for the over-valuation of certain facets of the early seventeenth century poetry in modernist criticism. This may perhaps be regarded as analogical thought in the reverse direction since it was a case of self-perception projecting itself onto a different historical period or, in a different formulation, a self-image helping to shape perception in subjective terms.

Examples of more normal modelling of self on conscious and unconscious parallels from across continents and cultures come to mind more easily and abundantly the moment one thinks of how Indian literature, both in English and Indian languages, has imbibed influences from the West. The question of the emancipatory role in India's cultural awakening played by forces from abroad is not the issue here: what one may in passing reflect on is the fact how self-fashioning on the basis of false or imperfect analogies may occasion impercipience with consequences that are amusing if not disastrous. There were interesting manifestations, a few decades ago, of an irresistible urge to play the Eliot role in the Indian context or, at a more modest level though with greater determination, to undertake 'Leavisian' projects that had anything but the show of the master's crusading zeal and fighting spirit. It was a strange and somewhat amusing case of inter-cultural relationship when a much-talked-about author decided, in the late 'sixties and after years of pretended and fashionable literary 'concern' with sex and sensuality, to convince himself that he needed religious conversion to some form of 'traditional' faith: the 'Anglicanism', unfortunately, of his choice was the most unpromising version of conventional Islam. A would-be Leavis, writing in one of the Indian languages, undertook

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to demolish a popular, long-established form of poetry, a form with a rich poetic output -- the close equivalent, in a fair estimate, of some of the best in the Western heritage. That the destructive piece of criticism was unconsciously motivated by Leavis's (or Eliot's -- though probably the former's since the critic in question had been his disciple at Cambridge) anti-Miltonism was perceptible when one thought of the savage and dogmatically annihilating tone and gestures of dismissal. The fact, however, that the attempt was finally based on false analogical perceptions of the self-imposed role and was patently invalid could be easily grasped if one gave thought to the extreme dissimilarity of situations. Leavis's stance could be seen to have found its partial negative validity in the modernist creative achievement but there was nothing in the Indian context then (or is there now) to justify the rejection of a form that in its essence is only regulative and is indeed endowed with infinite creative possibilities.

That the best fiction-writers in Indian English -- and fiction in fact is the most considerable form in it -- have not allowed their endeavours to be shadowed over-much by extraneous factors is of some credit and also reflects favourably on a form where distinction is possible merely by traditionally-determined documentation of social reality and attention to human interest. Indian fiction in English -- like much post-Joycean British fiction -- has modestly contended itself with conventionally acceptable narrative patterns without attempting to act as counterparts of what has been done elsewhere. This is almost as it should have been in view of the absence of organically-shaped and historically-conditioned parallel developments in indigenous intellectual and cultural life.

It looks as if, in view of the hazards of artificial, self-assigned and falsely analogical roles, the attempt to steer close to the safe haven of acceptability is a satisfactory solution to a problem that has deep roots in the cultural malaise of a country like India. There is more of adventurism in the Indian languages than in Indian English probably because there is less possibility of the detection of derivativeness from the Western models. This is not to suggest that Indian thought and literature can survive in isolation from the rest of the world, specially the West. Indian intellectual life, and this notwithstanding the surface ripples, suffers from deep stagnation and in view of this whatever little movement there may be is better than none at all. A cosmopolitan outlook is indeed no panacea, and

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facile imitativeness is not an alternative to lack of originality. What, however, can be learnt readily is the way how the West has been honest to itself in endeavouring to shape experience in humanly possible ways. There is, perhaps, no other justification for pursuing English studies in India.

-- Maqbool Hasan Khan

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Raymond Chapman

'I HAVE SEEN MORE YEARS THAN YOU': YOUTH AND AGE IN *JULIUS CAESAR*

When Shakespeare turned to Roman history for the subject of his third tragedy, the assassination of Julius Caesar and its aftermath had more than an antiquarian interest for the audience at the Globe theatre. The Elizabethans lived close to the classical world, the basis of their education from school to university. Julius Caesar was a particular focus of controversy. The question of whether his assassination was the removal of a dangerous tyrant or the unjust killing of a noble ruler was much discussed, and in that era of political plots and disputed succession it had a topicality that could become disturbing to authority.

The balance of Renaissance, as of medieval opinion, was generally in favour of Caesar. Centuries earlier, Dante had placed the conspirators Brutus and Cassius in the lowest circle of the Inferno, together with the arch-traitor of Christianity, Judas Iscariot. Chaucer lamented that Caesar was killed by 'false Brutus and his othere foon'. Others more highly esteemed Brutus and agreed with John Stow that Caesar was 'the most ambitious and greatest traitor that ever was to the Roman state'.[1] There was no universally received judgement; the only agreement was that this historical event was still a matter for debate and that, in common with the rest of history, it bore lessons for the present in questions of power and sovereignty. As is well known, Shakespeare followed Plutarch's accounts of Caesar, Brutus and Antonius in the *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans* as his main source for this and the other Roman plays, in the translation made in 1579 by Sir Thomas North from the French version of Jacques Amyot. Plutarch took a critical view of Caesar, praising his generalship, courage and clemency but condemning his ambition and lust for power. He praised Brutus, and Shakespeare follows his judgement in many respects.

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The interlocking themes of *Julius Caesar* are as familiar as they are dramatically effective. The medieval sense of tragedy as the fall from high place is developed equally with the classical idea of the fatal flaw which leads to catastrophe for a man essentially noble. Caesar is near to attaining absolute kingship when he is suddenly betrayed and killed; Antony rises from being in danger of his life to a position in the new and ultimately victorious Triumvirate: Brutus and Cassius hold power for a time but sink into defeat and self-inflicted death. Among the many reversals of fortune, the theme of youth and age appears several times. The older man asserts his right by virtue of age but is eventually put down and destroyed. Two pairs of major characters, on each side of the struggle, engage in this argument. When the Triumvirate meet to take action after the assassination and the flight of the conspirators from Rome, Antony asserts his superior age over Octavius as they discuss the sufficiency of Lepidus to be of their number:

> Octavius, I have seen more years than you,
> And though we lay these honours on this man
> To ease ourselves of divers slanderous loads,
> He shall but bear them as the ass bears gold. . .
> (IV.i.18-20)[2]

As a matter of history, Octavius (b.63 B.C.) was considerably younger than Antony (b. 83 B.C.), who has already shown his attitude by telling his messenger to 'discourse/To young Octavius of the state of things' (III.i.296-7). Plutarch relates how Antony sneered at Octavius for questioning him about Caesar's will and 'at the first made no reckoning of him, because he was very young, and said, he lacked wit and good friends to advise him, if he looked to take such a charge in hand, as to undertake to be Caesar's heir'. He notes also that when the Triumvirate became unpopular, Antony bore most of the blame, because he was older than Caesar, and had greater authority than Lepidus (166, 170).[3] The youthfulness of Octavius is contemptuously mentioned by his enemies before the final battle:

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Octavius. I was not born to die on Brutus' sword.
Brutus. O, if thou wert the noblest of thy strain,
Young man, thou couldst not die more honourable
Cassius. A peevish schoolboy, worthless of such honour
(V.i. 58-61)

Shakespeare's audience would have been well-acquainted with the subsequent history, which was later dramatised in *Antony and Cleopatra*, that Antony would quarrel with Octavius, suffer death and defeat leaving his rival as sole ruler and first Roman emperor. The coming conflict in which the older man was the loser is adumbrated at Philippi when Octavius quietly puts down Antony for misjudgement:

Now, Antony, our hopes are answered.
You said the enemy would not come down,
But keep the hills and upper regions:
It proves not so; their battles are at hand.
(V.i.1-4)

Although Antony defends his opinion by saying that the tactic is only a diversion, young Octavius follows up his advantage by asserting his right to command:

Antony. Octavius, lead your battle softly on
Upon the left hand of the even field.
Octavius. Upon the right hand, I; keep thou the left
Antony. Why do you cross me in this exigent?
Octavius I do not cross you, but I will do so.
(ibid. 16-20)

Historically, this dispute was between Brutus and Cassius. According to Plutarch, 'Brutus prayed Cassius he might have the leading of the right wing, the which men thought was far meeter for Cassius, both because he was the elder man, and also for that he had the better experience. But yet Cassius gave it him' (140).

Although Shakespeare transfers this particular disagreement to the other side, the assertion of age and experience is made when tension arises between Brutus and Cassius during the quarrel in the tent scene at Sardis. Throughout the play the choleric and jealous Cassius con-

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tinually yields to Brutus: over the question of whether Antony should be killed with Caesar, whether Cicero should join the conspiracy, whether Antony should give a funeral oration, and eventually over the fatal decision to give battle at Philippi. Brutus, invariably wrong in his judgement, was younger than Cassius. Plutarch tells how Brutus generally showed consideration to Cassius, 'both because he was the elder man, as also for that he was sickly of body' (129). In the tent scene, Brutus angers Cassius by his admittedly priggish rebukes about bribery and appeals to the nobility of their compact, concluding, 'I'd rather be a dog and bay the moon/Than such a Roman'. Cassius flies back at him:

> Brutus, bay not me
> I'll not endure it. You forget yourself
> To hedge me in. I am a soldier, I,
> Older in practice, abler than yourself
> To make conditions.
>
> (IV.ii.83-6)

Brutus twists the claim to 'You say you are a better soldier', drawing the response:

> You wrong me every way, you wrong me, Brutus.
> I said an elder soldier, not a better.
> Did I say better?
>
> (ibid. 111-13)

Here again, the older man submits or is overruled at every point, until both he and Brutus die when defeat becomes inevitable.

In the same scene, after the quarrel has been resolved, there is a significant brief interlude. A Poet forces his way into the tent and rebukes both Brutus and Cassius for disputing with one another:

> For shame, generals, what do you mean?
> Love and be friends, as such two men should be,
> For I have seen more years, I'm sure, than ye.
>
> (IV.ii.184-86)

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Shakespeare took this incident from Plutarch, who gives the intervention to one Phaonius, who affected the role and plainness of a Cynic philosopher. His rebuke to the generals is taken from the words of the aged Nestor to the quarrelling Agamemnon and Achilles in Homer's *Iliad* (Bk.I, 1. 259), rendered by Plutarch as:

> My lords, I pray you hearken both to me,
> For I have seene moe yeares than suchie three.
> (135)

Shakespeare creates his own version, which verbally echoes the rebuke of Antony to Octavius. Dramatically the episode is useful in relieving the tension following the quarrel, both for the audience and in character for Brutus and Cassius. No doubt the spectacle of a slightly drunken poet being hustled off the stage was also welcome comic relief for the groundlings. Significantly, Shakespeare changes the character from a regular companion of the generals, who is subsequently allowed to join them at dinner, to an anonymous figure whose warning is unheeded and who is unceremoniously dismissed. Once again, the claim to wisdom through superior age is fruitless. Some critics regard this episode as an afterthought by Shakespeare; if this is so it suggests that he was pleased to find in his source a further example of elder wisdom being slighted by younger men.

A fourth assertion of greater age is made metaphorically by Caesar when, on the morning of the assassination, the augurers find the woeful omen that the sacrificial animal has no heart:

> The gods do this in shame of cowardice.
> Caesar should be a beast without a heart
> If he should stay at home today for fear.
> No, Caesar shall not. Danger knows full well
> That Caesar is more dangerous than he.
> We are two lions littered in a day
> And I the elder and more terrible.
> And Caesar shall go forth.
> (II.ii.41-8)

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Here again, to be earlier born gives no protection and Caesar goes to his death, defying the supernatural warnings of the Soothsayer and augurers, and the rational advice of Artemidorus. Danger, poetically invoked as his younger twin, has the mastery of him.

These specific references to superseded age are supported by much else in the play. In the first scene the audience is immediately reminded of how Caesar had displaced Pompey, four years his senior in age, and his predecessor in power and favour. The text has frequent references to ancestry and tradition, usually set aside or ignored by the present. Calphurnia is to be touched by Antony in the Lupercal running:

> for our elders say
> The barren, touched in this holy chase,
> Shake off their sterile curse.
>
> (I.ii.9-11)

But soon Caesar will be dead and traditional wisdom will never in this case be proved. Cassius laments to Casca that the wisdom of their noble ancestors has died with them and no longer prevails in Rome:

> for Romans now
> Have thews and limbs like to their ancestors.
> But woe the while! our fathers' minds are dead,
> And we are governed with our mothers' spirits:
> Our yoke and sufferance show us womanish.
>
> (I.iii.79-83)

Metellus Cimber supports Cassius' suggestion of including Cicero in the conspiracy by a reminder of his advanced years (Cicero was in fact sixty-two, and older than Caesar or any of the conspirators):

> O, let us have him, for his silver hairs
> Will purchase us a good opinion,
> And buy men's voices to commend our deeds.
> It shall be said his judgement ruled our hands.
> Our youths and wildness shall no whit appear,
> But all be buried in his gravity.
>
> (II.i.143-8)

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Cassius immediately gives way to the objection raised by Brutus. Thus rejected, the venerable Cicero disappears from the play and later we learn that 'Cicero is dead, / And that by order of proscription' (IV.ii.229-30). Eventually, Cassius is fighting at Phillipi on his birthday. As he begins another year, his age and experience do not avail him and he finds himself in the same position as Pompey, once a man of power and now superseded:

> This is my birthday; as this very day
> Was Cassius born. Give me thy hand, Messala
> Be thou my witness that, against my will,
> As Pompey was, I am compelled to set
> Upon one battle all our liberties.
>
> (V.i.71-5)

The death of Cassius is seen by Titinius as indeed the end of the old Roman Republic and the start of a new regime:

> Cassius is no more. O setting sun,
> As in thy red rays thou dost sink to night,
> So in his red blood Cassius' day is set.
> The sun of Rome is set. Our day is gone.
>
> (V.iii.60-3)

The theme of greater age claiming superiority and continually being overthrown by the younger is a satisfying dramatic theme in a play which deals with the shifts of power at a time when the whole structure of Roman government was in process of change. It has been well said that in this play Shakespeare gives us 'an imaginative awareness of the unique greatness of Roman power, even in crisis, and of what it must have been like to be at the vortex of that power and help to exercise it'.[5] He uses the contrast of youth and age also to present character and motivation on a sound psychological basis. We may respect the judgement of the old and wise, but we also know how irritating is the assumption of authority by one not very much older than oneself. Every spectator and reader from the first performance until now will have had some sympathy with Octavius and Brutus on this count. Though the development of this motif needs

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no more than dramatic justification, it may also have reference to the political situation in England at the time when Shakespeare was writing.

The date of *Julius Caesar* is generally accepted to be 1599. On 21 September that year the Swiss visitor Thomas Platter records seeing it 'very pleasingly performed', and other evidence supports this reference. It is equally certain that 1599 was the year of *Henry V* and that both plays were among the first to be played at the new Globe Theatre - the 'straw-thatched house . . . over the water' to which Platter refers. The Chorus to the fifth act of *Henry V* pays a fulsome compliment to Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, whose return from his campaign in Ireland was expected:

> Were now the General of our gracious Empress -
> As in good time he may - from Ireland coming,
> Bringing rebellion broached on his sword,
> How many would the peaceful city quit
> To welcome him!

On 28 September, seven days after Platter's visit to the Globe, Essex returned suddenly and against the Queen's order, bursting precipitantly into the Court at Nonsuch in Surrey. The link between Shakespeare and the Essex faction is well known. One of the most prominent followers of Essex was Thomas Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, the dedicatee of Shakespeare's two long narrative poems, and by tradition his generous benefactor. Essex was an enemy of the Brooke family, one of whom was Robert Cecil's brother-in-law, who are thought to have objected to Shakespeare's first naming of Falstaff as Oldcastle, an ancestor on their mother's side. It has also been suggested, though with less support, that *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was written for the marriage of Essex to Frances Sidney in 1590. Some commentators have found hints of Essex in various Shakespearean characters. For years the Earl of Essex and his supporters had been at odds with the ruling Court party, led by the Cecils.

This was a conflict between older and younger men as well as a disagreement over policy. The Queen was born in 1533, the older Cecil, William Lord Burgleigh, in 1520.

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The latter had died in 1598, a year before *Julius Caesar* was first performed and his influence had passed to has son Robert. Essex was born in 1566, Southampton in 1573. They made an alliance with the Bacon brothers, Anthony (b.1558) and Francis (b. 1561). The Queen was an old woman by the standards of her time, and was clearly ailing. With no direct heir, the question of succession was in all minds. Essex and others believed that it was time for Elizabeth to abdicate and name her successor, who could accede peacefully without the dreaded power vacuum which lingered in English folk memory from the fifteenth-century dynastic struggles of the Wars of the Roses. Essex favoured James VI of Scotland (b. 1566), who in fact eventually succeeded on the Queen's death in 1603.

When Essex returned from Ireland without the Queen's permission he fell into disfavour but regained his position. In January 1601, he could no longer control his impatience. With a few followers he attempted to seize power, but his brief rebellion failed to gain the hoped-for support in the City of London and led to his summary trial and execution. Southampton was sentenced to death but pardoned and imprisoned for a time. On the day before the rising, the Lord Chamberlain's Men performed Shakespeare's *Richard II* at the Globe, persuaded by a payment of forty shillings from Sir Gelly Meyrick, a member of the Essex conspiracy.[6] It says much for their official favour and reputation that they escaped the subsequent inquiry without penalty, but this link between the theatre and public affairs was one of many such significant correspondences to which recent criticism has given attention. When *Richard II* was printed in the Quarto of 1597, the deposition scene (IV.i) was omitted, and was not included until after the death of Elizabeth and the accession of James I.

Attempts to find traits of Essex in the character of Brutus can be pushed too far, and Elizabeth was by no means an analogue of Julius Caesar. Certainly he was trusted by the Queen as Brutus was by Caesar, and the eventual rebellion seemed as much a personal betrayal as an act of treason. Essex was ambitious for power and headstrong in his decisions; to his admirers he no doubt

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appeared more attractive than he does to the judgement of history. Yet it may be that in this play Shakespeare was obliquely commenting on the current political situation. Age and tradition continually assert their privilege and are continually put down by new events and younger men. Shakespeare's Roman plays have always been particularly open to the interpretation of contemporary politics.[7] The Elizabethans were quick to find analogies between their own situation and that of the ancient Rome which dominated their formal education. The age/youth motif in *Julius Caesar* is an interesting feature in itself, and it may offer further evidence of the connection between the Essex faction and the company to which Shakespeare belonged.

Yet in this play, as elsewhere, Shakespeare by no means shows himself as a proponent of radical change. The murder of Caesar, whether it was mean envy or the removal of a tyrant, leads to the ills of doubtful succession, divided loyalties and civil war. These were things which he, in common with his contemporaries, greatly feared. The history plays had already given abundant examples of the consequence of deposition and seized power, from the killing of Richard II to the Wars of the Roses depicted in *Richard III*. Despite the attempts of some critics to equate him with a specific political ideology, Shakespeare's opinions cannot be thus identified. He took as broad a view of affairs of state as he did of the rest of human life, and in *Julius Caesar* he offered not a political manifesto but a dramatic statement of power and conflict. It is well said that 'For three centuries *Julius Caesar* has inevitably reflected political assumptions. Still, Shakespeare himself takes no sides, or all sides'.[8]

Yet the era of change when the Roman Republic was coming to an end would be partly replicated in the era which saw the closing of the Tudor dynasty and the emergence of the new struggle which was to culminate in the Civil War of 1642. 'The Elizabethans . . . delighted in historical parallels, and many of them would be prepared to bring to a Roman play an eye not less penetrating than that which they carried to Whitehall.'[9] In depicting the fate of Brutus and Cassius, Shakespeare may have felt prophetic concern for the Essex

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faction, especially for his patron Southampton. Whether or not he had Essex in his mind, he offered to the discerning members of his audience matter for reflection on the challenge of a new generation to those who relied on seniority and tradition for the survival of a structure which was already near its end. Yet the enduring sense of the play is perhaps the Renaissance theme of Mutability and continual change. Caesar is destroyed by the 'new men' but Burtus and Cassius fall in their turn, to be replaced by the Triumvirate of which the youngest member, Octavius, will ultimately rule alone.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1]Chaucer, *The Monk's Tale*, 1.716; John Stow, *Chronicle* (1580); for further references see Arthur Humphreys, *Julius Caesar* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1984), p.38.

[2]Shakespearean quotations throughout are referenced to *The Complete Oxford Shakespeare* (Oxford: OUP, 1987).

[3]Figures in parentheses after quotations from North's Plutarch refer to pages in W W. Skeat, *Shakespeare's Plutarch* (London: Macmillan, 1875).

[4]The bibliographical and typographical evidence for the later addition of this passage is adduced by B. Stirling, 'Julius Caesar in revision' (*Shakespeare Quarterly* 13, 1962) pp. 188-205, and F.Bowers, 'The Copy for Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*' (*South Atlantic Bulletin* 43, 1978) pp. 23-36.

[5]P Ure ed., Introduction to *Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: a Casebook* (London Macmillan, 1969) p. 13

[6]The documents relevant to this affair are reprinted in E.K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: a Study of Facts and Problems* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1930) vol.2, pp. 323-6.

[7]See T Spencer, 'Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Romans' *Shakespeare Survey* vol.10 (Cambridge: CUP, 1957) pp. 27-38; A. Humphreys ed., *Julius Caesar* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984) pp. 48-72.

[8]Humphreys, op.cit. p.71.

[9]J I M Stewart, 'Character and Motif in *Julius Caesar*' in P Ure, op.cit p 119

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Meena Sodhi

COLERIDGE ON SHAKESPEAREAN CHARACTERS - AN APPRAISAL

Coleridge's Shapespearean criticism can be counted among the chief glories of English criticism. Before Coleridge arrived on the scene, the neoclassical critics of drama were almost unanimous in their charges against Shakespeare. "He wanted art", said Ben Jonson to Drummond. The critics of the Restoration period and eighteenth century, under the influence of Thomas Rymer, attacked Shakespeare for his violation of the unities of time and place and also of action; for his mingling of tragic and comic scenes. In spite of these charges, the worshippers of the rule could not but feel his profound impact on the stage. Therefore, it can be concluded, as Raysor observes, that Shakespeare triumphed over other dramatists inspite of his faults. He had the power of natural genius which compensated for the lack of conscious art. And at that time also "judgement was found in Shakespeare's delineation of character, a power which has never been doubted at any time."[1]

The importance of neo-classical criticism started declining after 1762 and with it the value of the three unities in drama depreciated considerably. The critics' interest in Shakespeare's plots suffered a decline and importance was given to character analysis. The Shakespearean characters began to be taken as historical beings, with a past of their own. Hazlitt, in his preface to the *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays*, criticised Dr. Johnson for giving more importance to the idea of generality. Coleridge did not treat the Shakespearean characters in isolation or as imitation of individual psyche. According to him Shakespeare created his characters with detachment and so we find no sort of 'ventriloquism' in his plays. The term ' ventriloquism' is used by Coleridge to describe the lack of sufficient detachment in a dramatist from his creations. "to denote the absence of what T.S. Eliot once called the 'third voice of poetry.'"[2] A dramatist who creates such characters as speak the voice of the poet is a ventriloquist and Shakespeare was not one. Shakespeare created characters who are independent of him; Coleridge feels that all the Shakespearean characters have a life of their own and are distinguished from one another by having their own lives and their own voices. "That is why Shakespeare

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seems to be characterless."[3]

Barbara Hardy[4] and Badawi have argued that Coleridge's account of character was directed by his sense of imaginative form. Badawi insists that "it is high time indeed the prejudiced and largely misinformed opinion of Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism which has become prevalent since the reaction against romanticism early in this century, was reconsidered."[5] David Ellis and Howard Mills say that "despite the work of Barbara Hardy and Badawi, Coleridge is still commonly regarded as first and foremost a character critic."[6]

Regarding Coleridge's analysis of the characters of Shakespeare, J.R. De J. Jackson says that Coleridge had been deeply affected by the Shakespearean characters which appeared to convey to him the idea of universality and truth; at the same time the characters did not reveal much of the dramatist's personality.[7] For Coleridge Shakespeare's characters are 'ideal realities' and he asserts that Shakespeare "studied mankind in the *idea* of the human race; and (that) he followed out that Idea into all its varieties, by a *Method* which never failed to guide his steps aright."[8]

Coleridge considers the characters of Shakespeare to be the embodiments of the Idea, "the individual form, in which the truth is clothed."[9] He explains his conviction by saying that the Shakespearean characters act and speak in a different way from the real people, but still they convey an appropriateness. Coleridge wrote extensively on Hamlet for thirty years or more, and he was constantly developing or changing his thoughts. His writings are found in marginalia and other notes; sequences of notes in varying degrees of continuity and formality; more elaborate outlines for lectures; as well as the "Treatise on Method" which centres on *Hamlet*. Thus Hamlet's character caught Coleridge' attention more fully than any other tragic hero. He felt that he had something of Hamlet in himself, " I have a smack of Hamlet."[10] The character of Hamlet was well fitted to become a favourite with the romantic critics. Mackenzie had already anticipated Coleridge in his stress on emotion and moral scruples. Richardson had felt the influence of Mackenzie and had analysed Hamlet in a slightly different way. In Germany, Goethe had given a brilliant exposition of Mackenzie's thesis, which obscured Mackenzie's priority. Schlegel and Coleridge independently developed their own theories and were followed by Hazlitt, Campbell and many others. Thus the number of critics involved is a measure of their sympathy with the "new Hamlet."

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Needless to say that the most influential piece of Shakespearean criticism is Coleridge's analysis of Hamlet. He asserts that he had conceived his interpretation as early as 1798. Henry Crabb Robinson supports this assertion and records Coleridge's interpretation as developed in conversation on 23 December 1810, while Schlegel's Shakespearean lectures were published in 1811.

J.R. de J. Jackson feels that "Coleridge set great store by his criticism of *Hamlet*. He was jealous of his claims to originality partly because he realized that he owed much of his critical reputation to his analysis of this character, and partly because it coincided so remarkably with his analysis of himself."[11] Coleridge's Hamlet was his own creation and for this reason he did not wish to share the credit for him even with the German critics. Therefore, his famous remark " I have a smack of Hamlet myself, if I may say so", makes one understand his resentment on the charges of plagiarism.

Coleridge sees the individual character as the product of the modifying imagination. He sees the shape of the play as a hierarchical pattern of character in which psychological equality is impossible. His notes and lectures on Shakespeare illustrate this on every page. His brief analysis of the first scene in *Hamlet* appears in greater detail in *Marginalia* than in any of his lectures. Barbara Hardy feels that the *Notes* give a much fuller formal analysis. In the *Notes* Coleridge takes into consideration the dramatic situation : words, scenes, events, dramatis personae. He sees character as part of the structure, not as its psychological content. He observes that it is the dramatic function which directs even greatly individualised character : "In any direct form to have kept Hamlet's love for Ophelia before the audience would have made a breach in the unity of the interest: but yet to the thoughtful reader it is suggested by his spite to poor Polonius."[12]

Raysor, David Ellis and Howard Mills feel that Hamlet has been romanticised by Coleridge. Raysor argues that as Coleridge's actual historical knowledge was not detailed, he did not understand the contemporary literary analogies to Hamlet's refusal to kill the king because he was praying and was thus safe from damnation. Coleridge did not appreciate the suggestion that Hamlet's voyage to England might have been introduced by Shakespeare mainly because of its presence in the source, which in the semi-historical

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plot, might be of great importance. Thus Coleridge interpreted both these incidents as proofs of Hamlet's unwillingness to act.

According to Bradley, Hamlet delays because he thinks too much, whose native hue of resolution is sicklied over with the pale cast of thought. Ellis and Mills feel that "Bradley's diagnosis was so narrowed down to 'excess of thought' that he shared Dowden's objection that it 'neglects the emotional side of Hamlet's character . . . If it is true therefore, to say that Coleridge 'romanticizes' Hamlet, it is true here only in the sense that he relates the character to a major concern of his own day."[13]

If for Coleridge Hamlet is not a man who 'thinks too much', he is neither simply one who acts too little. It is because for Coleridge the achievement of a balance between the real and the imaginary is a *moral* necessity. The play's structure is such that the more highly one thinks of Hamlet, the less one is tempted to think of Claudius and Polonius. And yet Coleridge defends both Claudius and Polonius as well.

Coleridge's psychological genius is also evident in the analysis of Macbeth's character where he discusses the origin of Macbeth's guilt. "But how truly Shakespearean is the opening of Macbeth's character given in the *unpossessedness of* Banquo's mind, wholly present to the present object - an unsullied, unscarified mirror; and (it is) in strict truth of nature that he, and not Macbeth himself, directs our notice to the effect produced in Macbeth's mind, rendered *temptable* by previous dalliance of the fancy with ambitious thoughts."[15]

Coleridge points out an instance of this self-temptation in the disturbance of Macbeth at the election of the prince of Cumberland; but his conscience alarms him and he meditates to remove this hindrance, as he exclaims, 'stars: hide your fires.' Very skilfully he evades his conscience before he commits the crime ; but after the crime he expresses his helplessness. Coleridge says that morally Macbeth is selfish ; and if he could have everything he wanted, he would rather have it innocently.

Lady Macbeth, according to Coleridge, is a woman with visionary and day-dreaming mind; her eyes are fixed on her ambition; but her conscience was continually smarting within her - and she tries to smother its voice by appealing to the spiritual agency. The woman in her is not dead -- even when she alludes to 'plucking her nipple from the boneless gums of her infant'. Had she

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regarded this with savage indifference, there would have been no force in her appeal to Macbeth; but her very allusion to it, and her purpose in this allusion (to remind Macbeth of his promise to undertake the plot against Duncan), shows that she considered no tie so tender as that which connected her with her babe. Another trait in her character, which Coleridge points out, is the faltering of her resolution, while standing over Duncan in his sleep: "Had he not resembled my father as he slept, I had done it." Raysor feels that probably Coleridge is at his best while discussing Lady Macbeth's character. Coleridge says that there is "entire absence of comedy nay even of irony and philosophic contemplation in *Macbeth*"[16] because it is wholly tragic.

Coleridge's criticism of *Othello* is based on the paradox that the hero is not a jealous character. He cannot be understood only from *Marginalia* and has to be understood from *Table Talk*. "There is no predisposition to suspicion, which I take to be an essential term in the definition of the word. Desdemona very truly told Emilia that he was not jealous, that is, of a jealous habit, and he says so truly of himself."[17] This criticism is valuable since it is just the opposite of what Schlegel and other critics were saying; mainly that *Othello* had in him a predisposition to jealousy. These critics find Iago's evidence unconvincing; but to Coleridge it is sufficient to convince a man who is not naturally jealous. Such a man takes it as the 'general idea', just as an audience does under the spell of dramatic illusion. Because Coleridge feels that Othello is not a jealous man, he has difficulty in describing the agony of his soul. He calls it moral indignation and offended honour. Coleridge's analysis of Othello's character is one of his best achievements in psychological analysis.

According to Coleridge, jealousy is the main passion portrayed in *The Winter's Tale* and he feels that Shakespeare's description of jealousy is mainly philosophical. "The mind that once indulges this passion has a predisposition, a vicious weakness, by which it kindles a fire from every spark . . . [18] This he shows in the conduct of Leontes, who seized upon occurrences of which he himself was the cause, and when speaking of Hermione, combined his anger with low images and cruelty. Coleridge contrasts this character with that of Othello, who, according to him, was noble, generous, open-hearted, unsuspicious and unsuspecting. Othello, when confronted with the handkerchief as evidence of his wife's guilt, utters her praise. Coleridge did not like the idea of making

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Othello a negro; he was a gallant Moor, of royal blood. And such a person was confronted by an accomplished and artful villain who was victorious in poisoning his mind.

King Lear offered no scope for a psychological discussion. In 1819 Coleridge wrote, " I have learnt, what I might easily have anticipated, that *Lear* of Shakespeare is not a good subject for a whole lecture, in *my* style." (II, 263) In fact, all the notes on *King Lear* are concerned with formal rather than psychological relations of characters. Coleridge opens his discussion with, "Lear combines length with rapidity, like the hurricane and the whirlpool, absorbing while it advances. It begins as a stormy day in summer, with brightness; but that brightness is lurid and anticipates the tempest." (I, 15) "Old age, like infancy, is itself a character. In Lear the natural imperfections increased by life-long habits of being promptly obeyed. The relations of others to him, of wondrous fidelity and frightful ingratitude, sufficiently distinguish him. Thus he is the open and ample play-room of nature's passions." (I,62)

In the play Lear is the 'persona patiens', Edmund the 'agent and prime mover.' Edgar's madness is there as a contrast to Lear's: and Coleridge, as a psychologist, observes the nature of the difference. Edmund's motivated evil is compared with the motive-less evil of Goneril and Regan: Oswald, the evil steward balances Kent, the good steward. In every case, he places the psychological effect in a dramatic context : the false madness brings out the essential quality of Lear's 'eddy without progression', while lessening its shock. Edmund's motive alleviates the horror of the lack of motive in the women.

Shakespeare accommodated himself to the taste of the time and introduced Fools and Clowns in his serious plays to satisfy the demands of the Elizabethan audience. But even then he does not sacrifice the artistic consideration. "The Fool", in *Lear*, Coleridge says, "(is) no comic buffoon to make the groundlings laugh, no forced condescension of Shakespeare's genius to the taste of his audience. Accordingly, he is *prepared* for -- brought into living connection with the pathos of the play, with the sufferings . . . The Fool (is) as wonderful a creation as the Caliban - an inspired idiot." (I,63) Then again Coleridge says, "The fool's conclusion of this Act (of Act I, v) by a grotesque prattling seems to indicate the dislocation of feeling that has begun and is to be continued." (I, 64).

Shakespeare's genius and judgment taught him to use his

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characters with a profound effect, when aggravating the agony of his distressing scenes. This is especially seen in *King Lear* where the Fool enhances the tragedy in some of the most painful situations. In such scenes the old King, in the fury of his despair, complains about the ingratitude of his daughters. Immediately afterwards the Fool interposes to heighten the passion of the scene. Coleridge feels that Shakespeare's comic constantly reacted on his tragic characters. Giving an example again from *King Lear*, he says that the King wandering in the tempest, had all his sad feelings increased by the constant overflow of the wild wit of the Fool. The latter is seen in his dramatic function, and he is also seen as a character endowed with individuality - like Kent - for the performance of this function.

Coleridge's lyrical interest made him devote his attention to *Romeo and Juliet*; but he recognised the superiority of *Antony and Cleopatra* also. Coleridge's comments on the characters in *Romeo and Juliet* are formal comments - "A unity of feeling pervades the whole of his plays. In *Romeo and Juliet* all is youth and spring - it is youth with its follies, its virtues, its precipitancies; it is spring with its odours, flowers, and transiency; - the same feeling commences, goes through, and ends the play. The old men, the Capulets and Montagues, are not common old men; they have an eagerness, a hastiness, a precipitancy - the effect of spring." (II, 130)

Coleridge divides the characters of the play into two groups one is the class of passionate love, drawn beautifully, but the persons are not individualised. Tybalt belongs to such a class - "a man abandoned to his passions - with all the pride of family, only because he thought it belonged to him as a member of that family." (II,96)

Coleridge feels that Shakespeare never takes pains "to make his characters win your esteem, but leaves it to the general command of the passions, and to poetic justice. It is most beautiful to observe, in *Romeo and Juliet*, that the characters principally engaged in the incidents are preserved innocent from all that could lower them in our opinion . . . . " (II,97).

Coleridge explains the second group of characters by giving reference to a Hamlet-like character, which the poet should introduce into every play. Coleridge feels that Shakespeare avails himself of his psychological genius to develop the human heart - and here he has an advantage over all other dramatists.

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Mercuito is one of Shakespeare's typical and favourite characters. He has the elements of a poet. His death in the play brings about the whole catastrophe of the tragedy.

Coleridge deals at length with the character of the Nurse. She is the representative of all the qualities and peculiarities that can belong to a nurse. "Thus, in the Nurse you have all the garrulity of old age, and all its fondness; for the affection of old-age is one of the greatest consolations of humanity. I have often thought what a world this would be without children, and what an inhuman world without the aged." (II, 99)

In the Nurse, we have the arrogance of ignorance, with the pride of meanness due to her connection with a great family. She has her vices too, which arise from her grossness. She assists Romeo, but later she favours Paris with the same admiration which she had for Romeo. "How wonderfully are these low peculiarities constrasted with a young and pure mind, educated under different circumstances." (II,100)

The characters in *The Tempest* appear with organic regularity. The first scene, meant to be lively commencement of the story, introduces the Boatswain and Gonzalo. And in the next scene Shakespeare brings Prospero and Miranda; Miranda possesses all the delicacy of innocence and the ideal beauties which could be imagined by the greatest poet of any age of a country ; yet, at the same time, she has all the powers of her mind unweakened by the struggles of life. (II, 132, 140) She has all the advantages of education, communicated by a wise and affectionate father.

Coleridge notices " a fine touch of Shakespeare's knowledge of human nature, and generally of the great laws of the human mind - I mean Miranda's infant remembrance." (II, 133-34)

Coleridge calls Ariel " a wondrous creation. If a doubt could ever be entertained whether Shakespeare was a great poet, acting upon laws arising out of his own nature, and not without law, as has sometime been idly asserted, the doubts must be removed by the character of Ariel. The very first words uttered by this being introduce the spirit, not as an angel, above man; not a gnome, or a fiend, below man; but while the poet gives him the faculties and the advantages of reason, he divests him of all moral character, not positively, it is true, but negatively." (II, 136) Ariel is made up of all that delights the mind from the external appearances.

Ariel's first speech is characteristic of him. Prospero has no

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doubt freed him, but he is still bound to obey the commands of Prospero. And so he is discontented. Such a "bondage is unnatural to him, yet we see that it is delightful for him to be so employed." (II, 137) Coleridge further says that - "It is worthy of remark that Miranda is never directly brought into comparison with Ariel, lest the natural and human of the one and the supernatural of the other should tend to neutralise each other. " (I, 134).

Coleridge feels that the character of Caliban is "wonderfully conceived; he is a sort of creature of the earth, as Ariel is a sort of creature of the air." (II, 137) This remark of Coleridge indicates an influence of Schlegel, though a coincidence is more likely. Coleridge feels that Caliban has the qualities of the brute - he has mere understanding without moral reason; and secondly he does not possess the instincts of absolute animals. Yet he is a noble being and Shakespeare has raised him above contempt. The images he uses "are drawn from nature, and are highly poetical; they fit in with the images of Ariel. Caliban gives us images from the earth. Ariel images from the air." (II, 138)

Shakespeare introduces Miranda and Ferdinand in a beautiful way. And Coleridge's discussion of the episode, Barbara Hardy observes, is "far from mere psychological criticism as it is from closet criticism."[19]

The title role in *Richard II* gave Coleridge an opportunity to present one of the finest character-studies. It is for this reason that he neglects the Falstaff plays among the histories. Coleridge feels that in order to understand the history plays, it is very essential to understand the difference between the epic and the tragic muse. The first one is under the control of destiny, while the second is based upon the free-will of man. Shakespeare, he feels, blended the epic with the tragic. Shakespeare's objective in writing the historical plays was to make his countrymen more patriotic, and this is especially true of *Richard II*, where the popularity of the play is "owing, in a great measure, to the masterly delineation of the principal character." (II, 142) He is represented as a man with courage, which is evident at the time of his assassination. He has a foresight which he exhibits throughout the play. Yet he is "weak, variable, and womanish, and possesses feelings, which, amiable in a female, are misplaced in man, and altogether unfit for a king." (II, 145).

At the end of the first act, a new light is thrown on Richard's

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character. "Until now he has appeared in all the beauty of royalty; but here, as soon as he is left to himself, the inherent weakness of character is immediately shown. It is a weakness, however, of a peculiar kind, not arising from want of personal courage, or any specific defect of faculty, but rather an intellectual femininness which feels a necessity of ever leaning on the breast of others, and of reclining on those who are all the while known to be inferiors." (I, 135). Consequently, it is one of Richard's vices, which leads to other vices like the tendency to concealment, and his cunning. Coleridge feels that Shakespeare has represented this character very peculiarly; he is not amiable with his counterbalancing faults, "relying on Richard's disproportionate sufferings and gradually emergent good qualities for our sympathy; and this was possible, because his faults are not positive vices, but spring from defect of character." (I. 135)

It is true that he may be overwhelmed by his earliest misfortunes; but it has not subdued him, and his spirit is reanimated by the first glimpse of returning sunshine. Throughout the whole play he exhibits the peculiarities of his mind - he catches at new hope, searches for new friends, is disappointed, saddened and later makes a merit of his resignation. He is a picture of rapid transitions - from the highest insolence to the lowest humility; from hope to despair; from the extravagance of love to the agonies of resentment and from pretended resignation to the bitterest reproaches. "The whole is joined with the utmost richness of thought, and were there an actor capable of representing Richard, the part would delight us more than any other of Shakespeare's masterpieces, -- with, perhaps the exception of King Lear. I know of no character drawn by our great poet with such unequalled skill as that of Richard II." (II, 147).

Henry Bolingbroke appears as the rival of Richard II. He is a courageous and an ambitious man, belonging to the category of Richard III. But here the similarity between the two ends. Richard III is no vulgar tyrant and has always an aim in view. Bolingbroke, from the beginning is an injured man, encouraged by the grievances of his country. He comes home under the pretence of claiming his purpose in the end. In him is seen the struggle of inward determination, without outward show of humility. His first introduction, where he says to nobles who came to meet him, goes thus.

Welcome, my lords. I wot your love pursues

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A banished traitor; all my treasure
Is yet but unfelt thanks . .
(Act II. sc iii)

He is here concealing in pretended disgrace the implacable ambition that haunted him.

By the side of Bolingbroke, York has been presented as an old, weak man who struggles with his sense of duty. He speaks truth, no doubt, but does nothing for the sake of truth - drawing back after he has spoken, and becoming more passive when he ought to be active.

Coleridge feels that as far the characterisation of the whole play is concerned Shakespeare has risen to the peak of his excellence. As in all the histories, here also Shakespeare familiarises the people with the great names of their country and thereby excites steady patriotism.

Coleridge says of Shakespeare :

He was a child of nature, but it was of human nature and of the most important of human nature. In the meanest characters, it was still Shakespeare; it was not the mere Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, or the Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing*, or the blundering constable in *Measure for Measure*, but it was this great and mighty being changing himself into the Nurse or the blundering constable, that gave delight . . . (II. 53-54)

Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth, Othello, Romeo and Juliet The Tempest and *Richard II* were the plays which claimed the special attention of Coleridge. His psychological and aesthetic criticism of these plays together with his essay on Shakespeare's poetry in *Biographia Literaria*, are the peaks of Shakespearean criticism. His "contribution to English Shakespearean criticism is precisely the introduction of a new approach."[20] His concept of Shakespearean characters also shows us the life and principle of each being with organic regularity. He has his weaknesses, no doubt, which include the ignorance of the theatrical conditions and dramatic conventions, prudery, prejudices about comedy. At times he lingers too much on psychological details and spends excessive time in discussing characters as moral examples. Due to his solemn approach to Shakespearean plays, he does not discuss the comedies at all; hence there are no comments on the humourous character of Falstaff. At other times he makes generalised remarks

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that "there is no character in Shakespeare in which envy is portrayed with one solitary exception - Cassius in Julius Caesar". (II. 146) and ignores Iago and other numerous characters in the history plays. Similarly due to his idealization of the Shakespeare woman he declares that in Shakespeare "all the elements of womanhood are holy". He conveniently forgets Lady Macbeth. Goneril and Regan. But "with all his faults Coleridge brought a new approach to Shakespearean drama. an approach which has become a part and parcel of most of the subsequent criticism of Shakespeare."[21] Badawi feels the appropriateness of Eliot's remark that "it is impossible to understand Shakespeare criticism to this day. without a familiar acquaintance with Coleridge's lectures and notes."[22] He seldom considers the dramatic character in isolation. either from the dramatic context of other characters or from full context of the orientation twoards the audience. Undoubtedly he was the first critic to understand a universal mind like that of Shakespeare. Raysor has very rightly remarked that "The greatest of English creative writers received his due tribute from the greatest of English critics."

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G.E. Bentley Jr.

A FIFTH ZOA

Blake's four giant masculine zoas Los, Urizen, Tharmas, and Luvah, are well known, at least to Blake scholars, and their titanic love affairs and raging struggle with one another form the myth of his great epics, particularly of *Vala* or *The Four Zoas* (?1796-?1807), *Milton* (1804-?8), and *Jerusalem* (1804-?20). In each of these, the story concerns at least in part "the torments of Love and Jealousy" (as the sub-title of *Vala* says) of the zoas for their female emanations, as they survey womankind from China to Peru.

Blake's "Four Zoas of Albion, the Four Living Creatures, the Cherubim" (*Jerusalem*, pl. 63, l. 2) have been thought to derive from the "living creatures" of Ezekiel's vision called zoon in the Septuagint. There is some difficulty about this derivation, however, for Blake's zoas are simply human in form, whereas "the four living creatures" who appeared to Ezekiel by Chebar's flood had each of them "four faces, and ... four wings ... and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot (*i.e. cloven*): and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass ... like burning coals of fire .. and out of the fire went forth lightning". Moreover, their four faces were of a man, a lion (on the right), an ox (on the left), and an eagle (evidently in back), and they were surrounded by wheels of eyes and a mighty rushing wind "like the noise of great waters" (Ezekiel ii, I, 4-7, 10, 13, 18, 24). Blake actually depicts Ezekiel's "zoa" somewhat like this (see Plate 2 here), but his own zoas are not so described or depicted.

His own zoas are in their appearance and actions much more simply like men -- though of course men who can expand and contract their all flexible senses, who are less trammelled than we usually are by time and space, and who govern, indeed who are, the universe.

Such a conception is a far cry from Ezekiel or from any poet who has written since Ezekiel's time, and Blake's originality in the creation of his zoas has been praised, exclaimed about, and lamented, since his epics were first read with sympathy.

However, there was another "zoa" in the earth in those days and indeed one likely to have been widely, not to say vulgarly,

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known. And not only is this new zoa displayed at large just when Blake was first using the name zoa, about 1807, but she is a woman -- and not merely a woman but a young, nubile, heroic woman -- and Indian. Indeed, she is both Indian and European.

She appears in *The History of Zoa, the Beautiful Indian* (1801-20). When I saw a copy of the work offered for sale, I knew that here must be the source of Blake's zoas, and I telephoned for it immediately. The book proves to be an undated chapbook printed on paper watermarked 1806 and with a frontispiece (Plate 1 here) designed, engraved, and coloured in a style considerably better than most of its kind. (Unfortunately, the frontispiece represents neither Zoa nor her story but the perils of Lucy Harris, the heroine of the companion tale in the same volume.)

The story of Zoa is narrated by the foster-father of Rodomond, who is sent out as a very young merchant with the East India Company, apparently to the Bombay Presidency. Here Rodomond learns "the Malayan language" (p. 8) so well that he becomes the Company's interpreter and very prosperous, saving #20,000 in six years (p.5). However, he returns to England abruptly and unexpectedly with a strange tale -- this tale.

Though his fluency in the Malayan language, he had been able to detect the (Maratti-speaking) natives (of Maharashtra) in so many frauds that they ceased to be his friend and became his enemies. Assassins hired by his former friends the "banyan" (merchant) capture him, bind him, and store him in a hole (or cavern) in the garden of the banyan until they can return to kill him at a more convenient time. He is traced there by the beautiful Indian maiden Zoa, the daughter of the banyan, and she calls down to him: "Rodomond. . . . my heart is pierced with shame and sorrow, at the cruelty of my father. He is determined to kill you; it is, he thinks, a service he owes his country" (p. 11). She therefore kindly lights a bundle of straw and tosses it down to him so that he can burn his fetters -- and in the process himself, "my shoes and stockings having been burnt off" (p.15) -- and climb up a rope which she provides. They disguise themselves as Negroes (which one might have expected to render them somewhat conspicuous in India) and flee first to Bombay, where he passes Go and collects his #20,000, and then by ship to England.

At first, "she spoke no English" (p. 21), but on the long voyage to England she not only learns the language but she

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> Put on an English habit, which, though altogether new to her, she appeared perfectly easy and genteel in. My friend, who had never before seen her as a woman, was dazzled and transported . . . . He confessed he had never beheld any thing so lovely . . . there is something irresistibly engaging in her whole person . . . .
>
> (*pp.22-23, 28*)

Of course the story ends with the happy couple getting married and living happily ever after.

The last paragraph of the story promises not a sequel to the tale but a preamble to it. Zoa, it turns out, is half-European, with a French mother, and the history of her mother is

> no less interesting than . . . the life of Zoa herself. The various accidents, and at last the severe necessity which compelled her to become the wife of a man (*the banyan*), of a complexion, religion, and manners so different from those of her own country, will, I doubt not, excite the compassion of all who read it. . . . more particulars are related concerning her in the life of her mother, Henrietta de Bellgrave, which is just published, price only Sixpence.[1]

The story of Zoa was apparently a popular one, for *The True History of Zoa* appeared in chapbooks.

(1) with The Shepherdess of Chamouny (London : S. Fisher, 1799);

(2) with The Interesting History of the Shepherdess of Chamouny and with the Affecting Life of Poor Lise and Login (London: S. Fisher, 1801);

(3) ibid (London: S. Fisher, [1804]);

(4) with The Memoirs of Lucy Harris, A Foundling, who, at Sixteen Years of Age, Was Discovered to be Daughter to the Countess of B-- (London: Sabine & Son [?1806]);

(5) with The Affecting History of the Shepherdess of Chamouny [and the History of Mr William Wingfield] (Birmingham [1810]);

(6) with The History of Lisette and Login: A Russian Tale (London: Dean & Munday [?1810]);

(7) with The Wanderer or The Rights of Hospitality (Stourbridge: Heming & Tullis [1815]);

(8) with The Affecting History of the Shepherdess of Chamouny [and the History of Mr William Wingfield] (London: Dean & Munday [c. 1820]);

(9) with The Interesting Story of Obidah and the Hermit,

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Together with the Tale of Ortogrul and Basra (Birmingham [?1820]);
(10) with The Shepherdess of Chamouny (London [?1820]);
(11) With The Hisotry of Lisette and Login (N.Y., 1821);
(12) ibid (N.Y., 1823).
(13) ibid (N.Y., 1828).

And these thirteen chapbook editions are likely to have been circulated very widely from barrows in the streets of London and by chapmen travelling on foot to the remotest parts of the kingdom. The story of Zoa may well have been read, and thrown away, from Land's End to John O'Groat's -- and some of Blake's friends, or their servants, may have known it.

Indeed, it appeared originally in a more genteel form. The stories of both Zoa and her mother Henrieta de Bellgrave apparently originate in the anonymous *Lady's Drawing Room:* Being a Faithful Picture of the Great World . . . Interspers'd with entertaining and affecting Novels (London, 1744), 13-36, 101-174, with a new edition in Dublin in 1746 and a Second Edition in London in 1748.

It is wonderful to discover that not all the zoas were masculine, that the zoas were, or at least one Zoa was, widely known in Blake's time, and that zoas are adaptable to Real Life Romances and not merely to titanic Torments of Love and Jealousy.

But is it likely that Blake knew of *The History of Zoa, the Beautiful Indian* -- or that, if he knew of it, he cared? The answers must be no -- or rather NO! The differences between Zoa, the beautiful Indian daughter of Henrietta de Bellgrave, and the Four Zoas who "stood around the Throne Divine"[2] is the difference between the hired pen and the free imagination, between the writer of pulp romances and genius, between Anon. and William Blake a Mental Prince.

NOTES

[1]p 29 The work referred to is evidently *The True History of Henrietta Bellgrave, A Woman Born to Great Calamities, A Distressed Virgin, Unhappy Wife, and Most Afflicted Mother, Her Intended Voyage with her Parents to the East Indies.* It was apparently first published separately about 1750, and there were editions of London, 1799, ?1804, London: T. Sabin & Son [?1806], ?1820, N.Y. 1821, N.Y., 1823, N.Y. 1828, and Derby, [?1830]

[2]*Milton*, pl. 17, l. 18, pl. 23, l. 76, *Jerusalem* pl. 59, l. 13.

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Chiramel P. Jose

BLAKE'S PUBLISHED "THEORY OF ART" AND HIS PRAXIS

The great artistic achievement of William Blake in poetry, painting and engraving has been a puzzle to his admirers as well as critics. One wonders what school of art or what critical theory could Blake be tethered to. But, when applied to Blake, any such attempt would fail, since Blake himself had convincingly declared that his business was to create a system rather than be enslaved to another man's: "I must create a system or be enslaved by another man's. I will not Reason & Compare: my business is to create." Blake apparently was successful in creating his system. Even a very hostile critic of Blake like Harvey Cox had to admit and applause the subtle mastership of Blake as a painter and poet, at least with reference to Blake's *Illustrations of the Book of Job*. He described those engravings as "the best that have been done in England," and continued to admit: "All in all, the series . . . shows that Blake did not produce only odd, self-hampered, paradoxical works: his essential fable or drama, the thing he had to say as man, poet and artist, does get said, in consummate art throughout."[2]

Recognising Blake as a masterly painter-engraver and one of the greatest poets of prophetic lyrics, one is prompted to agree with Herbert Read's comments. Dwelling on the nineteenth century approach to the tradition of ut pictura poesis, he asserted:

> It is in the nature of romantics to confuse the categories, to make painters poetic and poets painterly. The extreme case is that of the painter-poet, represented, for example, by William Blake, and later by Rossetti. There are some people who decry Blake as a poet, others as a painter, but I feel fairly certain myself that his genius finds equal expression in both mediums. The geometrically impossible has happened: the parallels have met at some infinity of genius.[3]

Confounded by the conspicuously manifest painterliness of Blake's text and the exquisite poetic and prophetic nature of his designs in content, execution and expression, the main-stream of authors and critics have been inclined to present

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Blake as a faithful adherent of the tradition of *ut pictura poesis*, although slightly varied approaches have been made by some Blake scholars.[4]

Blake might have definitely known about the pictorial tradition, or the sister-arts tradition, or the mimetic tradition, or the tradition of *ut pictura poesis* deriving that name from Horace's formulation of what had been suggested by the famous dictum of Simonides of Ceos, viz., "Painting is a dumme poesie, and Poesie is a speaking picture." But a thorough scouring through the complete writings of Blake reveals that the phrase "*ut pictura poesis*" has never been used by Blake in his annotations or critical remarks about art. This calls for our dependence on Blake's works which talk about Arts, all arts inclusive, for arriving at Blake's affinity to or deviation from this tradition, in our attempts to understand the main tenets of Blake's theory of art and thus to enter fully into the experience of those " images of wonder" where one could find "something implied in the work of art which is beyond thought; something lit up for a moment by the imagination which is beyond words."[6].

Blake has expounded his views on "Arts" mainly in his "Annotations to Reynolds". *A Descriptive Catalogue of Pictures*, and *Public Address* . To this, of course, may be added *The Laokoon*, and *A Vision of the Last Judgement* which was an addition in 1810 to the Catalogue of Pictures. Of all these works, Blake himself considered *A Descriptive Catalogue* as his work on Art which was printed and published during his life time. This can be proved by analysing the following internal evidences.

Back in 1921, Geoffrey Keynes had observed that two references made by Blake himself are "sufficiently definite to make it probable that this work [Blake's work on arts] was at any rate written; but if it ever was printed, no copy has yet been discovered, nor does the manuscript appear to have survived."[7] Keynes had made this observation depending on the evidence provided by Blake's letter to George Cumberland on 19 December 1808 and by the advertisement of Blake's Exhibition dated 15 May 1809. Blake had written to Cumberland: "I have, however, the satisfaction to inform you that I have Myself begun to print an

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account of my various Inventions in Art, for which I have procured a Publisher" (K 865). On May 15, 1809 appeared the printed notice advertising the *Exhibition of Paintings in Fresco, Poetical and Historical Inventions* by William Blake, where it is claimed: "The Art (Fresco painting) has been lost: I have recovered it. How this was done, will be told, together with the whole process, in a Work of Art, now in the Press" K 561). In the 1985 rpt. edition of Keynes's *Blake: Complete Writings with Variant Readings* the following note is included : "Nothing further is known of this projected work. [Work on Art which Blake advertised that it was in the press] unless perhaps the reference is to *A Descriptive Catalogue*, printed in 1809" (K 865 n 3).

Let us have a close perusal of the (Advertisement of) *A Descriptive Catalogue of Blake's Exhibition*, printed in 1809. There it is clearly advertised:

> The Descriptive catalogue. Price 2 s. 6 d. containing Mr. B.'s opinions and Determinations on Art, very necessary to be known by Artists and Connoisseurs of all Ranks. Every purchaser of a Catalogue will be entitled, at the time of purchase, to view the Exhibition.
>
> These Original Conceptions on Art, by an Original Artist, are sold only at the Corner of BROAD STREET (K 562).

Beyond doubt, these internal evidences prompt one to view *A Descriptive Catalogue* as the very work on Art about which Blake had written to Cumberland and then referred to in his advertisement on 15 May 1809.

Having thus established *A Descriptive Catalogue* as Blake's published Work on Art, an attempt is made here to delineate the main tenets of this master-painter's code of art as elucidated in the Preface and the descriptions of the 16 pictures included in the Catalogue[6]. After analysing the remarks in *A Descriptive Catalogue*, Blake's further statements about "Arts" in "A Public Address" and in "Annotations to Reynolds" would also be considered in the present study.

The very first, Numbers One and Two of it, including the two pictures of Nelson and Pitt, is a "proof of the power of colours unsullied with oil or with any cloggy vehicle" (K 565). Blake argued that "Oil will not drink or absorb colour enough to stand the test of very little time and of the air" (K

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565). In executing the two pictures of Nelson and Pitt, the artist [Blake],

> having been taken into the ancient republics, monarchies, and patriarchates of Asia, has seen those wonderful originals called in the Sacred Scriptures the Cherubim, which were sculptured and painted on walls of Temples, Towers, Cities, Palaces, and erected in the highly cultivated states of Egypt, Moa, Edom, Aram, among the rivers of Paradise, being originals from which the Greeks and Hetrurians copied Herculese Farnese, Vennus of Medicis, Appolo Belvidere, and all the grand works of ancient art. They were executed in a very superior style to those justly admired copies, being with their accompaniments terrific and grand in the highest degree (K 565).

Blake goes on to acknowledge that he had endeavoured to emulate the grandeur of those seen in vision, "where more is meant than meets the eye", and to apply it to modern heroes, on a smaller scale. All frescos, Blake says, are as highly finished as miniatures or enamels, and they are known to be unchangeable. All the genuine old little pictures, called Cabinet Pictures, are in fresco and not in oil, because regal gold and silver cannot be used with oil.

Blake considered Chaucer as the great poetical observer of men, who in every age is born to record and eternize its acts. Number III, "The Canterbury Pilgrims" is Blake's tribute to the great poet. In the frieze-like procession of this large painting (Tempera 46.4 X 136.5 cm) the pilgrims are posed as a series of archtypes, ranked according to class. They are seen setting out from the Tabarde Inn, Southwark. Behind is a fine atmospheric vista showing Blake's gift for landscape. Speaking about the thinness of Chaucer's Plowman as caused by excessive labour, Blake said, "Visions of these eternal principles or characters of human life appear to poets, in all ages, " and, "The Plowman of Chaucer is Hercules in his supreme eternal state, divested of his spectrous shadow" (K 571). Slightly changing his depiction of Clerk of Oxenford from Chaucer's description, Blake justified his placing the Clerk of Oxenford (the type of philosophical genius) as if under the tuition of the mature poet : " Let the philosopher always be the Servant and Scholar of inspiration and all will be happy" (K 572). Blake sounds harsh against those who separated painting from drawing. He accused them of losing form in "broken

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lines, broken masses, and broken colours" as against his own finding form in unbroken lines, unbroken masses and unbroken colours. A later depiction of this same theme by Thomas Stothard had placed Chaucer's Knight and the Squire among his rabble, because for Stothard, the Squire was a fop. Blake quoted many lines about the Squire and argued that Chaucer's Squire was not at all a fop. Detecting the same folly in Stothard's characterization of Chaucer's people, Blake warned him : "when men cannot read they should not pretend to paint" (K 574). The implicit demand to adhere to the pictorial tradition is manifest in this warning.

Praising the "bold & daring and most masterly conception" of Gray in weaving the "winding sheet of Edward's race . . . that the public have embraced and approved with avidity," Blake observed :

> Poetry consists in these conceptions: and shall Painting be confined to the Sordid drudgery of facsimile representations of merely mortal and perishing substances, and not be as poetry and music are, elevated to its own proper sphere of invention and visionary conception? No, it shall not be so! Painting, as well as poetry and music, exists and exults in immortal thoughts (K 576)

By this, one is reminded of the apparent criticism launched by G.E. Lessing against the excesses of the mimetic or *ut pictura poesis* tradition. In the preface to his *Laokoon* Lessing stated :

> Now they force poetry into the narrower bounds of painting: and again, they propose painting to fill the whole wide sphere of poetry
>
> To counteract this false taste and these ill- informed judgements is the primary object of the pages that follow [9]

Lessing was not at all bent on annihilating the tradition of *ut pictura poesis*. He wanted to fulminate on the excesses and errors of that tradition, and wished to see each art reinstated into its proper realm. He argued that poetry and painting should live contentedly each in its own borders.[10] To painting and poetry Blake adds also music and other art forms. Among them, mutual enrichment is advocated, but never total interdependence. Blake wanted to elevate each of these to its own proper sphere of invention and visionary conception.

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The totally independent existence of these visionary art forms and at the same time their mutually enriching connections - never reaching the level of interdependence - is made manifest by Blake :

If Mr B. s Canterbury Pilgrims had been done by any other power than that of the poet's visionary it would have been as dull as his adversary's. . . . Mr. B. requires the same latitude. and all is well. The Prophets describe what they saw in Vision as real and existing men. whom they saw with their imaginative and immortal organs; the Apostle the same: the clearer the organ the more distinct the object. A Spirit and Vision are not. as the modern philosophy supposes. a cloudy vapour. or a nothing : they are organized and minutely articulated beyond all that the mortal and perishing nature can produce. He who does not imagine in stronger and better light than his perishing mortal eye can see. does not imagine at all. The painter of this work [Blake] asserts that all his imaginations appear to him infinitely more perfect and more minutely organized than anything seen by his mortal eye (K 576-77)

Although painting and poetry are independent. Blake asserts that his Tempera "The Canterbury Pilgrims" is its worth also due to his talisman as a poetic visionary. In Chaucer's poem "more is meant than meets the eye," and this is captured by Blake as a poetic visionary which is immortalised in the form of tempera painting.

Tracing the sacredness of the antiquities of every nation under heaven to and identifying all of them having one language and one religion. the religion of Jesus, the Everlasting Gospel. Blake asserted that even Greek and Roman, Egyptian and Hindoo antiquity "preaches the Gospel of Jesus." In executing "The Ancient Britons". Blake was commanded in vision to model his beautiful Man on Apollo. the Strong Man on Hercules and the Ugly Man on the Dancing Fawn. He knows that his own works cannot be inferior nor superior to the antique models. which too were the gift of God. inspiration and vision :

Poetry as it exists now on earth. in the various remains of ancient author s . Music as it exists in old tunes or melodies. Painting as it exists in the remains of Antiquity and in the works of modern genius. is Inspiration. and cannot be surpassed; it is perfect and eternal. Milton. Shakespeare. Michael Angelo. Rafael. the finest specimens of Ancient Sculpture and Painting and Architecture. Gothic. Grecian.. Hindoo and Egyptian. are the extent of human mind. The human mind cannot go beyond the gift of God. the

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Holy Ghost. To suppose that Art can go beyond the finest specimens of Art that are now in the world, is not knowing what Art is, it is being blind to the gifts of the Spirit (K 579).

Blake includes all art forms as he speaks of Art : poetry, music, painting, sculpture and architecture. Creation of real forms in art resulting from inspiration and imagination has been explained as the true task of the artist.

The next consists of Blake's views on colouring of flesh with his pronouncements against the copiers of nature which are even more strongly expressed in "Public Address". The next four pictures, namely, VI, VII, VIII & IX, are described by Blake as experiment pictures. These pictures as he has explained, having been painted at intervals for experiment on colours, "were the results of temptations and perturbations, labouring to destroy the Imaginative power, by means of that infernal machine called Chiaro Oscuro, in the hands of Venetian and Flemish Demons, . . . (and were included in the exhibition, for) and exhibition and exposure of their vile tricks" (K 582). Blake specially condemns Titian and Correggio, for executing without a model and copying from that memory of nature and of Pictures of the various schools.

In Number X, Blake refers to the statue of Laocoon, who though a priest was represented naked. On this ground Blake justified the false or incorrect costumes given by himself to the Brahmans. Blake wished Numbers XI - XIV were in Fresco on an enlarged scale to decorate the altars of Churches, and to make England, like Italy, respected by honourable men of other countries on account of Art. Only the decision should have been there from the part of the rulers, and then Blake was confident to have them done by himself. In Number XV, Blake stressed the importance of drawing and outline : "If losing and obliterating the outline constitutes a Picture, Mr. B. will never be so foolish as to do one" (K 585).

Explaining that "Fresco Painting is susceptible of higher finishing than Drawing on Paper, or than any other method of Painting" (K 585), he goes on to elucidate the golden rule of art :

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The great and golden rule of art, as well as of life is this : That the more distinct, sharp, and wirey the bounding line, the more perfect the work of art; and the less keen and sharp, the greater is the evidence of weak imitation, plagiarism, and bungling (K 585)

Blake explained that the oak is distinguished from the beech, or horse from the ox, or one face or countenance from another, or honesty from knavery, by the bounding outline and its infinite inflexions and movements. "Leave out this line, and you leave out life itself; all is chaos again, and the line of the Almighty must be drawn out upon it before beast or man can exist" (K 585). Blake pleads hence to talk no more of Correggio, or Rembrandt or any others of those "Plagiaries" [plagarists] of Veince or Flandres for they are but lame imitators of lines drawn by their predecessors, and their works prove themselves contemptible, disarranged imitation, and blundering, misapplied copies. The painting Number XVI, which had been done by Blake some thirty years before the Exhibition, also was included in the exhibition in order to prove that the productions of one's youth and of one's mature age were equal in all essential points.

Although "Public Address" was not printed during the lifetime of Blake , it too contained his ideas on art and artist. In fact, "Public Address" was written as descriptions of Chaucer's characters for Blake's engraving of the same from his own fresco of the subject, which has been discussed above. Blake's contempt for imitation or copying in poetry as well as in painting is reiterated in "Public Address" too.

In his *Notebook called Rosetti Manuscript* Blake wrote

No man of sense can think that an Imitation of the Objects of nature is the Art of Painting, or that such imitation, which anyone may easily perform, is worthy of Notice, much less that such an Art should be the Glory and Pride of a Nation (K 597)

Explaining the statement further, he continued :

A Man sets himself down with Colours & with all the Articles of Painting: he puts a Model before him & he copies that so neat as to make it a deception : now let any man of sense ask himself one Question : Is this Art? Can it be worthy of admiration to anybody of Understanding? Who could not do this ? What man who has eyes and an ordinary share of patience could not do this?

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Is this Art? . . . Countrymen. Countrymen. do not suffer yourself to be disgraced ! (K 597).

This passage of Blake takes one back to the ideas of Plato who removed poetry and painting from his *Republic*. even after asserting the similarities between a poet and a painter. for the reason that both poetry and painting are thrice removed from the world of being and could produce only copies of what themselves were copies of ideal forms.'' Blake however. never removes poetry and painting from his realm. but only abhors the mere copying. In the same passage. Blake earnestly warns against and appeals to his fellow English artists not to imitate : "The English Artist may be assured that he is doing injury and injustice to his country while he studies and imitates the Effects of nature. England will never rival Italy while we servilely copy what the wise Italians. Rafael and Michael Angelo. Scorned. nay abhorred. as Vasari tells us" (K 597). "Servilely copying " is the thing abhorred by Blake.

Repeatedly did Blake explain the same idea that if Art was no more than copying from Nature. then it would be no better than any other manual labour. "Anybody may do it and the fool will often do it best as it is a work of no mind" (K 598). The implication is. that even if the artist is allowed copying. his creativity would be and should be reflected in that "copying". if the artist were a man of mind or if he were not a fool. Blake wanted to recover art to the Florentine original and if possible. to go beyond that original. This. Blake considered the only pursuit worthy of a man. Blake then categorically condemns imitation :

To imitate I abhor. I obstinately adhere to the true style of Art such as Micahel Angelo. Rafael. Jul. Rom.. Al. Durer left it.. (The Art of Invention not of Imitation Imagination is my World this World of Dross is beneath my Notice & beneath the Notice of the Public del.) (K 600).

Blake. of course. would admit and tolerate imitation. not of objective nature or persons. but of visions. Such copying is described as belonging to the world of invention and not of imitation. Imitation of objective nature and persons are tolerable only in the case of portrait painting.and this is the

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direct contrary thing to Designing and Historical Painting in every respect.

In his letter to Thomas Butts, dated 22 November 1802, Blake wrote : "If you have not Nature before you for Every Touch you cannot Paint Portrait; if you have Nature before you at all, you cannot Paint History; it was Michael Angelo's opinion & is mine " (K 815). About one year earlier than this letter, Blake wanted to do the portrait of Thomas Butts from life in his best manner, and in the letter written to Butts on 11 September 1801 he had written :

> for now I have discovered that without Nature before in Painter's eye, he can never produce anything in the walks of Natural Painting. Historical Designing is one thing & Portrait Painting another, and they are as Distinct as any two Arts can be (K 510).

What is admissible in the case of Historical Designing, is the copying of imagination :

> Men think they can copy Nature as correctly as I copy Imagination: this they will find impossible, and all the Copiers or Pretended Copiers of Nature, from Rembrandt to Reynolds, Prove that Nature becomes (tame del.) to its Victim nothing but Blots & Blurs. Why are Copiers of Nature Incorrect, while Copiers of Imagination are Correct? This is manifest to all (K 594-95).

Such pronounced hatred of Blake towards copying or imitation, would be apparently contradictory to what Blake had written in his "Annotations to Reynolds": "To learn the language of Art, 'Copy for Ever,' is my rule" (K 446), and "The difference between bad Artist & a Good One is the Bad seems to Copy a Great deal the Good One Does Copy a Great deal" (K 455-56). Blake differentiates the good artist as one who does copy effectively and the bad one as one who only seems to copy but fumbles all throughout. When a good artist for Blake is one who does copy a great deal can his categorical hatred towards copying be justified at all?

A closer look at the texts and Blake's practice helps one to dispense with the apparent contradiction in the above annotations. Copying, for Blake, was only for learning the language of art; it was for him " the grammar of the language of art."[12] Or rather, to put it in Blake's own words, "Copying Correctly . . . is the only School of the Language of Art" (K

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448). Once this grammar is learnt, the artist must rise from the level of merely copying to the range of using the conventional *"Pathos formulae"*. Artists are known to use "*Pathos formulae*" as writers use words; and like the meaning of a word, the meaning of *pathos formula* can be modified or altered by context. The study of these formulae is the lexicography of art ." [13] Having chosen his own visual vocabulary from such a lexicography, Blake used it consistently. No more resorting to copy nature. Blake then copied imagination. Blake's paintings are thus "recreations, not imitation, although there may be 'correct copying', for that is visionary."[14] Thus copying imagination supported by other sources, Blake was capable of "breathing living flame into the driest bones." [15].

Blake had not been a slave of any system. And this excludes the possibility of his being an adherent to the tradition of *ut pictura poesis*. The peculiarity of Blake's composite art form, bringing out conspicuous painterliness in his poems and exquisite poetic quality in his paintings in content, execution and expression, would be better understood when we grasp what C.G. Jung has suggested, making a distinction between the psychologic and visionary types of artistic creations :

> [The Visionary Creation in Art] is a primordial experience which surpasses man's understanding and to which in his weakness he may easily succumb. The very enormity of the experience gives it its value and its shattering impact Sublime, pregnant with meaning, yet chilling the blood with its strangeness, it arises from timeless depths [In contrast, the psychological mode of artistic creation deals with] experience of the foreground of life. These never rend the curtain that veils the cosmos: they do not exceed the bounds of our human capacities But the primordial experiences rend from top to bottom the curtain upon which is painted the picture of an ordered world, and allow a glimpse into the unfathomable abyss of the unborn and of things yet to be.
>
> We find such a vision in the *Shepherd of Hermas* , in Dante in the second part of *Faust*, in Nietzsche s Dionysian experience, in Wagner s *Ring*, *Tristan*, *Parsifal*, in Spittler s *Olympian Spring*, in William Blake s paintings and poetry.[16]

Jung acknowledges this visionary creation of art to Blake's paintings and poetry in general or as a whole, without specifying one or two poems or paintings as in the case of

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other artists mentioned, except Dante. This distinguishable visionary faculty was meant by Blake when he averred that both in poetry and painting. "Imagination is my World. this World of Dross is beneath my Notice" (K 600).

Seemingly, this capacity for visionary art was connatural to Blake. There are evidences showing that Blake was an artist at a very early age, much earlier than he was apprenticed to the engraver James Basire at the age of fourteen. Speculating with the available data and internal evidences, G.E. Bentley Jr., has argued that Blake engraved the face of blind Milton, from a plaster bust of Cipriani, in 1760, that is to say, when Blake was only three years old.[17] If this is true, there is no wonder, because in 1808 Blake himself had claimed :

> So spoke an Angel at my birth.
> Then said, 'Descend thou upon Earth
> Renew the Arts on Britain's shore.
> And France shall fall down & adore [18]

Even at the time of selecting a master Blake's visionary powers seem to be fully developed. When he was rejected by William Wynne Ryland, more renowned than Basire, Blake, coming out from that interview, had prophesied to his father : "I do not like the man's face; it looks as if he will live to be hanged."[19] At that time when Ryland was in the zenith of his glory this 'prophecy' was unimaginable and somewhat outrageous. But twelve years after this interview, what Blake had predicted happened to Ryland.[20] This visionary intuitive quality grew with Blake's age, and manifested itself both in his poetry and painting.

Precisely for this reason could Blake affirm :

> I am more famed in Heaven for my works than I could well conceive In my Brain are studies & Chambers fill'd with books & pictures of old, which I wrote & painted in ages of Eternity before my mortal life, & those works are the delight & study of Archangels. Why then should I be anxious about the riches or fame of mortality. The Lord our father will do for us & with us according to his Divine Will for our Good' (K 802).

That Blake followed inspiration both in poetry and painting

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will be clear from the following two incidents to quote from many such. The first one is an entry from the diary of Henry Crabb Robinson :

February 18th 1826 : Called on Blake . . . He warmly declared that all he knew was in the Bible. But he understands Bible in the Spiritual Sense . . . ' I write,' he says, 'when commanded by the spirits and the moment I have written I see the word fly about the room in all directions. It is then published and the spirits can read. My Ms. is of no further use. I have been tempted to burn my Mss. , but my wife won't let me.' 'She is right, 'said I.[21]

The second incident, prior to the above in chronology, is concerned with Blake's originality in Designing because he follows the command of his Genius or Angel. In his letter to Dr. Trusler on 16 August 1799 Blake wrote :

I find more & more that my Style of Designing is a species by itself & in this which I send you have been compelled by my Genius or Angel to follow where he led: if I were to act otherwise it would not fulfill the purpose for which alone I live, which is, in conjunction with such men as my friend Cumberland, to renew the lost Art of the Greeks

I could not do otherwise: it was out of my power (K 791-92).

In the same letter Blake insists on the minute particulars practised by himself in his works and goes on to affirm the Inspiration of his work : "But I hope that none of my Designs will be destitute of Infinite Particulars which will present themselves to the Contemplator. And tho' I call them Mine, I know that they are not Mine, being of the same opinion with Milton when he says, That the Muse visits his slumbers & awakes & governs his Song when Morn purples the East. [cf. *Paradise Lost*, Book VII, 11. 29-30]. & being also in the predicament of that prophet who says : 'I cannot go beyond the command of the Lord, to speak good or bad' [cf. Numbers xxiv. 13]" (K 792).

Blake believed that as "Poetry admits not a Letter that is insignificant, so Painting admits not a Grain of Sand or a Blade of Grass Insignificant - much less an Insignificant Blur or Mark" (K 611). This observation was made by Blake in the context of his description of the Vision of the Last Judgement. But, even from Blake's earlier practice, this could be proved. In the illuminated plate 24 of *Milton a Poem*, Erdman observes that just

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below the line 28 "dances stout William Blake, a paint brush in one raised hand, a knife turning into a bird (N.B.) flying from the other

His face, with modest economy, is left to what our imagination can make of a nose and eyes from the 'gs' of things (28); no other lines are drawn for the head. "[22] Blake never drew a line, or rather, never retained a line unnecessarily, because it was in the practice of Blake to make thorough revisions of everything he did, before making the final product. In the profound words of his biographer, "the designs are highly finished : Blake had worked upon them so much, and illuminated them so richly . . . . A picture has been said to be midway between a thing and a thought; so in these books over which Blake had long brooded, with his brooding of fire, the very paper seems to come to life as you gaze upon it - not with a mortal life, but with a life indestructible, whether for good or evil."[23] This is said about the illuminated works of Blake and it becomes equally applicable to his poetry and painting.

As in Blake "the geometrically impossible has happened, the parallels meeting at the infinity of his genius", one cannot easily resolve the question whether Blake's poetry was influenced by his painterliness or whether his paintings and engravings were influenced by his poetry. Nor can one depend on the analogical method of criticism with reference to the *ut pictura poesis* tradition, or to any other tradition for that matter, relying on manifestations, as it were, of two separate arts distinct in two separate individuals. Precisely for this reason Mitchell conceded : "Today, however, the question is no longer whether Blake's poetry and painting have anything to do with one another, but how their relationship may be best understood."[24] The strenuous effort of Blake in producing them in illuminated printing necessitates that they be approached together for understanding his works comprehensively and in a better way, but which is not very often the practice.

Blake strove also to restore painting as poetry and music and to lift them into an elevated sphere. This calls for our consideration of Blake's musicality, before closing the present study. For Blake, painting as well as poetry and music existed and exulted in immortal thoughts. Although not on par with the interest in Blake's poems and paintings, there is a growing trend to read into the musicality together with the text and design in Blake's works. B.F. Fairchild has rightly observed that Blake was deeply involved in the idea of the sister arts of music, poetry and painting, in his aesthetic

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pronouncements as in his musical imagery and iconography. "Music thus became vital not only to his aesthetic but to his myth as well : speculative music is woven throughout the Blakean universe of the major prophecies."[25]

From Blake's biography it is evident that for some time, especially in the 1780s, Blake attempted music for some of his poems. It is reported that "Nollekens" Smith often heard Blake singing several of his poems. "Yes! sing them : for Blake had composed airs to his verses. Wholly ignorant of the art of Music, he was unable to note down these spontaneous melodies, and repeated them by ear. Smith reports "that his tunes were sometimes most singularly beautiful, and were noted down by musical professors". "He was listened to by the company," adds Smith. "with profound silence, and allowed by most of the visitors to possess original and extraordinary merit." Phoenix amid an admiring circle of cocks and hens is alone a spectacle to compare mentally with this![26] However, Blake did not pursue the art of music to perfection, as far as we know. Yet, the possibility of considering Blake's work as a perfect blend of the arts, music, painting and poetry, cannot be entirely ruled out.

The cyclic inscriptions on *The Laocoon* reveal Blake's commitment for the cause of arts : " A Poet, A Painter, A Musician, An Architect : the Man or Woman who is not one of these is not a Christian; Jesus & his Apostles & Disciples were all Artists Christianity is Art." (K 776-77) The importance of these four arts has been suggested in Milton Book the First, plate 27, lines 55-56 :

> But in Eternity the Four Arts, Poetry, Painting, Music
> And Architecture, which is Science, are the Four Faces of
> Man (K 514)

The lyrics of Blake which were a combination of poetry and painting in their illuminated form, were also conducive for music. Giving a list of tunes set for Blake's songs by various composers, Martin Nurmi made the following observation :

> Among the great English poets, Blake seems one of the easiest to set, especially in the lyrics, which have short musical lines, clear images, and seem reasonably perspicuous, at some level; at a first hearing. Even the lyrics, however, present more of a challenge than some composers appear to have realized, for setting these poems which do little more than reflect the surface meaning, as many of the settings do, will have little to offer on successive hearings, when the listener becomes aware of other

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meanings in the poems. The challenge might have been met by Hugo Wolf, had he set any of Blake's texts, but unfortunately he did not [27]

As per the list given by Nurmi, "The Lamb" is the one most frequently set to music. "The Tyger", "The Poison Tree", "The Shepherd", "London", and other *Songs* and even passages from prophecies like *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, and "The Ghost of Abel" are often rendered into music. Nurmi has admitted that the list is not in any way exhaustive, because it represented only the result of a very casual and incidental search, in Sir George Grove's *Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Library of Congress Catalogues and reviews of performances.[28] Many new volumes of Blake's songs and prophecies with musical notations printed together with the text are coming out especially in the last three or four decades.[29]

The analysis of Blake's theory and his practice prompts one to think Blake wanted to create a human divine form - *Imago Dei* - of art, an Art that includes all the arts. The poetic order can never be a closed cosmos. It must be open to infinite variety. Blake is a poet.

who seizes each opportunity to find design, to enter the wild dance of life and experience so as to create significance and order from each moment to the next. In this and not in any oppressive absolute, Blake grounds his "visions of Eternity. [30]

An Damrosch has rightly pointed out, "all the arts are committed in Blake's opinion, to expressing the same visionary truths, and those truths are so clearly symbolic and intellectual that he constantly reiterates his hatred of chiaroscuro, naturalistic colouring, and anything else that might seduce the viewer into accepting the images of Vala's world."[31] Therefore, "if one sees merely the words, in order arranged, settled neatly into the time and space of the page, one sees precisely as Blake's idiot questioner who cries out irritatedly : " when the sun rises do you not see a round disk of fire somewhat like a Guinea?" Blake's answer is what his poems demand our answer to be : O no no, I see an Innumerable company of the Heavenly host crying Holy Holy Holy is the Lord God Almighty!" To see the words on the page as linguistic constructs (or even metaphors and symbols) is to see one's self only. One is reminded of the quip abut great poetry being as a mirror : if an ass peers into it, he can hardly expect an angel to peer out."[32]

The conglomeration of all art forms moulded in the Eternal

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Imagination of Blake demands from the reader or viewer some extra effort to follow Blake's mind. For his visionary art could,

> see a World in a Grain of Sand
> And a Heaven in a Wild Flower,
> Hold Infinity in the palm of [his] hand
> And Eternity in an Hour
> ("Auguries of Innocence" See K 431)

Blake wanted to communicate through the media of all the arts in a composite manner. Blake could take a poet's images and effectively translate and transform them into their verbal, visual, and to a great extent to the vocal (musical) equivalents. The other followers of *ut pictura poesis* or of *ut musica poesis* traditions, take ideas and either illustrate them with pictures or express them through music. In Blake the shift from a particular medium to the other is so natural that one cannot distinguish which predominates over the other. This precisely is the uniqueness of Blake. And thus Blake may not be and probably cannot be hedged by the *ut pictura poesis* tradition or the *ut musica poesis* tradition or any other tradition.

In fine, "every word and every letter is studied and put into its fit place; the terrific numbers are reserved for the terrific parts, the mild and gentle for the mild & gentle parts, and the prosaic for inferior parts; all are necessary to each other. Poetry Fetter'd Fetters the Human Race. Nations are destroy'd or Flourish in proportions as Their Poetry, Painting and Music are Destroyed or Flourish! The Primeval State of Man was Wisdom, Art and Science" (K 621). This remark of Blake in his *Jerusalem* is true with regard to all his works.

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NOTES

[1] *Jerusalem* pl. x : 20-21; quoted from Geoffrey Keynes, ed., *Blake: Complete Writings with Variant Readings* (1957; rpt Oxford & New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985), p.629. All subsequent quotations from Blake follow this edition, indicated by K followed

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by the page number, unless otherwise mentioned; e.g., K 629.
[2]J.R. Harvey, "Blake's Art," *The Cambridge Quarterly*, 7, No.2 (1977), 144.
[3]Herbert Read, "The Parallels in Painting and Poetry," *In Defense of Shelley and Other Essays* (1936; rpt. New York : Books for Libraries Press, 1968), p. 247.
[4]See for example : W.J.T. Mitchll, "Blake's Composite Art"; Eben Bass, "Songs of Innocence and of Experience : The Thru rts of Designs"; Janet A. Warner, "Blake's Use of Gestures"; Ben F. Nelm, "Text and Design in *Illustrations of the Book of Job*"; Jean H. Hagstrum," Blake and the Sistert Arts Tradition"; all in *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic*, ed. David V. Erdman & John E. Grant (Princeton : Princeton Univ. Press, 1970). Some of these essays have been later developed into single publications : W.J.T. Mitchell, *Blake's Composite Art* (Princeton : Princeton Univ. Press, 1978); Janet A. Warner, *Blake and the Language of Art* (Kingston & Montreal : Mcgill-Queen's Univ. Press, & Gloucester " Alan Sutton, 1984). See also : Jean H. Hagstrum, *William Blake, Poet and Painter: An Introduction to the Illuminated Verse* (Chicago : The Univ. of Chicago Press, 1964) : & Edward J. Rose, "*Ut Pictura Poesis* & the Problem of Pictorial Statement in *William Blake*", in *Woman in the Eighteenth Century & Other Essays*, ed. Paul Fritz & Richard Morton (Toronto & Sarasota : Samuel Stevens and Hakkert & Co., 1976).
[5]Horace wrote : "*Ut pictura poesis* [Poetry is like a picture]." See *The Complete Works of Horace with a Literal Interlinear Translation* (Pennysylvania : Handy Book Company, 1894), p. 468. Simonides's dictum, "Painting is a dumme poesie, and Poesie is a Speaking picture," found its way to England in E. Hoby's translation of Coignet entitled *Politique Discourses*, as quoted in the appendix by Gregory Smith, *Elizabethean Critical Essays* (1904; rpt. London : Oxford Univ. Press, 1959), I, 342.
[6]George Wingfield Digby, *Symbol and Image in William Blake* (Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1957), p. 94.
[7]Geoffrey Keynes, *A Bibliography of William Blake* (New York : The Grolier Club of New York Press, 1921), pp. 187-88.
[8]These 16 pictures, however, are not reproduced here. A look at them from Martin Butlin's edition, *The Paintings and Drawings of William Blake* 2 vols. (New Haven, London : Yale Univ. Press 1981) would be greatly helpful.
[9]G.E. Lessing, *Laokoon or the Limits of Painting and Poetry With Incidental Illustrations on Various Points in the History of Ancient Art* in *Laocoon, Nathan the Wise, Minna von Barnhelm*, trans. William A. Steel (London : Everyman's Library, 1930), p.4.
[10]Ibid., p. 65.
[11]*The Republic of Plato*, trans. Allan Bloom (New York & London : Basic Books Inc., Publishers, 1968), pp. 288 ff.
[12]Janet A. Warner, *Blake and the Language of Art*, p. 9.
[13]Bo Lindberg, *William Blake's Illustrations to the Book of Job* (Abo, Finland : Abo Akademi, 1973), p.115.
[14]*Blake and the Language of Art*, p. 13.
[15]C.H. Collins Baker, "The Sources of Blake's Pictorial Expression," *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, 4 (1940 - 41), 267.
[16]C.G. Jung, "Psychology and Literature," in *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*, in *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, No.XV, trans. R.F.C. Hall (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), pp.90-91.
[17]G.E. Bentley Jr., "A Portrait of Milton Engraved by William Blake When Three Years of Age'? : A Speculation by Samuel Palmer," *Univ. of Toronto Quarterly*, 51, No.1 (Fall 1981), 28.

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[18]Geoffrey Keynes, ed., *The Note Book of William Blake called the Rossetti Manuscript* (Facsimile edition; London: Nonesuch Press, 1935), p.79.
[19]Alexander Gilchrist, *Life of William Blake*, ed. Ruthven Todd (1863; rpt. London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1942), pp. 10-11.
[20]Ibid.
[21]Quoted from Judith O'Neil, ed., *Critics on Blake* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1970), p.16.
[22]David V. Erdman, ed., *The Illuminated Blake* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1975), p.240. Geoffrey Keynes, however, numbers this as plate 22; K 505.
[23]A. Gilchrist, *Life of William Blake*, p.77.
[24]"Blake's Composite Art", in *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic*, p.57.
[25]B.H. Fairchild, *Such Holy Song: Music as Idea, Form and Image in the Poetry of William Blake* (Ohio: The Kent State Univ. Press, 1980), p.11.
[26]A. Gilchrist, *Life of William Blake*, pp. 40-41.
[27]G.E. Bentley Jr., & Martin K. Nurmi, ed., *A Blake Bibliography* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesotta Publications, 1964), p.364.
[28]Ibid.
[29]See for example: Ruth Lamon, *Five Songs after Poems by William Blake for Contralto and Viola* (Washington: Arsis Press, 1980); & Elie Seigmeister, *Songs of Experience for Voice, Viola, and Piano: Poems by William Blake* (New York: Carl Fischer, Inc., 1978).
[30]Andrew J. Welburn, "Blake's Cosmos: Sources and Transformation," *J.E.G.P.*, 80 (1981), 53.
[31]Leopold Damrosch, Jr., *Symbol and Truth in Blake's Myth*, (Princeton Univ. Press, 1980), 115.
[32]Robert F. Gleckner, "Most Holy Forms of Thought," in Nelson Hilton, ed., *Essential Articles for the Study of William Blake, 1970-1984*, (Connecticut: Archon Books, 1986), p.113.

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B.P. Sandilya

NATURE AGAINST MAN : FROST'S ANTI-ROMANTIC VIEW

Frost's perception of nature is far from uniform or homogeneous. Sometimes nature can be friendly and benign, at others it can appear neutral and indifferent or even turn out to be subversive and hostile to human life.

In many situations Frost perceives a barrier between man and nature rather than any clear antagonism. The boundary may often be all for the good, sparing man later shock and pain. But the barrier restricts man's freedom. The divergences between man and nature may be interpreted as either entirely fortuitous or inherent in the scheme of things. The difficulty of communication between sentient man and insensate nature rules out any meaningful give-and-take. Sometimes by conferring imaginary values on nature which do not fit in with reality, man precipitates emotional and moral crises for himself. It is possible that the indifference which man attributes to nature and which baffles and pains him is not cold and deliberate neglect, but its sheer neutrality. Still, nature's apparent imperviousness to human emotion hurts and frustrates him. Frost comprehends all these varied and sometimes conflicting possibilities.

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In *The Wood-Pile*, the habitual stroller comes to the edge of the wood and after a moment's hesitation, enters it. The vacillation reflects the uncertainty about the fulfillment of man's expectations of nature. The landscape is undistinguished; the only thing that strikes the speaker is that he is far from home. The implied contrast with "home", which offers him a sense of mooring and security, brings out the strangeness of the environment. A small bird, the first sign of animation, flits away from him. The man reflects amusedly on the "foolish" bird's reaction to his movement:

> He thought that I was after him for a feather -
> The white one in his tail; like one who takes
> Everything said as personal to himself

The bird's instinctive suspiciousness of human motives suggests a kind of pre-established barrier between man and nature. The

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wanderer's attention is next arrested by a wood-pile stacked away in a relatively secure place. The pile seems to have been carefully composed, but now it bears all the marks of dereliction. Even in its decaying state, it represents a triumph of form in the surrounding formlessness, a silent testimony to man's creative endeavour. The speaker has mixed feelings about the man and his handiwork. He admires the absent wood-cutter for leaving behind this reminder of man's creativity in a non-human environment. Yet he is sorry that the man should have allowed the pile, on which he had spent his time and labour and love, to rot and go waste:

> I thought that only
> Someone who lived in turning to fresh tasks
> Could so forget his handiwork on which
> He spent himself, the labor of his ax,
> And leave it there far from a useful fireplace
> To warm the frozen swamp as best it could
> With the slow smokeless burning of decay

The wood-pile, however, is not altogether wasted, although it is not consumed in "a useful fireplace". With the smokeless burning of decay the soil is replenished and plant growth assured. But this recycling is at odds with human purpose. Nature, which is bleak and uninviting, reduces human effort to nought. It is not exactly hostile nor is it quite amiable or beneficent. In the poem the two situations in the forest convey parallel impressions of the gulf that separates man from nature. The speaker finds a barrier of incommunicability between himself and the bird's animate nature and an opposition of purposes between the maker of the wood-pile and the all-consuming frozen swamp.

Sometimes man himself erects this barrier. Whereas in *The Wood-Pile*, the nondescript bird is wary of the stranger's intention and hence avoids him, in *A Minor Bird* the human dweller shoos away a minor singing bird in a fit of irrational temper:

> I have wished a bird would fly away
> And not sing by my house all day.
>
> Have clapped my hands at him from the door
> When it seemed as if I could bear no more

However, the speaker later realizes his mistake:

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The fault must partly have been in me.
The bird was not to blame for his key

And of course there must be something wrong
In wanting to silence any song.

It seems that there is no spontaneous flow of understanding between the human and the nonhuman. Self-concern breeds apprehension of intolerance. Insensitive man often ignores the living part of nature. His sympathies are imperfectly developed; that is why he cannot see the good that nature offers him.

Two Look at Two records the intuitive sharing of love and sympathy between man and nature almost through a miracle. In *The Most of It* nature is strenly unresponsive to man's eagerness for love and recognition. *The Tree at My Window* stands between the two ends of this scale. It is one of those few poems where Frost directly addresses a natural object -- generally he casts himself in the narrator's role while dealing with forms of nature. Proximity and a series of shared joys and sorrows create a close tie between the poet and the tree. He characterizes the window tree thus:

Vague dream-head lifted out of the ground,
And thing next most diffuse to cloud,
Not all your light tongues talking aloud
Could be profound.

While the poet's aspirations, like the tree's, strive upwards, the latter betrays a kind of frivolity unknown to the poet. What however seals their friendship is the harrowing suffering they have undergone, each in full view of the other:

But, tree, I have seen you taken and tossed,
And if you have seen me when I slept,
You have seen me when I was taken and swept
And all but lost.

While Frost does not fail to point out the elements of difference, his mind draws strength from the close kinship between the tree and himself:

That day she put our heads together
Fate had her imagination about her

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Your head so much concerned with outer,
Mine with inner, weather.

In any clash of interests between man and nature, nature swings into action, like a sentient being, with all the resources at its command. Man's temptation to encroach upon and reverse nature's laws meets with stout resistance. In *There Are Roughly Zones* we are introduced to a farmer who has planted a peach tree on a far northerly slope where it is sure to perish from intense cold. It is man's lust for expansion of his domain, "this limitless trait in the hearts of men", that goads him to tempt and try nature's patience. The farmer's unwillingness to curb his greed may lead to the tree's death. The farmer gently reproves this human weakness in himself:

Why is his nature forever so hard to teach
That though there is no fixed line between wrong and right,
There are roughly zones whose laws must be obeyed?

Behind nature's resistance to human encroachment lies the larger struggle between nature and civilization. Nature wrests back the fruits of man's conquest by reoccupying deserted or sparsely populated tracts. In *The Birthplace*, the mountain, which was opened up for habitation, seemed to tolerate the bustle of human company good-humouredly for some time:

Here further up the mountain slope
Than there was ever any hope,
My father built, enclosed a spring,
Strung chains of wall round everything,
Subdued the growth of earth to grass,
And brought our various lives to pass.

The maker of the house seems to rejoice over his power to bend nature to human purposes. The mountain's unprotesting submission, "with always something in her smile", masked her future intentions. When an opportunity came -

The mountain pushed us off her knees,
And now her lap is full of trees.

In *Mending Wall*, nature wrecks silently and persistently the wall between two neighbours' properties on whose value and utility they

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themselves are divided:

> Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
> That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it
> And spills the upper boulders in the sun,
> And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

The poem *In the Home-Stretch* deals with a city-bred couple's frantic efforts to settle down in their new country domicile. The couple is daunted more by the unfamiliar landscape and atmosphere than by arduous housemoving arrangements. The trees are so frightfully close that they seem ready to march into their lost territory once the couple's back is turned:

> that pasture slope that seems
> The back some farm presents us; and your woods
> To northward from your window at the sink,
> Waiting to steal a step on us whenever
> We drop our eyes or turn to other things,
> As in the game "ten-step" the children play.*

In *The Last Mowing* the trees are about to regain the abandoned meadow threatening even the "tumultuous flowers" with doom.

Just as nature is bent upon ousting man from its preserves, man is determined to extend his control deep into nature's territory. Man working collectively as the vanguard of the urban civilization can rudely disturb nature's placid life. *The Line Gang* depicts man violating nature in his rage for power. Men from towns penetrate the hitherto inaccessible regions to establish signposts of mechanical progress:

> With a laugh,
> An oath of towns that set the wild at naught,
> They bring the telephone and telegraph

Frost resents the intrusion of civilization into nature in another poem called *An Encounter*. He is irked by the sight of a telegraph pole in the midst of pure nature and gently ridicules the utilitarian purpose for which the dead tree-trunk has been erected. With this slave to man he contrasts his own aesthetic freedom in the world of nature.

In *Hyla Brook*, the brook's reduced state is nature's own doing, a short-lived seasonal phenomenon; hence the brook does

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not lose its naturalness and beauty. In *A Brook in the City*, perverse selfishness prompts man to stem the brook's flow ingeniously by throwing it

> Deep in a sewer dungeon under stone
> In fetid darkness still to live and run -
> And all for nothing it had ever done,
> Except forget to go in fear perhaps

The poet contrasts the dark underground murmurings of the brook at present with its happy unobstructed flow in the past. Frost attributes feeling and power of conscious will to nature. He feels that the brook, however, curbed, will not perish and may one day burst out in violence:

> But I wonder
> If from its being kept forever under,
> The thoughts may not have risen that so keep
> This new-built city from both work and sleep.

Thoughts of the brook's captivity, its unrest and rebelliousness, cause all the restlessness and strife in the city. Gripped by tension during the day, men cannot properly attend to work and there are frequent breakdowns and other disruptions. They are also harried by a subconscious sense of guilt which robs them of their sleep at night.

Man-nature conflict ramifies beyond thrusts and counter-thrusts into each other's territory either for extending the area of control or for recovering lost ground. The solitary explorer, unlike the wandering couple, frequently perceives a vague threat in nature. In *A Dream Pang*, the speaker's fear of a challenge to his self is rendered in terms of a dream:

> I had withdrawn in forest, and my song
> Was swallowed up in leaves that blew away;

In *The Wood-Pile*, the blank sameness of the swamp threatens to engulf him before he comes upon the stack of firewood. In Frost the fear of engulfment and loss of human identity in the midst of nature's immensity is deep-rooted. *On Going Unnoticed* throws into focus man's smallness and fragility seen against the backdrop of the immutable forest. *The Demiurge's Laugh* begins with a sugges-

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tively imprecise description of the location of the action: "It was far in the sameness of the wood;" The Demon mocks at the lone wanderer's foolhardy adventurousness. Man's desire to know is rebuffed, since it seems to be at odds with the obscure and arbitrary workings of an indifferent power. In *Stars* the poet may initially feel that the heavenly bodies shine with "keenness for our fate". But such illusions are soon dispelled when the stars appear as absolutely impersonal and cold symbols of an uncaring universe:

> And yet with neither love nor hate,
> Those stars like some snow-white
> Minerva's snow-white marble eyes
> Without the gift of sight.

The Most of It demonstrates the futility of imagining nature to be responsive to man's emotional needs. *Good Hours* begins with the poet's usual dilemma: whether to venture into uninhabited ground or to step back and return home. During his solitary walk the poet derives some comfort from lights shining through roadside windows which were "Up to their shining eyes in snow." The unspoken sense of companionship which comforts him in the beginning is lost during the return trek when the poet is oppressed with the surrounding loneliness:

> I turned and repented, but coming back
> I saw no window but that was black.

Nature, it is evident, has offered him nothing to compensate for the loss of human company.

Sometimes nature is outwardly placid and benign, but a closer acquaintance changes one's impression. Man carries out his daily occupations in the familiar milieu of nature without serious let or hindrance. But its sudden bursts of fury disturb pastoral tranquility and upset the traditional attitude toward nature. The fear caused by these reversals is further fed by deep-seated ancestral suspicion of nature. Frost is quick to recognize such horrors, although he does not generalize on them or suggest that the way to remove them is to crush nature completely. In *Two Tramps in Mud-Time* Frost warns his readers that nature's graceful smile may quickly change into a hideous grimace:

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Be glad of water, but don't forget
The lurking frost in the earth beneath
That will steal forth after the sun is set
And show on the water its crystal teeth.

But nature has also a cruel and malignant face that is unmistakably hostile to human life. At times it seems to be endowed with sentience, a power it uses for murderous purposes. In *Storm Fear*, the storm spends its might on unhousing a whole family. It is violently hostile, like a ferocious animal baulked of its prey, and challenges the cowering inmates to an unequal fight outdoors:

When the wind works against us in the dark,
And pelts with snow
The lower-chamber window on the east,
And whispers with a sort of stifled bark,
The beast,
"Come out, Come out,"
It costs no inward struggle not to go,
Ah, no!

The speaker doubts whether the dwelling will survive the continuous onslaught of the storm and whether they can protect themselves without any outside help:

And my heart owns a doubt
Whether 'tis in us to arise with day
And save ourselves unaided.

The destruction that looms large in *Once by the Pacific* threatens to sweep away all life and creation. Although narrated in the past tense, the poem has an electrifying effect. Through understatement and indirection Frost creates an atmosphere of terror. The two descriptive images conjure up vague gigantic figures with no recognizable forms. Only one of them refers to the raging ocean. The waves peering over their shoulders look like prehistoric brutes advancing remorselessly toward their prey. They seem to embody the very spirit of malfeasance. Rarely does Frost use understatement with such deadly sureness of touch as in ascribing conscious purpose to the waves which

. . . thought of doing something to the shore

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That water never did to land before.

The menace felt equally by the senses and instinct is indeterminate, yet palpable. In the other image, dark low clouds resemble huge hairy monsters with the ominous glint of glee in their eyes. Frost couples the poetical term "locks" with the unpoetical "low" and "hairy" to create the picture of a frenzied being who is at the same time cunning and ruthless. The next few lines are also sinuously suggestive. The tone of indefiniteness expressed especially by the repeated use of the conditional "as if" helps to heighten a sense of suspense and terror. The shore, the cliff and the continent appear all too brittle in spite of their joined strength:

You could not tell, and yet it looked as if
The shore was lucky in being backed by cliff,
The cliff in being backed by continent;
It looked as if a night of dark intent
Was coming, and not only a night, an age.
Someone had better be prepared for rage.

The last two lines with their Biblical vision of the night of wrath seem to spread the threat of a past event, which was never actualized, to times still to come. By a skilful blend of the vatic-rhetorical and the cautious-colloquial tones Frost succeeds in presenting a fearsome aspect of nature.

Far more terrifying and intractable than nature's visible hostility are those veiled, nameless threats insinuating themselves into a person's thoughts. *The Hill Wife* series present the devastating effect of nature on a person who is both physically and psychologically lonely. It consists of five short poems describing different dramatic crises in a young woman's gradual loss of sanity. From an oppressive sense of loneliness suffered in spite of the company of her husband, there develops a fear of the dark. An increasing sense of insecurity makes her imagine the tramp who had come to beg, as harbouring evil designs on her. In the fourth poem, *The Oft-Repeated Dream*, her morbid repressed fears give rise to monstrous nightmares involving the dark pine at the window:

She had no saying dark enough
For the dark pine that kept
Forever trying the window latch
Of the room where they slept.

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The image embodies the possibility of sexual violence. In the final poem, *The Impulse*, the woman, who accompanies her husband to his work, strays far into the forest, never to return. The eerie solitude of the place has wiped out the last vestige of rationality from her conduct. As a result, she yields to the urge of a destructive impulse.

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"TILL . . . WE DROWN": AQUATIC IMAGERY IN ELIOT'S PRUFROCKIAN SONG

To what does the dire, pointed allusion to eventual aquatic submergence at the tail end of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" symbolically refer? Steve Ellis has recently seen it as yet another parallel to the watery resonances of *The Tempest* (35-36). Further, in commentary on the first volume of his *Letters* found in the collection of centenary materials *T.S. Eliot: Man and Poet*, mention is made of the introductory vocative or imperative phrase "you and I " in the poem as applying to the French student Jean Verdenal and Eliot on the streets of Paris (II, 387).[1] So, plausibly enough, the former's "death by water" (*at*, but not *in*, the Dardanelles, as George Watson has indicated [467-75]), as possibly also hinted at in *The Waste Land*, might likewise be here recollected, that is in the monologue's final lines.

For, after all, what relates to the very beginning could also correlate with the finale, providing therewith a framed effect. Surely, in addition, the poet's home territory in Missouri with his strong cognizance of "Ole Man River" could enter into the autobiographical framework as well (on which, see Soldo). Fascinating in addition is the latent psychological inuendo that imagery relating to drowning can subliminally hint at the submergence of the individual self in the Collective Unconscious, thereby recalling the popular, archetypal writings of Carl Jung.[2] In this connection, the reader readily recollects how Eliot later completed his longer masterpiece in Jung's home country with its Alpine backdrop and marvelous waterfalls (even though his own physician, Dr. Roger Vittoz, appears not to have been a direct disciple of Jung, but did keep in touch professionally with the better known psychologist, as Kearns has now authoritatively shown [153]).

With *The Waste Land* concomitantly in the back of our minds, let us likewise try to associate a presumed drowning which provided some vital background for that poem, namely the so-called aquatic regal suicide of the eccentric Ludwig II near Munich. Recollections of this king are indeed discernible early on in that longer work and may even have especially inspired, at least in part,

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the "Death by Water" section (Part IV), sometimes considered the best. Does, then, the similar enough effect in the earlier, interior monologue not somehow look ahead to this further, Bavarian connection?

In partial answer, Prufrock's very surname can be thought to have its Teutonic twist, referring back to such a name in St. Louis (that of a wholesale furniture dealer); moreover, *prufen* and *Rock* in German have their verbal associations with the trade of tailoring, whereby we might take into account J. Alfred's coat, his being buttoned up with a sleek collar. In point of fact, as is well recognized now, a surname found in the St. Louis telephone directory, *Prufcoat*, is evidently based on an Anglicized version of the German etymology. Yet that would be like trying to argue, without clear-cut external evidence, that the poet knew the hearsay about King Ludwig before he himself was in Munich, where *The Waste Land* was completed. Still, this royal death, purportedly by drowning, had become so famous (if not infamous) that at least a suspicion to this effect can remain.

In any case, critically speaking, Raymond J.S. Grant writes that evidently "Eliot's purpose in making mention of the Starnbergersee is to bring before the reader's mind the tragic figure of King Ludwig II of Bavaria" (96). Although self-murder has often been claimed as the cause of the royal death, Grant does offer other valid options, concluding as follows: "Others have the troubled monarch committing suicide by drowning, a difficult thing for a strong swimmer to accomplish in waist-deep water" (94). More pertinently perhaps, he cites in passing the curious matter of the King's alleged "latent homosexuality" (101), whereby some observant readers might be tentatively inclined to correlate Eliot's rather close association with Jean Verdenal once again, though a legitimate case for deviancy has hardly been proved and certainly not in Verdenal's published letters. The point is that James E. Miller, in showing how the original epigraph to "Prufrock" refers somehow back to Arnaut Daniel in *The Divine Comedy*, involving thereby hermaphroditic imagery and even sodomy (*T.S. Eliot: Man and Poet* II, 228), offers what could now be taken as valid new evidence for this insinuation. Still, the allusion is, at best, indirect, and an annotation of Miller's earlier work on Eliot's sexuality which happens to appear in the bibliographical section of the same collection (*T.S. Eliot's Personal Waste Land*) interprets Verdenal's

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letters much differently and feels Miller ought well to have taken these confessional documents into account -- that is, if he could have at that time.

Other familiar "deaths by water" might likewise be at least tentatively enlisted. After all, water imagery in one form or another permeates the monologue, starting with "oyster-shells" (l. 7) obviously near the seacoast, the fog coming in, and even in pre-Sacramental terms with John the Baptist. So because of mention made of "Prince Hamlet" in the monologue (l. 111), Ophelia's drowning might revert to mind, especially, let us say, because of the presumed effect of biographical data on Shakespeare's own creativity as well, namely the curious drowning of a certain Katherine Hamlett in the Avon not far from Stratford (nor long before the play was composed). Such an onomastic link-up may appear easily inviting at first, but then in the light of Prufrock's abrupt dismissal of any Hamletian nexus at all ("No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be"), it might finally better be dispensed with as only tangential. Granted, something similar might likewise be said of Gretchen's drowning of her child in the first part of *Faust*, which actually appears to be based, in part, on Goethe's understanding of the Danish tragedy, for other echolalia from the English play abound there, notably from Ophelia's related mad songs, as is common knowledge. Yet, with Eliot, the Hamlet association came in through his reading of Laforgue's own version, "Hamlet, ou les Suites de la Piété Filiale," which is poetically very different, stylistically and otherwise, from Shakespeare's forerunner.

In any event, Eliot evidently was intrigued enough by the very conception of watery death and its causes, even as he had it then provide the fundamental background for the plot of his play *The Family Reunion*, the protagonist Harry having perchance pushed his wife overboard on an ocean liner and being haunted thereafter about this pusillanimous act (or wish), but even there true "echoes" of the original *Hamlet* might well be called into question, the main influences being obviously from Greek tragedy, as Ellis (32), among others, has pointed out in detail.

Further analogous drownings might be cited as being plausibly influential as well. In *David Copperfield*, the hero's adolescent love, Little Emily, is later induced to run off with James Steerforth, who then accidentally drowns in the Atlantic at a

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crucial, poignant time in the novel that Dickens liked the best. His very surname, suggesting his *steering forth* (to sea, that is, ironically to his doom), is therewith set forth. Indeed, a certain Dickens-like quality is readily discernible throughout "Prufrock," whereby the so-called anti-hero in his singular, standoffish way can, in turn, be seen as even harking back to Steerforth's close associate, Littimer.[3] Yet, admittedly, if all that had any influence on the intermittent water imagery and the drowning effect at the end of the poem, it must have been fairly oblique.

Because the conclusion to "Prufrock" has well-recognized literary overtones of diverse sorts, let us not overlook various key additional possibilities, however seemingly disparate some may initially seem. Certainly "mermaids singing, each to each" (l. 124) recollects in some capacity the fabulous sirens in Homer (*Odyssey*, Book XII) and the prophetic death by drowning said to result from hearkening to them. Hence Odysseus was fastened to the ship's mast, so could hear them but not be allowed to try to plunge into the water and reach their side. Along with this, David Sanders has of late argued for "the other watery deaths which Zeus or Poseidon plan for Odysseus" (49-50). The late Victorian nature of the monologue's setting may have us call to mind Tennyson's own "Ulysses," not to forget the analogous poem "The Forsaken Merman" as well. In general, because Eliot's work is usually termed romantically anti-romantic in this case (that is, in the Laforguean manner), classical correlations clearly can be effective too. Yet a number of other analogs relating to the mermaids can be adduced, so the Homeric case is not definite. In Jungian terms, "water maidens" are said to have the power "to stir up and invert the order of things" perhaps in more ways than one (on which, see Cirlot 348).

All told, because the confessional piece was in effect "dedicated" to Verdenal, being the leading lyric in *Prufrock and Other Observations*, which contained just such a fervent dedication, plausibly that particular autobiographical association would appear at first to operate best. Miller's relating Eliot's friendship with the French medical student to the "you and I" of "Prufrock" as well as to *The Waste Land* indirectly links the suggestion of another "death by water" at the end with the introductory "you and I." Why not? Nonetheless, his further contention that the poem's original title, "Prufrock among the Women," intimates actually that

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the anti-hero's "natural habitat was with men" (228) seems *recherché*. For one rather obvious reason why the proposed earlier title need *not* suggest that the speaker was, for example, even misogynistic is that it anticipates, titularly, Eliot's later "Sweeney among the Nightingales," which refers to an Irish-American blithely among some prostitutes: the difference is one in degree but scarcely in kind. Thus, a major reason for our rejecting the earlier Prufrockian label is that it merely repeats, in effect, the turn of phrase in the title of the best known of the Sweeney poems. The point is that the earlier label should rather be taken at face value, as descriptive of what it literally states, meaning the speaker was indeed among the ladies, not as implying that his usual socializing was rather oriented toward menfolk. To go into this more "psychologically" is uncalled for.

In any event, the further point can now be entertained that Conrad Aiken's *The Jig of Forslin* likewise provides a connection between the beginning and conclusion of the Prufrockian account. For, as Joseph Warren Beach states it, "in 'Forslin' the drowning in dreams is regarded as a wholesome way of supplementing reality, whereas in 'Prufrock' the drowning in reality . . . is a symbol of the man's sentimental and spiritual confusion" (757). On the other hand, he specifies that Aiken's very phrase "Let us drown, then" is strikingly reminiscent of Eliot's opening solicitation, so much so (when compared with all the other echoes) that it becomes clear enough that Aiken himself intuitively recognized what Eliot had in the back of his mind specifically in structuring the earlier poem so that the end had some bearing on the beginning. This would appear to provide grist for Miller's mill. Yet it is important always to bear in mind as well that Eliot himself strongly resented John Peter's imputation of homosexuality to him apropos of Verdenal and in *The Waste Land* in particular (on which, see Ackroyd 309).

Last of all, one critical reaction that, though also strongly set forth, might better itself be "drowned out," as it were, is the one that the speaker is indulging in temptations about gross self-annihilation in "Prufrock." Determining that the fundamental "overwhelming question" (l. 10) is whether the speaker should take his own life, Michael Baumann concludes that the romantic vision here does call for the suicidal act, but that J. Alfred can be expected to fail once again, even in accomplishing his complete

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self-destruction. True, Baumann would usher in Hamlet's "To be, or not to be" soliloquy as somehow relevant, even as it verbally seems to link, on the surface, with "nor was meant to be" (l. 111), yet the fact that the anti-hero affirms that he has "known them all already, known them all" (l. 49), has previously "measured out" his life (l. 51), need hardly be taken as his now being on the verge of death preparations. That suggestion would represent simply too literal a rendition. Likewise the fact that he cites "time" repeatedly scarcely has to be construed as implying that he is now simply fatigued with earthly existence and longs for an otherworldly one. To bring in the aquatic imagery specifically again, at least the John the Baptist reference connotes the eventual use of water in a positive, spiritual sense, so that even his chopped-off head can have affirmative meaning not because of Prufrock's seeming to be already a dead character, but because of his indirectly thus prophesying the advent of one who would die if only to be reborn and even seen in this life. This renewal would be prognosticative also of Eliot's own later conversion.

Baumann thus ignores the commonplace that Prufrock is not essentially Romantic with death longings, but rather attempts to be a realist. Most striking of all, this critic compares Sweeney's reference to "Birth, and copulation, and death," figuring that when one is finally tired of the first two, what can remain but the last? This decipherment is ingenious, yet that Irish type appears later on a totally different level of comprehension. In spite of the desideratum that the labels "Prufrock among the Women" and "Sweeney among the Nightingales" do themselves interrelate, the latter titular figure was based fundamentally on a pugilist Eliot got to know in the Cambridge-Boston area, in short was very masculine, and so can hardly have any vital bearing on the St. Louis-bred J. Alfred Prufrock, who was in contrast effete.

In short, the final drowning reference in the monologue notwithstanding, the overall effect of the water imagery and allied symbolism, when the poem is seen in the larger context of Eliot's *oeuvre* as a whole, has more salutary than destructive significance. Water embraces a vast variety of meanings multiculturally, from Egyptian hieroglyphs to the Chinese abode of the dragon to the maternal import in the *Vedas*, but basically it is thought of as the *fons et origo* of all things and related to the other prime elements, and so is fundamental to life itself more than to death

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(for which, see Cirlot 345). Prufrock's fear of drowning because of the sea-girls probably reflects some kind of unconscious Oedipal fixation, an inherent realization that waters have a pre-natal meaning -- but one not to be taken "over-board" in the final analysis.

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NOTES

[1]James E. Miller, Jr., also find the "you and I" relating to Verdenal and Eliot "at some level," as he puts it (I, 228). Eliot citations throughout are to *The Complete Poems and Plays 1909-1950*.

[2]Cf. Jones's study of Eliot and Jung, especially Chapter II, which concentrates on "Prufrock."

[3]On this particular correlation, see my *Ascending the Prufrockian Stair* (published for the Eliot centenary) 167-73. (Although only descent is specifically cited in the poem, presumably the speaker has to make an ascent first before he can come down and meet the Footman, and, what is more important, *the reader* makes his ascent in the process as well.)

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THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA AS TESTAMENT

"There may be consummate fools who do not understand what fishermen do, but the latter will not mistake the timeless meaning of their action, for the symbol of their craft is many centuries older than the still unfaded story of the Grail."
C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious* Bollingen Series XX, p.24

If you were to make a literal statement of *The Old Man and the Sea*, it would read approximately as follows.

After eighty-four days of bad luck, the old fisherman, Santiago, went alone in his skiff into the Gulf Stream where he caught a marlin. On the return trip, sharks attacked and devoured his catch, even though he attempted to fight them off. When the other fishermen saw the skeleton, they said it was the largest marlin they had ever seen. It lay in the garbage waiting to go out with the tide.

As plainly stated as it is, the paraphrase brings out two striking features. Eighty-four days without a catch is more than mischance, and despite skill and courage, strength and momentary success, the old fisherman loses in the end. Thus his story reveals an ironic contrast at the very heart of existence — between what a man may set out to do and what fate may decree for him.

If such a synopsis depicts the struggle for survival and the power of Fate over the individual life, the entire tale testifies to the fact that existence includes greater and more intricate truths than these. Consequently, the first part of this paper highlights the simple epic dimensions of the story in order, in the second part, to seize the more complex view. In the old man's earthy understandings, there is divulged one of the most meaningful visions of human destiny that modern man has yet attained.

The narrator depicts the underlying irony in things by the contrast and intentional distortion of character, situation, space and time. We know this because the outcome of the adventure alerts us to the reason Santiago is caught in his situation: in the old man is a powerful instinct that necessitates the central conflict. His life demands the kind of battle which ends either in destruction or

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survival. As the case turns out, the story tells of both defeat and victory.

By the end of the first paragraph of the novel, Santiago seems a brave man hemmed in by age and misfortune (p.9).[1] Although his weather-beaten face appears to confirm this state, the cheerful and undefeated eyes bely and surrender (p.10). Blue and serene as the deep water, they hint of a mysterious power in the man himself. The old man confirms this impression when the boy Manolin twice questions him if he is still strong enough to pull in a truly big fish. The fisherman replies that he knows many tricks (p. 14) and though he may not be as strong as he thinks, he has resolution (p. 23). Santiago's words imply that inner control ultimately decides the issue of things.

In his poor shack he lived a sober and humble life. All that he has left are a few souvenirs of his dead wife (pp. 15-16). There at night he no longer remembers storms, or women, or great fish, or fights, nor even his wife. Instead, he recalls places and young lions frisking on the beach (pp.24-25). Hence Santiago no longer dreams of glory but of pure masculine power at play. His dreams tell us he wishes he still had that kind of strength.

When the old man pushes the boat into the water (pp.27-28), we enter another realm of experience. He becomes a part of an ageless ritual as he rows away from the island. The gliding of the boat through the water acquires a legendary aura. The world grows remote in time and place.

This impression is confirmed as Santiago's little boat moves out over the great well where the ocean depths all at once drop to 700 fathoms (p.28). He dwindles to a speck on a limitless ocean. When Santiago realizes how suddenly she can be cruel (p.29), we feel an upsurge of anxiety for him. His minuteness is like that of the delicate birds that skim the waters far out, calling with small, sad voices (p.29). Like them, Santiago may also be swallowed by the unpredictable sea.

Details make clear what will take place between the old man and the creature he is stalking. The length of his fishing lines awe us: 40, 75, 100, and 125 fathoms deep (pp.30-31). Each line is as thick as a pencil, the deepest being 750 feet down. These particulars alone tell us how titanic the struggle will be.

With the description of the bait, the tuna, and the appetizing fresh sardines (p.31), we begin to look at what is to happen from the

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standpoint of the pursued. For the first time we see how the intelligence and the hunger of the deep sea being are to be tested by the shrewdness and tricks of the old man.

Unconcerned that land is fading away (p.35), Santiago's mind is on one thing only, "My big fish must be somewhere." (p.35) To fight straying thoughts, he reminds himself that he was born to do this task (p.40). Yet he is troubled that everything on the surface travels so fast to th north-east and he wonders if he is ignorant of some sign of the weather. His self-doubts make us question if he does know enough to raise the leviathan from the depths singlehanded.

This eighty-fifth day he sets his will against time when he admonishes himself "...fish the day well." (p.41) In the next moments the fish takes the bait, and as the line all at once becomes unbelievably heavy, the pivot point of the tale has been reached: from here on the two are linked in a fight to the death.

The ease with which the fish tows the skiff for hours hints at its size. What Santiago will do if it sounds and dies, he does not know, but he is aware there are plenty of things he can do (p.45). For the while he must not try to think, but only to endure (p.46).

At this conjuncture, if we pause to reflect on what we have been experiencing through Santiago, we come to some first realizations.

That he has been without a catch for eighty-four days tells us the kind of man he is. Unlike the other fishermen of the village who are content to haul in any fish to sell, the old man wants to hook only the great fish. So he is a "poor man" by choice. For this reason the old man was *salao*.

The bad luck on his shoulders seems to weigh down the very days of a life that is coming to its end. Santiago is dwarfed on a limitless ocean, and his very physical and mental strength are called into question. Yet the old man pits his tiny will and fine skills against time. This is the significance of his keeping his lines straight and at the right depth. "I keep them with precision... It is better to be lucky. But I would rather be exact. Then when luck comes you are ready." (p.32) It is faith in his own ability that he pits against Fate.

With the fish still pulling the skiff, the old man grows conscious of his loneliness. He misses the boy; he thinks of baseball; he reminds himself to keep alert and strong, the sense of his age adding to his desolation (pp.74-48. So the odds against

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Santiago appear greater, and we suspect the fish will be too much for one old man alone.

The weaknesses from within begin to harass him. He sees that the fish with a quick pull has cut his right hand. It is bleeding. He fears a failure in resistance and tells himself to eat the tuna (p.56. His left hand starts to contract painfully, and because the cramp is a treachery of his own body (p. 62), he mocks it by saying, "Make yourself into a claw" (p.58). Santiago's addressing his hand reminds us of man's affinity to all that is alive. The fisherman's condition marks a meaningful universal: each man is *in* and *of* that nature.

Although the fish has made him feel its power, Santiago has vowed to the marlin, "I'll stay with you until I am dead" (p.52). He begins to devise ways to hurt the creature and make it jump and fill its pouches with air so that it cannot go deep to die (p.53). Even if he loves and respects it, he is resolved to kill it before the day ends (p.54). Because of the great size of the fish, Santiago must improvise as it tries to fight itself free (p.60).

The conflict between man and beast becomes clearer. Just as the marlin's instinct is to stay in the deep dark water beyond lures and treacheries, Santiago's instinct leads him to seek the great one beyond all people (p.50). Now united in battle, Santiago must show the fish what sort of man he is (p.64). The thousands of times he tested himself before mean nothing. "Now he was proving it again" (p.66). In the past when he fought the athletic Negro from Cienfuegos, who was the strongest man on the docks. Santiago learned that, if he were determined enough, he could beat anyone (p.70). So in the boat Santiago begins to execute his plan to take the great fish. He lashes two oars across the stern to slow down the pull of the marlin (p.73). Using its pain and still unsatisfied hunger, he must let the fish pull itself until it dies.

When the marlin suddenly makes a number of great leaps filling its sacks with air, the old man makes the fish pay for every inch of line. From then on it cannot go deep to die (pp. 81-82). As the marlin begins to follow the current, Santiago knows it is tiring and will soon start to circle (p. 84). At sunrise on the third day, the fish begins its ellipse (p. 86), and the old man draws in line to make the ominous circle tighter and tighter (p. 87). The symbolic meaning of this slow spiral toward death becomes clear as the complex vision of the story unfolds.

The fisherman's battle is far from won. He sees black spots,

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feels faint and dizzy (p. 87). The fish resumes jumping as if it would throw the hook, and it beats the wire several times so the old man has to give up a little line (p. 88). They are one in their struggle and in their ebbing strength. Whatever advantage the fisherman gains, he is threatened with losing all because he himself is weakening. Both are afflicted, and Santiago knows he must hold the pain of the fish where it is. If the old man can control his, the creature's pain will drive it mad (p. 88). In being superior to distress, a man is not an animal.

As the marlin is drawn to the skiff in a narrowing vortex, Santiago's physical condition and mental state are strained to the extreme. Faint from fatigue and sleepless nights, his courage wavers. "I am not good for many more turns." "You are killing me, fish." He takes all his pain and what is left of his pride to bring the marlin alongside the skiff (pp. 92-93) where the man plunges the harpoon into its heart (p. 94). Afterward when the fish is lashed to the boat, the fisherman cannot believe its size (p. 96). At that moment the reader recognizes how truly heroic the old man is.

Santiago's victory is short-lived. The appearance of the sharks brings a kind of fateful retribution. The first shark closes fast astern and hits the big fish even as the old man rams the harpoon into the predator's brain killing it, (pp. 101-102), yet he knows others will come. Soon Galanos appear, excited by the scent and their great hunger (p. 106). Despite Santiago's efforts to fight them off, all his weapons are broken or torn out of his hands (p. 115). Sensing he is defeated because he has gone out too far (p. 116), he knows by midnight the fight is useless (p. 118). So the battle that began out of the excess which makes him the man he is comes to an end.

In this respect, Santiago seems a kinsman to the tragic hero who, despite greatness of soul, brings about his own downfall through outrageous pride in himself. It is as if the Fates have mocked the man's puny designs. It is as if he were a victim — his will and courage merely toyed with.

Because the fisherman's story transcends his single life and because what happens to him happens to all of us, he seems for three days to enact the destiny of the entire race. The old man represents mankind itself in its struggle for survival — physical and spiritual. Indeed, as Santiago, everyone of us wages the battle for himself — and without realizing it — for man. So his sealed fate becomes our fate too.

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Yet is he fated? To accept such an interpretation of the tale is to be misled. Indeed, there is a warning here against viewing fictional experience from any single vantage point, for it may perceive only a fraction of the meaning, and what is worse, it may misconstrue the overall significance of the story.

By solely examining the contrasts and the intentional distortions of *The Old Man and the Sea*, as I have done so far,the critic is forced to the bleak conclusion that injustice alone rules the world. However, such a judgment would be tantamount to defining darkness without describing the presence of the light which created the penumbra and the umbra. In fact, a fatalistic interpretation of Santiago's life ignores the charity, hope and faith implicit in the story as a whole. To attain that depth of understanding, let us now trace out the comparisons of situation, character, space and time.

Among parallel characters, there are four figures with underlying similarities: Joe Di Maggio; the boy, Manolin; the fish; and Santiago. The least involved relation is that presented by Joe Di Maggio, Santiago's baseball hero, model of the way a champion endures. Early in the story the old man sees a kinship with the player, whose father had also been a fisherman. Joe had had a spell of bad luck too, and even though the Yankees lost that day, Joe was once more himself (p. 21). Like Di Maggio, Santiago feels the old optimism coming back. Later during the second day out at sea, Santiago wants to be worthy of the great Di Maggio, who does all things perfectly, even with the pain of a bone spur in his leg (p. 68).

Critics have identified Di Maggio's hurt with Achilles' heel, implying by association that Santiago himself perhaps suffers from the tragic flaw of overweening pride. Yet neither Joe Di Maggio nor Santiago meet with a tragic end. If both Joe and the old man are like ancient stoics in resisting bodily anguish, Santiago's determination to do what he was born to do, in spite of everything against him, proves him superior to fate and worthy of a higher destiny.

Manolin recognizes the man for what he is. Although the boy's parents make him go with another boat, he never doubts the fisherman (p. 10). Manolin recalls everything from when they first went fishing together, and even if he cannot go with Santiago, the lad wants to serve him in some way (p.12). The boy even reproaches himself for being thoughtless in not getting his friend a shirt, a jacket, some sort of shoes and another blanket (p. 21). Hence Manolin is a spiritual son to Santiago, and the fisherman

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confirms this relationship when he thinks of the boy, wishing he were there to help bring in the big fish. If Santiago's life shows him to be a man of faith, the boy as faith-seeker senses what the old man has yet to teach him.

It is the antagonists, of course, who are closest to one another: the marlin and the man. From the moment the fish tugs at his line when Santiago visualizes it 600'below nibbling at the bait, the fisherman thinks it may remember being hooked once before. With that realization the two become one identity, for we sense how the caution and keenness of the fish match Santiago's skill and cunning (pp. 41-42).

The identification between man and beast enlarges to include other sea creatures as the two porpoises in the night making love (p. 48), which call to mind the time he hooked a female marlin whose loyal mate stayed with her till her death (p. 49).

Santiago has sympathy for the great fish he has out-witted. From the way it took the bait and pulled, it must be a male, and the man wonders if it too is old. From its strange ways, it seems as desperate as the fisherman himself (pp. 48-49). When the old man notices his hand is bleeding, he thinks that the fish is hurt too (p. 56).

Through the nights and days, he comes to realize the fish is his friend; indeed, that all the creatures in the sea are our true brothers (p. 75). He knows the punishment of the hook and the hunger of the fish are nothing compared to the marlin's not understanding what it is up against (p. 76). And so in their struggle to the death, the old man feels for the flesh of the fish and suffers with its great spirit.

Finally, Santiago pits his pain against the fish's torment to bring it alongside. With his last strength, he harpoons the long, silver shape behind the chest fin that stood as high as the man's chest. Startled, it rose above the old man with the last of its power and glory to fall dead in the water beside him.

When the old man has driven off the sharks for a while, he recognizes how kindred the marlin is. He asks, "How many did you ever kill, old fish? You don't have that spear on your head for nothing." (p. 115) So even though they both must live by the law of nature, they are brother souls.

The scene of the struggle has been sea and sky, yet Santiago feels on the sea as a male child on its mother or a man on his mistress, for to him she is benign or passionate. As a woman,

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she conceals what is most secret and sacred to her, and he never knows what he will arouse or draw up from her depths. So he is a part of her. How much he is one with creation is shown in his love of the birds, the porpoises and the great fish. Hence despite the Darwinian law of survival, Santiago senses that all living creatures are part of one transcendental identity.

If so, then how was it possible for the old man to club and kill the fish as Manolin remembered it in the boat, the smell of sweet blood coming to the boy, the sound like a tree being chopped down? (p. 12) Indeed, a terrible irony underlies the fisherman's way of life. It is seen when Santiago jokes with the bird for resting on his fishing line, gripping fast with its delicate feet. He asks, "What are birds coming to?" (p. 55) In the next moment the old man thinks bitterly how the hawks will soon come to kill it. In the same way a hurricane could engulf him, yet Santiago is alluding mainly to the seemingly diabolic plan of existence that he himself instinctively follows — as hunter of the hunted. Even though the marlin is his friend, he must slay it. Even his sorrow for the fish does not alter his determination to put it to death.

Later he wonders how many people the marlin would feed and realizes they are unworthy to eat it because of its behaviour and great dignity (p. 75). With the battle won, Santiago admits. "I am only better than him through trickery and he meant me no harm." (p. 99) Hence if the old man's intelligence and deceit prevail over the fish, its lack of malevolence, its unawareness of the man's evil intent, make it superior to the man. The injustice seems repaid in kind when the sharks hit the beautiful, blue giant tied to his skiff to devour the fish chunk by chunk.

It is time and metaphor which begin to unravel the paradox of existence. While at sea, Santiago is part of the great cycles of nature -- the flow of the currents, the blowing of the winds in the month of the hurricanes, the migration of the birds. There he is a part of vast cycles of time. Similarly, metaphor recycles past, present and future into recurrent meanings. The old man likens the deep creased scars in his hands to old erosions in a fishless desert (p. 10). In his experience, there is only one source for such an image: the wastelands where Moses and Christ walked. Santiago's own wilderness is the sea.

It is then we remember the opening lines of the story which make so much of time and numbers. The old man has had eighty-

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four days of bad luck, which are divided into two periods: the first forty days fishing with the boy, and the forty days after when the boy could no longer go with him because the fisherman was said to be jinxed. In the Bible, twice a great spiritual leader (Moses and Jesus) went for forty days into the wilderness. Add four days for Santiago, and you obtain a curious trinity of time that sets the stage for the fisherman's "change of luck". What significance can the four days have?

The number *four* evokes memories both ancient and modern. In the context of the story, it may remind us of the four cardinal directions of the world, the four winds, the four "corners" of the earth, the four seasons of the year and of life, the four natural virtues of Plato, and the four evangelists and their gospels. All these seem part of Santiago's awaiting the day he can once more prove what a man can endure and do.

If we look to other things which may have figurative meaning, the commonest objects take on a new AURA. The coiled fishing lines in the boat recall the fish circling the boat to approach its death. The gaff and the harpoon remind us of the old man's cramped hand and the numerous references to a bird's claw. Around the mast the sail was furled like a flag of permanent defeat (p. 9). It seems a military image appropriate for an old fighter as Santiago. Yet when the old man carries the mast on his shoulder (p. 15), we recollect the Biblical counterpart of Christ bearing the cross to Golgotha.

Metaphor also provides the clue to Santiago's mature credo. When the boy tells him to remember it is September and to keep warm, the old man replies it is the month of the great fish and adds cryptically, "Anyone can be a fisherman in May." (p. 18) He means that anyone can accomplish what he wants when he is young. To do the same thing in the September of one's life takes more. He feels a man's great works can only come when experience, knowledge and courage direct his searching spirit.

The true complexity of existence begins to be revealed when, before dawn, the boat is slipped into the water and rowed beyond the scent of land to the clean, morning pungence of the ocean (pp. 27-28). Once there we grow aware that we are witness to an ageless ritual where the rite tells all if we can but fathom its mythical meanings. One key to the liturgy seems the curious double gender of the sea. The younger fishermen, who became rich when the price of sharks livers was high, use motorboats to make their

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catches. To them the ocean is the masculine *le mar* (pp. 29-30). The old man speaks of her as *la mar* because as a woman she could give or withhold favors and because she does wild and wicked things (p. 30).

While explaining the mother archetype, the depth psychologist C.G. Jung touches on the hermaphroditic qualities of the ancient gods. The mother has three essential traits, "...her cherishing and nourishing goodness, her orgiastic emotionality, and her Stygian depths."[2] If "maternal solicitude and sympathy ... all that is benign, all that cherishes and sustains..." is the positive part of her nature, she may also connote "anything secret, hidden, dark, the abyss, the world of the dead, anything that devours, seduces and poisons, that is terrifying and inescapable as fate."[3] Indeed, the ancient goddesses of fate (Moira, Graeae, Norns) wear this same bivalent aspect. As symbols of evil, the grave, the sarcophagus, deep water and death may be associated with her.[4] Even so is the sea. That death is part of life is a truth a man learns as he grows older and wiser.

Santiago's hatred of this ambivalence in nature is seen when the Portuguese man-of-war floats by the boat with its deadly filaments trailing behind. He calls it "*Agua mala*. You whore."

Yet beyond this malignant duality is the spiritual oneness of nature. Although "Santiago had no mysticism about turtles" (p. 37), he sees his heart and hands and feet are like theirs. He thinks "most people are heartless about turtles because a turtle's heart will beat for hours after he has been cut up and butchered" (p. 37). Not only is this an image of the life force within the creature and in Santiago himself but obviously it illuminates the Christian import of the story. Santiago thought the people were unworthy to eat the marlin, implying they were not worthy of the Eucharist — of partaking of the substance of God. (Similarly, the boat may be the symbol of the church being towed in the depths by Christ since the *nave* of a church means boat.) Hence in the marlin we have a metaphor for the cannibalization of Christ and in the turtle a symbol of His heart beating on through the centuries after His death.

Metaphor and irony play as light and shadow across the story to make visible the intricate patterns of Santiago's experience. That he believes he was born to be a fisherman (p.40, 50) seems to give his life an archetypal meaning. Yet the flight of the ducks against the sky, which tells him a man is never alone at sea (pp. 60-

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61), enlarges the significance of his destiny. Another subtle identification between man and creature is the time Santiago recalls the one-arm wrestling match with the strongest man on the docks, the Negro from Cienfuegos. The blackman's silhouette on the wall is like the powerful shadow in the water below. Furthermore, pain is shared by all creatures: the hook in the fish's mouth (p. 76) is analogous to Di Maggio's bone spur and to the fisherman's cuts and terrible fatigue. When the old man dreams of porpoises mating and of young lions playing on the beach (p.81) the secret, sympathetic identicalness of all life is reaffirmed.

Paradoxically other images link man to the predators. A shark's teeth are likened to a man's fingers, and Santiago's hand is crisped like an eagle's claw. These predatory pictures take on spiritual importance at the moment the old man sights two sharks coming to attack the remains of the marlin. His outcry "Ay" is the kind of noise a man might make "...feeling the nail go through his hands and into the wood." (p. 107) Santiago is obviously imagining what Christ felt on the cross. In a like manner, when the old man harpoons the fish (p.94), the reader can feel the spear being shoved into the heart of the crucified Christ. The fisherman's cry shows how he identifies with Jesus. Like the Saviour, he faces the desolation of death. In spite of the ultimate irony of personal extinction, Santiago performs too a daily sacrament to the meaning of life. He proves thereby his state of grace.

This presence of the sacred in Santiago's life serves to make us more conscious of the profane there as well. At a mundane level his story shows there are two great adventures open to man: hunting and fishing. In his world the hunters are the hawks and sharks and men with motorboats who go out in packs to hunt down schools of fish. They are killers, and their action may be seen as phallic and male.

In contrast to the hunter, the fisher cannot even see his prey, but must attract it to the bait. He must have the right touch to hook the fish, and according to its power and instinct, the man must know how to let it fight itself to exhaustion before reeling it in. At any time, because of ignorance or impatience, the fisherman may lose his catch.

[1] The sport is reminiscent of the evil women of ancient times, who lured victims to untimely ends: Circe, Clytemnestra, Medea. It recalls too the Moirae who spun a man's fate, assigned him a doom,

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and cut the thread of his life at will. So, curiously, to fish is the luring, feminine way to exist. In Jungian terms, fishing symbolizes the act of enticing intuitive truth out of the subconscious depths. What finally makes Santiago's deed masculine, of course, is the size of the quarry he is after.

The fisherman watches the birds for signs of sea creatures in the waters below. To him the secrets of nature are omnipresent, and the smallest things portend meanings. Even his own body offers spiritual signification, for how else interpret the self-scorn when his hand cramps? Why so much anger at his own body and no trace of self-pity? Surely not to prove his bravery to himself. Rather, the incident again points up his affinity to Christ. Jesus, unlike the Apostles who denied Him because they were afraid to die with Him, did not yield to the fear of the agony of the mortal body. Jesus' own flesh did not betray Him. And so Santiago fought that subtlest of all treacheries. He has learned that if the flesh can perish, it can also recover. Both the cramp and the old man's scars show the healing power within life, and such regeneration and restoration within nature seems to assure us the promise of salvation is real.

The intermingling of the worldly and the holy is depicted among the ironies of the story. When neither the woman tourist nor her male companion recognizes the marlin for what it is, their ignorance not only shows that citified man has lost that wisdom which understands and respects the living. The gist of modern civilization, seen in the garbage, is contrasted to the skeleton still majestic in death and mark of the noble spirit in nature. Since the fish is also the symbol of Christ, their incomprehension attests to how Christianity today is stripped of its former meaning.

This interpretation is borne out by the incident of the old man sleeping face downward on the newspapers with his arms outstretched and the palms of hands up (p. 122). The news in the papers is like a hostile world jeering the sacrifice of the Man on the Cross. And Santiago confirms his defeat when he tells Manolin about the sharks, "They beat me. They truly beat me." (p. 124) Implied by the juxtaposition of these episodes is that men daily profane the sacred — life itself.

But not so Santiago. Rather than exist as the sharks for the sake of hunger or believe the predatory reality reported by the newspapers, he chooses to live by wiser laws. If fishing for Santiago

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is a spiritual exercise, it is not only by confronting death and mastering pain that the old man seeks to perfect his soul. He has learned something from the giant cycles of nature. They have taught him what life is.

It is not all those things he no longer thinks about: the fights, the women, the storms. It is not even everything that humbled him: his poverty, the death of his wife, the daily defeats. Nor is it all those inconclusive gestures and deeds that lead nowhere, all the trivial desires and delusions that a man learns to let die along the way.

What makes him different from other men is that he has come to terms with the great laws of time which bring things into being.[5] They have taught him which things depend on him and which do not. They have taught him the patience shown in his profound humility and in his capacity to endure.

Time seems to have the duality of existence itself. As a power that atrophies and destroys life, it appears circular and malign. Happiness that is past can never be recaptured, although the memory of its loss brings fresh remorse and despair. Thus time is circular when pain reappears or the living return to non-existence. A Freudian might see time in terms of the traumata about which our psychic lives turn. A Jungian might interpret time as a mandala, "a protective circle" around a center of chaos.[6] This circularity to time recalls the old man's pulling the fish to him in contracting coils of space. The act appears a ritual to death. Yet religions traditionally use the circle as a symbol of God's perfect being.

This death-in-life paradox is further expressed in the style of the novel. If Santiago's story has the archaic simplicity of ancient epic or of the Old Testament, some of his observations have the intonation of Genesis while others sound like the Ecclesiastes, thus reiterating the sense of the beginning and end of things. However, transcending this circularity of style are the passages which presage a destiny to be fulfilled. Stemming from the New Testament, these passages show Santiago to be millennia-remembering man burdened with the memory of Christ.

The old man is pursuing a destiny, and all that this means is clarified by C.G. Jung. "Higher consciousness, or knowledge going beyond our present-day consciousness, is equivalent to being *all alone in the world*. This loneliness expresses the conflict between the bearer or symbol of higher consciousness and his surroundings.[6] This definition of awareness not only contrasts

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Santiago to his fellow fishermen but also differentiates him from the mindless, malevolent forces in nature. Moreover, he knows he must live in this new state of being utterly alone. Jung emphasizes, "Identity does not make consciousness possible; it is only separation, detachment, and agonizing confrontation through opposition that produces consciousness and insight."[7] This is the significance of Santiago's solitary struggle with the fish.

His isolation is seen in various ways. He stands alone at the center of the marlin's ellipse about him. He is also the focal point of the immense circle of ocean and earth. At night in the darkest hours, the particles of phosphorous form a ghostly halo about the skiff.

In a profound sense Santiago is the heart of a mandala just as Christ in Romanesque and Gothic tympana is encompassed by symbols of the four evangelists. Jung comments, "As psychological phenomena, they (mandalas) appear spontaneously in dreams, in certain states of conflict...Very frequently they contain...a multiple of four, in the form of a cross, a star, a square, etc."[8] On the sea in his boat, Santiago appears the radiating point of the our directions of the world, the four winds, and of the four Gospels. Indeed, he seems the point of intersection of an infinite cross within the protective circle of the universe.

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The importance of the mandala image is brought out by Jung. As archetypes of wholeness, they "...often represent very bold attempts to see and put together apparently irreconcilable opposites and bridge over apparently hopeless splits."[9] Just so the old man has tried to reconcile his knowledge of the predatory laws of existence with his cognizance of the underlying identity of all species. His share in their symbiotic and ecological fate has brought him the deep humility he has. All along he has endeavored to conciliate the laws of death with the laws of life.

This understanding suggests that for the old man fishing is a submergence of spirit, a baptism. Every day at sea he performs a sacrament of initiation, of rebirth and purification. When he hunts for the great fish, he is committing his soul to the Omnipresent. Santiago instinctively feels the need of this daily *renovatio*, this healing and strengthening of the soul. He is preparing himself. As Jung reminds us, "The *sarkikos* (carnal man) remains eternally under the law; the *pneumatikos* (spiritual man) alone is capable of being reborn into freedom."[11] Or perhaps Santiago is miming; God

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who pulls up the large souls among us — those with beauty, power and nobility — and lets the lesser beings go.

The story of this lowly fisher confronts our irresolution and doubts. An old man would allay our fears that life is absurd because the universe appears tyrannized by death. If humanity has run out of luck and out of time, the single man need not accept that fateful verdict. Santiago tells him that all of us must seek the hidden sense to the deceptively meaningless days of our lives. The old fisherman has taught Manolin that man has in truth a higher destiny and that only the unquenchable soul can make its dream come true. Thus the old man's faith, hope and charity become part of the boy and of us.

Hope is reawakened by the migration of the birds which points to the seasonal rhythm of the earth and consequently to the great cycles of cessation and rebirth. If to primitive man the vegetation gods die in the winter to return to life in the spring, our era sees in the Savior the manifestation of birth, death and resurrection. If killing seems the axiom of animal life, the cycles of nature show us that creation is a higher law than destruction. When Jung explains that the circular is ultimately female, we see the mother archetype triumph over the rapacious male principle. The cyclical continuation of life in the face of so much death proves conclusively one law is predominant. The higher power in the universe is female, and it is benign, loving and life-giving.

The paradox of existence is now seen as its Yin and Yang. We now understand why man need not despair. Although twists of fate may ridicule men, there is, nevertheless, a vast, durable cosmos prevailing over the chaotic and transitory. The Occidental mind still believes in destiny, and Santiago's transcendental vision offers us the timeless karmic faith of the Oriental.[12] Indeed, in compensation for the perpetual disappearance of the single life, the old man and the boy — as end point and beginning — join together to reassure us of the eternal power of love.

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NOTES

[1]All pagination in parentheses refers to Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952).
[2]C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, transl. R.F.C. Hull, (New York: Pantheon Books, Bollingen Series XX, 1959), p. 82.
[3]Ibid.
[4]Ibid.
[5]I am indebted to Jean Pucelle's *Le Temps*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967) for his excellent philosophical discussion of time in its manifold rhythms and cycles.
[6]C.G. Jung, p. 169.
[7]Ibid., p.171.
[8]Ibid., p.387.
[9]Ibid., pp. 389-390.
[10]Ibid., p. 144.
[11]Ibid., see footnote on p. 137.
[12]If a reader finds the symbolic interpretation of this article disconcerting, let him see Jessie L. Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1957) pp. 113-136. Miss Weston points out convincingly that fish and fisher are life symbols of immemorial antiquity and that the fisher has from the earliest ages been associated with Deities who are connected with the origin and preservation of life (p. 125). Not only is the sacramental fish meal common to Jewish, Christian and Mystery cults (p. 130). "...the central point of Jewish Fish symbolism is the tradition that, at the end of the world, Messias will catch the great Fish Leviathan and divide its food among the faithful..." (p. 128). This brings new light to Santiago's belief that no one is worthy to eat the marlin.

Of broader consequence, of course, is that fish symbolism is shared by both Occident and Orient. For instance, in Indian cosmogony Vishnu is represented as the golden fish which saved the Vedas from the underworld. "The Fish Avatar was afterwards transferred to Buddha." (p. 126) In the Mahayana scriptures Buddha is seen as the fisherman who draws fish from the sea of Samsara to the light of Salvation (p. 126). Finally, in funeral rites in India and China, the fish is employed as a symbol of resurrection (p. 127).

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G. Singh

GANDHI AS PROSE-WRITER

I

Before he could effectively fight the British rule in India, Gandhi knew all too well that the strength of his moral and political convictions, the righteousness of his cause, and the saintliness of his character alone could not cut much ice with them unless he mastered their language - mastered, that is, what Ezra Pound calls the unspeakably difficult art of prose. But what he was out to master was not merely the functional use of clerical English which Lord Macaulay, a member of the Supreme Council of India (1834-38), had prescribed for Indians to learn in order to be able to serve their new rulers; or the kind of English which the British themselves were to dub as Babu English; nor was it the rich literary language of the prose masters such as Burke and De Quincey, Ruskin and Carlyle, Matthew Arnold and Pater which some Indians had indeed learnt to use with great effect; but English which was simple, direct and forthright just like Gandhi's own character; morally cogent and transparent like his own thought; as free from ornamental tapestry and rhetorical devices as his own way of life and speech. It was to be, to borrow T.S. Eliot's works, "neither diffident nor ostentatious", "exact without vulgarity", "precise, but not pedantic" (*Little Gidding*). Truth dictates its own style, says Ezra Pound; and plain truth, to quote Byron, "needs few flowers of speech" (*Don Juan*). Of few prose writers can this be said with greater aptness than of Gandhi. He couldn't have agreed more with Matthew Arnold when he wrote: "Have something to say, and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret of style". Truth or what *he* considered to be truth was not only the *summum bonum* of Gandhi's life, the highest goal to which his soul could aspire, but also the main source of his strength and inspiration as a writer. He went so far as to identify Truth with God, God with Truth, so that, paraphrasing Keats's remark - "What the imagination seizes as beauty must be truth" - one could say of Gandhi that what his imagination seized as truth was for him not only God - but also the very soul and essence of his style. He called himself a "practical idealist"; and so far as his prose style is concerned he may be called a "practical stylist".

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There was, of course, no literary or linguistic training Gandhi underwent - his education being that of a barrister. Indeed he would have been surprised to be told that you can learn the art of writing by studying linguistics or philology which cannot more teach you how to write than accountancy can teach you how to be rich.

The only course open to each one of us - Gandhi included - is to frequent the great prose writers, or, like Robert Louis Stevenson, play the sedulous ape to one or more of them. But, Gandhi had no time or inclination for such a pursuit. In fact he thought poorly of what is called literary training. "I have never been able to make a fetish of literary training", he tells us; "My experience has proved to my satisfaction that literary training by itself adds not an inch to one's moral height and that character is independent of literary training". Hence, whatever authors he read - and he managed to read a good many during his numerous terms of imprisonment - he read them solely for what they had to teach him or enlighten him with, rather that for the beauty and elegance of their style. Writers like Ruskin - the Ruskin of *Unto this Last*, the Carlyle of *Hero and Hero Worship*, Henry David Thoreau, the author of *Walden*, and Tolstoy, not so much the author of *War and Peace* or *Anna Karenina*, as of *The Kingdom of God is Within You* had a message to convey to Gandhi which went straight to his heart, and the manner, style and technique through which that message was conveyed was of little importance to Gandhi. The same applies to his fondness for the Sermon on the Mount which he put almost on a par with the *Gita*. It would never have occurred to him to call Christ, as Robert Browning calls him in *Paracelsus* " the perfect poet", although Gandhi called him a social reformer, or "a prince among the politicians". External form - whether that of writing or architecture - had little or no interest for Gandhi. "All true art", he said, almost echoing unconsciously Robert Browning with his insistence on "incidents in the development of the soul", for nothing else is worth study" - all time art "must help the soul to realize its inner self. In my own case, I find that I can do entirely without external forms in my soul's realization. I can claim, therefore, that there is truly efficient art in my life, though you might not see what you call works of Art about me. My room may have blank walls; and I may even dispense with the roof, so that I may gaze out at the starry heavens overhead that stretch in an unending expense of

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beauty". Hence Gandhi's notorious description of the Taj Mahal as a "monument of forced labour". If he enjoyed and cherished a poem - as for instance Newman"s hymn "Lead kindly light", or Francis Thompson" "The Hound of Heaven" or a poem in his own mother tongue Gujerati entitled "Call the man perfect" by the 16th century poet Narasimh Maheta (1500-1580), he did so not for the sake of their literary style and poetic beauty, but for their moral and spiritual content in responding to which his whole being was thrilled to the core. For instance, take that Gujerati poem:

Call that man perfect
who knows the sufferings of others,
He never lets the faintest shadow
of pride cross his mind;
he bows before every one, never
speaks ill of any, being firm
in body, mind and word.
Blest be she who bore him.
He's given up all desires
and looks upon everyone with
the same eye, treating the wife
of another like his own mother.
His tongue may be tired of speech,
but never once does it tell a lie.
Nor does he lay his hands
upon another's wealth.
Ignorance envelops him not,
for his mind is well-versed
in the *yoga* of detachment. The name
of Rama fills him with ecstasy.
And all the places of pilgrimage
are centered in his body.
He's free from fraud and avarice,
having overcome anger and desire.
Says Narsimh: The very sight
of such a man has the virtue
of saving seventy-one generations from hell.

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If this poem meant so much to Gandhi, it was by no means for what was inherently poetic about it, but for the way each of the attributes or requisites of a perfect man made an irresistible appeal to him, constituting a sort of challenge for him to try to embody them in his own life.

A passionate votary of truth, Gandhi claimed to have no secret methods, know no diplomacy save that of truth; and possess

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no weapon but that of non-violence. The diplomacy of truth was to play a crucial role in moulding his prose. It not only made him call a spade a spade; but also lent his case, or his thesis, or his plea a peculiar force. However, what appeared to be disarmingly simple and undiplomatic in Gandhi's style was not really so, which made the force and authority of what he had to say all the more telling. The impact of a style like Gandhi's and the way it worked may, in some respects, be compared with the impact of his campaign of passive resistance and non-cooperation on the British government in India. For, for all its passive character, this campaign shook the moral and political foundations of an empire in which the sun never used to set. Similarly, for all its bareness and simplicity of style and the absence of any rhetoric or eloquence, Gandhi's prose had a subterranean force which was not merely moral, and which, by virtue of its being charged to the maximum with meaning, more than made up for the absence of literary or stylistic beauties or ornaments. A.E. Housman, perhaps the greatest classical scholar of this century, and at the same time a great master of English prose, had this to say of a fellow classicist - Hugh Munro, the editor of Lucretius. He wrote English so well, says Housman, that most scholars do not know how well he wrote it. Most people may not have known how well Gandhi wrote English; but the British masters certainly did: so that even those who were opposed to his aims and policies, could not but respect his lucid, firm and balanced prose as well as his political principles, his moral integrity and the saintliness of his character. "It is to me", Gandhi wrote, "a matter of perennial satisfaction that I retain generally the affection and the trust of those whose principles and politics I oppose". Part of this trust and affection Gandhi certainly owed to his prose style. Hence my argument here is that lurking behind their esteem and admiration of Gandhi, the man and the politician, there was on the part of the British, a tacit even though grudging recognition of Gandhi's mastery of English acquired in the course of a lifetime devoted to causes far more important for him - for India - and for the world at large - than the study and acquisition of style, whether in his own or in a foreign language.

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II

Gandhi's single-minded devotion to truth - truth in its profound as well as simple and obvious aspects is behind the kind

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of style that he, without being a stylist, manages to achieve. And this is how he sees the link between truth and his writing:

> There can be no room for untruth in my writing, because it is my unshakable belief that there is no religion other than truth and because I am capable of rejecting aught obtained at the cost of truth. My writings cannot but be free from hatred towards any individual because it is my firm belief that it is love that sustains the earth. There only is life where there is love. Life without love is death.

That is why in all his writings, where thought and sentiment, feeling and conviction are inseparably linked, the prose style acquires a distinctive character of its own, making his comments and reflections on the issues he was preoccupied with throughout his life all the more cogent and memorable. The plainness and simplicity of language with which he expresses himself is at once a measure of the depth of his thoughts, beliefs and convictions and of his own commitment to them. The clarity of style - and for Gandhi as well as for Housman clarity is not a virtue, but duty - is a symptom of his clarity of vision and thought; just as his candour and directness of expression reflect his utterly honest and straightforward nature. Hence if there was one - and that one a saint and a politician withal - of whom one could say unreservedly that the style is the man, that man was Gandhi. And that style is nowhere more prominent than in his discussion of the interrelation between reason and religion, or politics and religion. "Religion", he tells us, "without the backing of reason and enlightenment is a worthless sentiment which is bound to die of inanition. It is knowledge that ultimately gives salvation". Even the authority of scriptures could not interfere with the authority of reason. "I exercise my judgement", Gandhi tells us, "about every scripture, including the *Gita*. I cannot let a scriptural text supersede my reason". Later in life he went further and observed: "I reject any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality"; nor did he desire, as he puts it, "to carry a single soul with me if I cannot appeal to his or her reason". Such clarity and certitude of thought and conviction, moral, political and intellectual, is the hallmark of Gandhi's literary style, just as what is frank and outspoken about his expression is part of his courage and integrity, so that what he says is much less motivated by the desire to impress, persuade or convince others than by the desire to be utterly honest with himself, and, above all, with his thought and subject, irrespective of what impact it might

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have on others. Such an attitude contributed to Gandhi's independent thinking, which in turn led to a personal style even while dealing with public and impersonal matters. For instance, this is what Gandhi has to say a propose of the ancient Hindu scriptures;

I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas. I believe the Bible, the Koran and the Zend Avesta to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas. My belief in the Hindu scriptures does not require me to accept every word and every verse as divinely inspired. Nor do i claim to have any first hand knowledge of these wonderful books. But I do claim to know and feel the truths of the essential teaching of the scriptures.

Reason, truth, and belief in non-violence (Ahimsa) then, more than the authority of the scriptures whether divinely inspired or not, constituted the three cardinal principles of Gandhi's life and thought - principles he unreservedly applied to any subject-matter or to any context. Thus, for instance, while telling us how utterly incapable he is of hating anything or being against anything but evil, Gandhi explains his position with characteristic candour and simplicity of style: "I am not anti-English; but I am anti-untruth, anti-humbug and anti-injustice" - which may be regarded as a modern version in Gandhian terminology of the Latin proverb: "Amicus Plato, amicus Socrates, sed magis amica veritas". For as early as 1929, in the last chapter of his autobiography *My Experiments with Truth* (written in Gujerati) Gandhi would tell us: "My uniform experience has convinced me that there is no other God than truth". Even while arguing with his political opponents, analysing and exposing the fallacies of their arguments and trying to demolish their thesis Gandhi always insisted on the facts and on truth as well as on what ought to be rather than what was expedient. In fact, nothing would have gone so much against the grain of his nature and of what he believed politics to be as the definition of politics as the "art of the possible". For instance, while arguing with Lord Linlithgow, one of the last Viceroys of India, Gandhi's weapon was not so much subtleties of logic as a relentless adherence to facts as well as to moral principles and ethical criteria.

In his reply to Lord Linlithgow dated 31 December 1943, Gandhi asks him (concerning the arrest of the Congress leaders ordered by the Viceroy):

If I have not ceased to be your friend why did you not, before taking drastic action, send for me, tell me of your suspicions and make yourself sure of your facts? I am quite

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capable of seeing myself as others see me, but in this case I have failed hopelessly. I find that all statements made about me in Government quarters in this connection contain palpable departures from truth.

As to violence, Gandhi couldn't see much difference between government violence and the violence committed by ordinary citizens. "I see", he continues in the same letter,

the fact of murders as clearly as I hope you do. My answer is that the government goaded people to a point of madness. They started leonine violence in the shape of arrests already referred to. But violence is not any less so because it was organized on a scale so gigantic that it displaces the Mosaic law of a tooth for a tooth by that of 10000 for 1 - not to mention the corollary of the Mosaic law, ie., of non-resistance as enunciated by Jesus Christ.

Not that Gandhi was in any way justifying or excusing acts of violence whatever might have been the provocation. Referring to the riots that occurred in Bombay in 1947, and acts of violence in Ahemadabad he observed "A rapier run through my body could hardly have pained me more ... I felt I was a sharer in the guilt".

III

But moral considerations and principles, far from blunting the edge of Gandhi's logic, political acumen and dialectical shrewdness, made it all the more cutting, as it comes out from the exchanges he had with the members of the Hunter Committee inquiring into the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh, which quickened India's political life and drew Gandhi into politics. He answered the questions that were put to him and argued both as a politician and a moralist, a lawyer and a patriot.

Questioner:	Who is to determine the truth?
Gandhi:	The individual himself will determine that.
Questioner:	Different individuals would have different views as to truth. Would that not lead to suspicion?
Gandhi:	I do not think so.
Questioner:	Hence striving after truth is different in every case.
Gandhi:	That is why non-violence is necessary. Without that there would be confusion and worse.

And yet, under no circumstances, would Gandhi condone or defend terrorism which he considered to be bad whether

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perpetrated in a good cause or bad. Every case, he argues, "is good in the estimation of its champion". Referring to General Dyer who had ordered the shooting at Jallianwala Bagh, Gandhi observes:

> General Dyer (and he had thousands of Englishmen and women who honestly thought with him) enacted Jallianwala Bagh for a cause he undoubtedly believed to be good. He thought that by that one act he had saved English lives and the Empire. That it was all a figment of his imagination cannot affect the valuation of the integrity of his conviction. In other words, pure motives can never justify impure or violent action.

Both what he says here and the way he says it sums up what one might call Gandhi's anti-Machiavellian position whereby the means cannot justify the ends. In fact Gandhi used to say that in his philosophy of life means and ends are convertible terms.

Gandhi's unconditional love of truth made him fear untruth like a deadly disease and he did his best to keep himself immune from it. But he knew, being a "humble researcher after Truth", as he called himself, rather than a 'saint' - he knew that the one walk of life where, together with business, this disease is most rife is politics. His entering politics therefore was like a wrestler entering an arena where he is faced not with one combatant but several: greed, immorality, but above all the hydra-headed monster of untruth often masquerading as diplomacy. His struggle was therefore, all the greater because he wasn't and couldn't afford to be a pure politician. "The politician in me", he once observed, "has never dominated a single decision of mind, and if I take part in politics, it is only because politics encircles us today like the coil of a snake from which one cannot get out, no matter how much one tries". In his characteristically terse and transparent prose, as well as with his usual honesty and outspokenness, he tells us what entering into politics entailed for him and how he was determined to cope with it, whatever the cost:

> When I found myself drawn into the political coil, I asked myself what was necessary for me in order to remain absolutely untouched by immorality, by untruth, by what is known as political gain ... it was a difficult struggle in the beginning and it was a wrestle with my wife and - as I can vividly recall - with my children also. But be that as it may, I came definitely to the conclusion that, if I had to serve the people in whose midst my life was cast and whose difficulties I witness from day to day, I must discard all wealth, all possession. .

The inevitable mixture, therefore, between politics and religion could not but leave its mark on Gandhi's prose style, which was as

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much that of a religious teacher and moralist as that of a politician. Tact, delicacy, understatement, deliberate ambiguity, equivocalness and secrecy were as alien to Gandhi's prose as to his character. He even went so far as to regard secrecy, on which both politics, diplomacy and bureaucracy heavily depend, as a sin, and he linked his own abhorrence of it with his faith in God, ie. with his faith in Truth. "If we realize the presence of God as witness to all we say and do", he tells us, "we would not have anything to conceal from anybody on earth. For we would not think unclean thoughts before our Maker, much less speak them. It is uncleanliness that seeks secrecy and darkness". He regarded politics divorced from religion as a "corpse only fit to be buried". Such an approach may seem to be simplistic, but Gandhi successfully practised it throughout his life. The Biblical simplicity, directness and unequivocalness of his style is one of the proofs as well as manifestations of it. Take, for instance, what he says about truth and how it cannot but be rooted in one's personal experience and belief. "For a time many other things may sustain us", he tells us,

> but this (Truth) alone sustains us for all time. Truth gives perennial joy. In Sanskrit we have the words sat, chit, ananda. It is a fine combination. The three together make one word. Truth is knowledge also. It is life. You feel vitality in you when you have got truth in you. Again, it gives bliss. It is a permanent thing of which you cannot be robbed. You may be sent to the gallows, or put to torture, but if you have truth in you, you will experience an inner joy.

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Here Gandhi seems to be summing up or recapitulating the message of Francis Thompson's poem "The Hound of Heaven" which he had read during one of his terms of imprisonment, with avid interest and curiosity, and had asked his fellow prisoner C. Rajagopalachari, to explain its meaning to him. The various objects and persons the poet runs to in search of love and shelter from the pursuing feet of God - "the hound of heaven" - which eventually betray him are like the things that, in Gandhi's words, sustain us for a time only, but eventually betray us; truth alone sustains us for all time and cannot and will not betray us. For Gandhi the performance of one's duty in the field of politics irrespective of the consequences was no different from that in any other field - a notion that no real politician can afford to embrace and that cost Gandhi himself his own life.

In characterizing the nature of truth and safeguarding it

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against such human weaknesses as the proneness to exaggerate or to suppress or modify truth, Gandhi was, in a way, unfolding thevery nature of his prose style and of the source from which it drew its strength and inspiration. "Experience has taught me", he tells us,

> that silence is part of the spiritual discipline of a votary of truth. Proneness to exaggerate, to suppress or modify the truth wittingly or unwittingly is a natural weakness of man and silence is necessary in order to surmount it. A man of few words will rarely be thoughtless in his speech, he will measure every word. We find so many people impatient to talk. There is no chairman of a meeting who is not pestered with notes for permission to speak. And whenever the permission is given the speaker generally exceeds the time-limit, asks for more time, and keeps on talking without permission. All this talk can hardly be said to be of any benefit to the world. It is so much waste of time. My shyness has been in reality my shield and buckler. It has allowed me to grow. It has helped me in my discernment of truth.

What helped him in his discernment of truth also helped him in shaping his style, which, instead of meddling with or modifying truth, is level with it, economic with words and metaphors, and has a poise and calm about it, reflecting Gandhi's inner calm and poise. In 1926 Gandhi took a vow of a year's "political silence" which meant that each Monday of the year he would not speak. "A seeker after truth", he said, "has to be silent. I know the wonderful efficacy of silence". This efficacy not only helped him meditate and analyse his thoughts and spiritually re-charge himself, as it were, but also re-charge his words, his similes, his metaphors, so that, in terms of its transparent sincerity and truthfulness, his language was as far removed from the language of the general run of politicians as it was possible for it to be.

In fact, Gandhi brought to the practice and profession of politics the language of a spiritual leader, a social reformer, and a politician all rolled into one. "A reformer through and through", as he called himself, he pursued truth with a zeal and diligence that can be described as religious. And the more he pursued truth, the greater was his humility and patience which, he believed, "purge us of harshness and add to our tolerance". Thanks to this spirit of tolerance, we tend, in Gandhi's own words, "to magnify the molehills of our errors into mountains and minimise the mountains of others' errors into molehills".

Gandhi's sense of humility, patience, and tolerance, however, co-existed with his sense of pride in his own culture. He regarded Hinduism as the most tolerant of all religions, not only

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because it is a non-proselytising religion and heresy-hunting, in Radhakrishnan's words, the favourite game of many religions, is singularly absent from Hinduism, but also because "it is wholly free from the strange obsession of the Sematic faith that the acceptance of a particular religious metaphysics is necessary for salvation, and non-acceptance thereof is a heinous sin meriting eternal punishment in hell". And yet he was ready to learn or imbibe influences from whatever quarters they came. "I do not want", he tells us without any taint of chauvinism, "my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any. I refuse to live in other people's houses as an interloper, a beggar or a slave". This enabled him to acknowledge unequivocally his own errors which he regarded as being due to his ignorance rather than to his wilfulness. "I know", he tells us, with a mixture of pride and humility, insight, and self-analysis, "that the world has never had to suffer on account of my errors because they were all due to my ignorance. It is my firm belief that not one of my known errors was wilful'.

If there is, in all Gandhi's writings and speeches, the pervasive element of sincerity - not all good writings possess this element - it is because whatever Gandhi set out to teach he first tried it out on himself, so that he practised first and preached afterwards.

That is why when he discussed a general ethical or spiritual principle he often gave the impression of commenting on the drama of his own life, and deriving his sense of certitude and moral authority from first-hand experience. "A man becomes what he thinks", say the *Upanishads*. Gandhi became what he preached. That is why when asked what his message was, Gandhi answered, without any pride or presumption, and with the utmost humility: "My life is my message".

Of all the principles of moral, spiritual and religious life and thought, none inspired Gandhi and mattered so much to him as the principle of "Ahimsa" (ie. non-violence), in propounding, analysing and defending which both the saint and the psychologist, the moralist and the politician, the exegete and the prose-writer in him joined hands. A slight introspection, for instance, he tells us,

> will show that he who always depended on the sword will find it difficult to throw it away. But having deliberately discarded it, he is likely to find his Ahimsa more lasting than that of him who, not knowing its use, fancies he will not fear it. But that does not mean

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that in order to be truly non-violent one must before possess and know the use of arms. By parity of reasoning, one might say that only a thief can be honest, only a diseased person can be healthy, and only a dissolute person can be a brahamchari. The fact is that we have formed the habit of thinking along traditional grooves and will not get out of them. And if we cannot take a detached view we cannot draw the right conclusions and get caught in delusive snares.

IV

One of Gandhi's English admirers was Ronald Duncan, poet and playwright who edited *Selected Writings of Mahatman Gandhi* in 1951. In 1937, soon after coming down from Cambridge, he started corresponding with Gandhi and at one point even suggested that they should meet. Gandhi took him at his word and cabled his reply: "Met me Wardha on 23rd inst." Within a couple of days Duncan left London for India and reached Wardha on the 23rd. Gandhi had walked three miles to the station to meet him. Duncan expected Gandhi to congratulate him, on his survival, as he puts it, or at least to make some comment on his arrival, for he had after all travelled several thousand miles to keep this appointment. But even before he had time to shake off the dust of the journey, Gandhi began: "As I was saying in my last letter, means must determine ends and indeed it's questionable in human affairs whether there is an end. The best we can do is to make sure of the method and examine our motive". Duncan found Gandhi "the most practical man he had ever met". He would always drive any thought to its personal implication and practical application". This aspect of Gandhi's character stamped itself on his prose which is singularly free from rhetoric, hyperbole or extravagance. "There was about him", says Duncan, "a lake of calmness; being with him was a kind of solitude. He emitted peace in the same way as a heater radiates warmth". The same quality accounts for the clarity, poise and certitude that characterize Gandhi's prose no less than his logic. Here are some specimens of his thought which might well serve as specimens of his prose style as well. "There is no point", says Gandhi, "in renouncing an object that one still desires for there is a difference between renouncing an object and relinquishing it"; "nothing is or exists in reality except Truth"; "Truth is perhaps the most important name of God"; "it is more correct to say that Truth is God than to say that God is Truth"; "Truth is my God. Non-violence is the means of realizing Him"; "Civilization, in the real sense of the term, consists not in the multiplication, but in the

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deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants"; "A humble person is not himself conscious of his humility"; "Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will"; "Self-suffering is an appeal to (a wrong-doer's) better nature, as retaliation is to his baser"; "There is no such thing as the other world. All worlds are one. There is no 'here' and no 'there'"; "A government builds its prestige upon the apparently voluntary association of the governed"; "No country has ever risen without being purified through the fire of suffering ... the law of suffering is the one indispensable condition of our being"; "Jesus and the Bible are not the sole property of Christians, but the joint estate of humanity at large"; "Cow protection is the gift of Hinduism to the world. And Hinduism will live so long as there are Hindus to protect the cow"; "By every act of cruelty to our cattle, we disown God and Hinduism".

There is nothing new or original in what Gandhi says. "I have," he himself was the first to admit, "nothing new to teach the world. truth and non-violence are as old as the hills". And what he knew itself came from the study of the Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Upanishads etc. But the way he formulated these truths as well as the way he embodied them in his own life puts upon them the unmistakable seal of personal authority and of a rare kind of authenticity. The more passionately he believed in something, the more convincing was his way of arguing about it and the simpler and more forthright his style became. And yet Gandhi considered language to be "at its best ... a poor vehicle for expressing his thoughts in full" and wanted his writings to be cremated with his body. "What I have done will endure, not what I have said or written". While discussing what the principle of non-violence meant to him - not " a mere philosophical principle" so much as "the rule and the breath of my life" - he could express himself only through "solid action" as he calls it, rather than through speech.

In replying to Tagore who had criticized his call to the nation to reject foreign goods, wear homespun clothes, refuse to co-operate with the British and thus pave the way to swaraj (self-rule). Gandhi observes that "rejection is as much an ideal as the acceptance of a thing. It is as necessary to reject untruth as it is to accept truth."

Just as for every political stand Gandhi and a moral justification, so he let each moral stand and conviction of his translate itself into a political stand. Thus, for instance, at his trial in 1922 when he was accused of having written three articles

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entitled "Tampering with Loyalty", "The Puzzle and the Solution" and "Shaking the Manes" which were considered likely to excite disaffection towards His Majesty's Government, he not only pleaded guilty, but caught the English judge on the horns of a moral dilemma. Having argued that "non-co-operation with evil is as much a duty as is co-operation with good", Gandhi told him: "The only course open to you is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent; or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal". Whatever conflict the judge might have felt within himself, he could not but apply the letter of the law and sentence Gandhi to six years' imprisonment. Characteristically Gandhi considered the sentence, to quote his own words, "as light as any judge would inflict on me, and so far as the whole proceedings are concerned, I must say I could not have expected greater courtesy".

Courtesy and reasonableness, getting both the facts and his feelings right, enlisting all his principles and convictions to the service and support of a cause and imposing a certain order on his emotions was part not only of Gandhi's political tactics, but also of his prose style. His use of English was therefore influenced by his whole personality and self-discipline as well as by his various readings in English, Hindi, Tamil, Sanskrit and his own mother tongue Gujrati. His choice of reading was not that of a scholar, but that of a man of action. "I am not built for academic readings" said Gandhi, "Action is my domain". Much of his reading was done during his frequent jail internments and therefore, the choice of what he read was only partly his, but partly determined by the availability of books in prison libraries. These included Ruskin's *Unto This Last* which he paraphrased into Gujrati, Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God*, together with the *Gita*, Carlyle's *Lives of Burns, Johnson, and Scott*, writers like Gibbon, Shaw, Kipling, Wells and Adam Smith. He read *Das Kapital* in 1944, expressed surprise that it was badly written despite the leisure Marx had had for his studies, and added: "I don't care whether Marxism is right or wrong. All I know is that the poor are being crushed. Somthing has got to be done for them. To me this is axiomatic". In 1946 he again praised Marx for his industry and acumen, but refused to share his view that the use of violence could

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bring about non-violence. Gandhi thought that the world of thought was moving away from Marx but it did not undermine the value of what Marx and achieved.

In conclusion, one can say that both in his life and politics on the one hand and in his speech and prose style on the other, Gandhi, like Bertrand Russell, succeeded in being absolutely passion-free in thought, speech and action. His prayer to the God of Truth that "he may grant him the boon of non-violence (Ahimsa) in thought, word and deed" was largely answered. His prose, too, was as a result as free from what one might call linguistic violence or flamboyance in the name of creativity or free expression as it was possible in the case of one whose whole life had been devoted to political struggle, which often caused pain and suffering and disappointments. Hence both in terms of what he said and how he said it, one can say of Gandhi what Tennyson said of Wordsworth, that he uttered nothing base.

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Vanshree Tripathi

LANGUAGE CONSCIOUSNESS IN HEIDEGGER, CAMUS AND HEMINGWAY

The moral and social conditions in the twentieth century made nihilism an increasingly prevalent theme, or rather posed it as a threat in a world, emptied of values, where creative writers tried but failed to discover any meaningful link between the laws of thought (deductive logic) and the real human experiences and events, the details of realistic accuracy being somewhat beside the point. In this environment Heidegger's phenomenological perceptions offer a key to the problem of relating to human experiences in terms of language: why and how to cast realities in more elemental form and how to get beyond the surface realities to come to the source of art. Heidegger preoccupied himself with unfolding of truth obscured by centuries of rationalist philosophy. The present movement of deconstruction has much in common with Heidegger's project of dissolving logical and conceptual categories gripping western philosophy. The influence of Heidegger's hermeneutics on Derrida is a topic of great complexity.[1] We might agree with George Steiner's view that throughout twentieth century philosophic sensibility, Martin Heidegger has been the secret king of thought, there being hardly any sphere of intellectual argument and language consciousness, in which the presence of Heidegger is not manifest.[2]

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Criticism is an act of determining the significance of meaning, and this paper confines itself to interpreting the salient features of Heidegger, Camus and Hemingway in a way that might recover the original meaning of the author. It is possible to analyze the language consciousness of Camus and Hemingway in terms of Heidegger's notions of *Dasein* : Being, Time and Language. Thinking of being must consist, in concrete phenomenological analysis, of *How* being is and is not *What* or *Why*[3] and in *Being and Time* (*Sein und Zeit*) Heidegger analyzes man's particular mode of being in the world. Therefore, *Dasein* ('being there') in Time and Language is an approach to the understanding of Being. Steiner perceives that in *Being and Time*, there is a deliberate enforcement of common non-technical speech, a determination, which causes a characteristic stress and even violence of feeling, to arrive at the roots of man and

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of man's being in the world, through the compaction, through the condensation of simple words into primal nodes of truth.[4] This explains Heidegger's consistent preoccupation with etymology and his stance, that the world is not an object " out there" to be rationally analyzed, set over against a contemplative subject. It is not something we can get outside and stand over against. It is through thought and language that man is exposed to the truth of Being. Man is a temporally bound being and the horizon of being in time is death. Thus *Dasein* is in Sorge ('Care'). He cares about his existence in relation to others, in relation to his death, and naturally anxieties beset him (*Angst*). In 'anxiety', *Dasein* finds itself face to face with the 'nothing' of the possible. In the Heideggerian sense it is the sensibility of *Dasein* that Camus, Kafka and Hemingway integrate; and their works are distinct responses to the problem of *Dasein*: the sense of Being, the loss of Being in Time and the untruth of language. The predominant view their writing unveils is that the essence of man is to exist in a particular way that uniquely exposes him to awareness of the truth of Being in the horizon of *Nichts* (Non-existence).

An analysis of Camus's *The Fall* reveals how man can shield himself from such awareness and that language which might articulate the truth (the 'house of being' as Heidegger put it), can become a veil that hides it; the hero Clamence is trapped in abstractions, in bracketed concepts of conventional pieties. He cannot think his way beyond them and remains captive to a system of thought. When this happens, *Dasein* is living inauthentically, cut off from the true problems and mysteries of existence. Kierkegaard expressed earlier that most expressions tend to become *Gerede* (idle talk): "how ironical that by speech man can degrade himself below dumb creature."[5] True, language tends to become infused with essence (abstractions), generalization and projection in a world, infinite in extent, mechanical in its operation, without purpose itself and therefore indifferent to the purpose of man. Joyce's *Ulysses* shows how souls of modern men are made up of the sleazy, shop work fabrics of their world and their language. Beckett's art is more consistently emblematic of this view: habit of mind, thought and expression lock us in minor limbo and that habit is the series of compromises we make with the world; what precisely is the function of the art work is to break our habit of living, to unfold the horror and strangeness at the heart of life.[6] I find that Beckett's strategy has

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been more palpably able to unsettle the serious abstraction of critical discourses. *Waiting for Godot* makes one conscious that ideas are necessary to man if he is to order his experience, but time eventually erodes even the most apparently solid ideas. The effect on man of this is slow torture. If ideas were demolished instantaneously and irretrievably, the process would be far less painful; meaninglessness would at least be something definite. Instead, however, man is continually teased with meanings that seem always just beyond his reach. *The Fall* represents this torment and Camus's hero Clamence in his own words and action carries this theme. It is a mock ironic *tour de froce*, in confessional form: the confession of Jean Baptiste Clamence, a man who like the intellectuals of the time has spent his life in the "liberal conscience industry". The captain of such industry should go down with his ship but Clamence failed to rescue a girl who plunged into the Seine. His narrative makes it obvious that the more intricate pattern of rhetoric he spins, the further he is carried away from reality, and he realized that things and ideas that described him now begin to slip apart. He tells of his life in Paris as a lawyer:

"I used to specialize in noble causes... I had my heart on my sleeve. You really might have thought that justice slept with me every night. I am sure you would have admired the accuracy of my tone, the appropriateness of my emotion, the persuasion and warmth, the restrained indignation of my speeches before the court. Nature has favoured me as to my physique, and the noble attitude comes effortlessly. Furthermore I was buoyed up by two sincere feelings . . . [6].

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Semantically, "specialize in noble causes" "heart on my sleeve", "justice slept with me", "appropriateness" of emotion "restrained indignation", "nature favoured me to my physique"' "noble attitudes" are cliches -- verbal moulds in which Clamence forces his experiences; it is instead of shaping reality himself, passing it on, precast. Lastly, "buoyed up by two sincere feelings ...", on the one hand, is a false hyperbole, on the other, an awkward passive construction. The narrative reminds one of the characteristic speeches of politicians who delight in oratory, but their root meanings reveal pointlessness aiming at "profundity" and "elegance". Clamence claims that he abounded in small courtesies, was generous, lived full life; the following are more examples: "Giving up my seat in the theatre to allow a couple to sit together, lifting a girl's suitcase on to the rack in a train -- these were all deeds I performed

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more often than others" (p.18). He is complacent : "few creatures were more natural than I" (p.22). The word "harmony" is his main feature: "I was in harmony with life, fitting into it from top to bottom without rejecting any of its ironies, its grandeur, or its servitude" (p.23). Repeated several times "harmony" becomes abstruse redundancy. He succeeded in "living at the same time women and justice, which was not easy, went in for sport and art, and accepted marks of homage with a kindly pride" (p.23). He is truthful : "to tell the truth, just from being so fully and simply a man, I looked upon myself as something of a superman" (p.23). He makes brilliant improvisation on the" hardness of heart of our ruling class" (p.24). Not only the hyperbolism and unusual collocations, but the noun adjectival combination appear unnecessary. Such emotionally loaded words are largely empty of reference and have their meaning chiefly in their emotional force. The structure and the pretentious diction, demonstrate the old rut; instead of clarifying abstractions make the narration more confusing. Clamence has no choice except to retrieve into the pattern of thought that has already been discredited. Parker views Clamence as a stock, satirical portrait of the left wing intellectuals whom Camus saw as lost in the nihilistic wasteland of ideologies and systematic abstractions. The portrait of Clamence, a penitent judge is actually directed at Camus himself; it is Camus's anguished response to inauthentic existence. Conor Cruise O'Brien observes that Clamence's paralysis on the bridge corresponds to that of his creator. The laughter he hears denotes the discrepancy between what he has been saying and how he behaves.[9] The reader might easily recognize the deep-seated hypocrisy of Clamence's existence. His strikingly grand, epigrammatical, and at times pedantic monologues not only gradually wither and sop, but also question and undermine the reader's complacency. Camus's Clamence thus represents the composite picture of the time, trapped in words, immersed in abstractions that distort rather than reveal: *Versfallensein* (inauthentic existence) or fallenness. Nietsche's opinion in *Will to Power* that through untruth, through counter-factuality, man 'violates' an absurd confining reality could be applied to Clamence's situation.

The problem of creating seeming rather than *being* obsessed Camus's contemporary Hemingway too. Though Hemingway's responses in terms of semantic perception tended to be very different, it is easy to identify how *Dasein* manifests in Hemingway.

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Hemingway's opinion as expressed in *A Farewell to Arms* reveals an ironic distance from those universals which had so far dominated language. William Barret, a noted interpreter of Heidegger, quotes from his *What is Metaphysics*:

> "The history of the West marks the gradual estrangement from Being ... This estrangement takes place because all the sophistication of modern consciousness; and all the technological mastery over nature sets us at a distance from it. We set object over *Being*; caught in our cities, we live in our fabricated mazes; we can no longer surrender ourselves to Being.[10]

The phenomenological assertion of Husserl that in language man comes to the truth of Being is a major characteristic of the narrative in Hemingway. His story "Winners Take Nothing", shows *Being* in the horizon of *Nothing* (death/non being). It needs to be mentioned here that Heidegger's "What is Metaphysics" (the subject of which was *Nothingness*) was written in 1927 preceding in time the story "Winner's Take Nothing" which was written in 1930. Hemingway's celebrated novel *A Farewell to Arms* suggests aversion to stylistic conventions[11], but "Winners Take Nothing" marks a genuine break from riddle-making to forthrightness, a strategy that induces an awareness that the reality spun within time produces characters dissolved into multitudes of perspectives and that personality as a hard outline, in constant form is ruled out; in other words there are layers below layers and at each level the psychological topography might show us a different map. Hemingway in a varied way acknowledges this fluid texture of reality. The following quotation might expose that he does not tell in abstraction that war is cruel but he forces his readers to endure that reality of cruelty. The narrative content shows the violence, menace of war -- we have simply the things as they are; the narrative is its own meaning;

> They shot the six cabinet ministers at half past six in the morning against the wall of a hospital. There were pools of water in the courtyard. There were dead wet leaves on the paving of courtyard. It rained hard. All the shutters of the hospital were nailed shut. One of the ministers was sick with typhoid. Two soldiers carried him downstairs and out into the rain. They tried to hold him up against the wall but he sat down in a puddle of water. The other five stood very quietly against the wall. Finally the officer told the soldiers it was no good trying to make him stand up. When they fired the first volley, he was sitting down in the water with his head on his knees.[12]

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The narrative makes us comprehend more than the ideas; it becomes a reality experienced. The absence of emotive words intensifies the horror of the scene. This aspect must be compared to Heidegger whose prose style cannot be separated from his thought. Steiner observes:

> Heidegger's relation to idiom is distinctly problematic. He does not simply reject it in favour of arbitrary locutions but seeks to reveal idiom in Wittgenstein's sense. Hence much of what he says is simultaneously obvious and arcane. His bold use of short sentences has a 'deliberate delaying' or blockading effect. We are to be slowed down from our customary business, we are to be bewildered and barred in our reading so that we may be driven deeper.[13]

I find that in quality, Hemingway's narrative strives towards this level of transparence. He aims at cutting through abstractions. He allows things to appear what they are. A compelling narrative of this kind, forces us to see what war does, and the foregoing quotation, though understated, produces the bizarre and grotesque ('horizon of nothingness'), that human existence is facing. "Nick Adms" stories are also marked by short staccato sentences, apparently desultory; they are linked by a meaning. The narrative throbs with grotesque and violence, and yet remains effortlessly plain. But most importantly, an examination of the story "The Winners Take Nothing" would reinforce the synchronousness of Hemingway and Heidegger's language consciousness. The experience of an old waiter in this story is the unravelling of Hemingway's stance to *Time* and *Being* (*Dasein*):

> Turning on the electric light he continued the conversation with himself. It is the light of course but it is necessary that the place be clean and pleasant. You do not want music. Certainly you do not want music. Nor can you stand behind the bar with dignity although that is all that is provided for these hours. What did he fear? It was not fear or dread. It was nothing that he knew too well. It was all a nothing and a man was nothing too. It was only that, and light was all it needed and a certain cleanness and order. Some lived in it and never felt it but he knew it was nada y pues nad y nada y pues nada. Our nada who are in nada, nada be thy kingdom nada thy will be nada in nada as it is in nada. Give us this nada our daily nada and nada us our nada as we nada our nadas and nada us not into nada but deliver us from nada; pues nada. Hail nothing full of nothing, nothing is with thee.[14]

Nada is "nothing" in Spanish, and invocation to this "nothing" could not be taken as flippant repetition. The story in the composite form reveals the presence of *Nothing*. In the shadow of the leaves

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against the electric light, the terror, the empty tables, the quiet chatter of the waiters, pervades the presence of *Nada.* The winners, achievers, the failures take nothing -- this the language itself exposes, however varied it might be from person to person. Therefore, one cannot help feeling that it is impossible to think of time as a thing, it is nothing, a nothing; this present reality constitutes the potentials of its own renunciation, made up of nothing (negation).

As being is in the horizon of non-being, death may come in many ways -- warfare, the bull ring, a randam gun shot, disease, accident -- and lurks in the mind: I die, I become nothing and the world becomes *Nothing* for me. Indeed, there is nothing metaphysical about human existence, it is always within nothing. As Heidegger thinks, our being is a sort of thrownness, a primordial banality threatened by meaninglessness, which metaphysical speculation has long overlooked. Camus and Hemingway's narrative thus is a positive reaction to this portentious drift of time. The problems of compaction, dissipation and energizing of language could be seen against the permanence of time and sometimes the helplessness of the medium to get outside of time-space limit. Hemingway never went through the chain of reasoning, found explicit in Beckett, Heidegger or Camus, but he has seen what Heidegger speculated. One could sense the phenomenological perception (*Dasein*) in terms of language; the consciousness perceiving the actualities of violence that gather their meaning as the 'menacing' through the possibilities of *Nothingness*; the purpose of Phenomenology is attained in the form of intimate relation between consciousness and linguistic expression.

The foregoing analysis reveals that the consciousness of Being, Time and Language in Heidegger, Camus and Hemingway is manifested in varied forms of linguistic-semantic perceptions. There is an intense striving to get language and its readers inside the actual world, reading them with any degree of penetration is to sense the dynamics, the roughage of a process rather than its logic. But this might bring us to a problem: if we see language as not merely a tool for expression but a mode of understanding, a medium of creating answers in words, it can be a form of personal investigation and discovery, an understanding of the self, its nature, its forms, its attitudes, its feelings -- and we might be impelled to question: Whether the quest for *Being* (truth) in language is penultimate? Steiner's insightful statement arouses the reader's response:

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"Language is the main instrument of man's refusal to accept the world as it is. Without this refusal, without the unceasing generation of the mind of counter worlds -- a generation which cannot be divorced from the grammar of counter factual or optative forms -- we would turn forever on the treadmill."[16] Indeed, the notion of language as the truth of Being (*Dasein*) is a productive exercise in our quest for creation and intelligibility, but it is potentially reductive because there could always be the possibility of meaning becoming a creative *excess* (transcending truth), in the sense that Steiner implies.

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