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Abstract

Noting it is only one of many sources for her world-making, examines biblical typology and figural elements from Le Guin's *The Eye of the Heron*.

Additional Keywords

Bible—Narrative patterns; Le Guin, Ursula K. The Eye of the Heron; Typology (literature)

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Biblical Typology in LeGuin's The Eye of the Heron

Character, Structure and Theme

Joel N. Feimer

Ursula K. LeGuin once asserted, "It would seem that a writer who composes a universe, invents a planet, or even populates a drawing room, is playing God" ("Do It Yourself Cosmology," in *The Language of the Night*, ed. S. Wood 121). Roughly a generation earlier, Dorothy van Ghent observed concerning the works of Cervantes, Fielding, Bronte, Lawrence, Joyce, et. al., "that the nearest similitude for a novel is 'world'" (6). Such a similitude is appropriate, she continues, "because it reflects the rich multiplicity of the novel's elements and at, the same time, the unity of the novel as a self-defining body" (6). The novelist, and specifically the creator (or creatrix) of science fiction is seen as a *figura*, or type, an *imago dei*, appropriating the qualities exhibited by the main character in the first chapters of Genesis (On this subject see also Carter 174-6, and Zahorski and Boyer 56-81). In *The Eye of the Heron*, LeGuin demonstrates that she has learned a number of lessons in recording world-creation from the Master. This particular work is constructed, more obviously perhaps than her others, with typological, or figural elements from the two testaments that make up The Bible.

The narrative tradition of types is established in Genesis and informs both the Hebrew Testament and the Christian Testament, which appropriates the Hebrew and claims to record its fulfillment. The tradition of authorship of the Hebrew Testament is revealed in Exodus. As Moses prepares to return from the peak of Mt. Sinai with the tablets of The Law by means of which he will govern the people of Israel in their escape from bondage in Egypt, he is ordered by God to "Write thou these words" (Exodus 34:27). God's directive is the creative impetus for biblical narrative. Typological critics such as Northrop Frye *(The Great Code)*, Erich Auerbach (*Mimesis* and "Figura") and John Drury ("Luke" in Alter and Kermode *Literary Guide to The Bible*), as well as archetypal psychoanalytical writers such a C. G. Jung (*Answer to Job*) have described the defining nature of biblical record. All the above have observed that characters, narrative elements, and themes in both testaments of The Bible are presented and developed as types and *figurae*.

Simply put, the structure of biblical narrative follows the pattern of figure and fulfillment (Auerbach "Figura" 28-32). For example, Adam is the type of mankind. His portrait in chapters two and three of Genesis prefigures every other male character in The Bible, including those of the Christian Testament. Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samson, David, and Christ all derive their meaning from Adam and enlarge, or fulfill his significance. The same is true for Eve who establishes the type (typos) of womankind against which every other character in The Bible is measured, including Mary. The structure of biblical narrative is similarly typological, or figural (Auerbach demonstrates the interchangability of these terms in "Figura" 14-5). It is informed by the pattern of Creation, Fall, Chastisement, Re-creation, Exile, and Restoration, and then with the Christian Testament, Incarnation, Sacrifice, Resurrection, and ultimately the Second Coming, Apocalypse and The New Jerusalem. In this pattern, Creation prefigures the Incarnation and both are ultimately fulfilled in the New Jerusalem. Biblical narrative, both Hebrew and Christian, presents this structure as the historical blueprint used by the Master Architect to construct the universe (Auerbach "Figura" 34-41, Drury 421, Frye 80-3; Jung 116-9 provides Yahweh with a psychological motive for this historical structure, Eliade 88-90, 152-3 establishes the mythic dimensions of history). Tolkien discusses the appearance of such an historical pattern in fairy-stories, especially in his definition of "eucatastrophe" (68). Lin Carter asserts that the best writers of fantasy "create the illusion of a genuine historical reality, ... they construct a viable worldscape on paper and in the minds of their readers" (9). Both critics acknowledge a conscious appropriation of historical similitude by the human architects of "imaginary worlds" (Carter's term). Doris Lessing in "Some Remarks" with which she prefaces the inaugural volume to the *Canopus in Agos: Archives* reveals:

> It was clear I had made - or found - a new world for myself, a realm where the petty fates of planets, let alone individuals, are only aspects of cosmic evolution expressed in the rivalries and interactions of great galactic empires: Canopus, Sirius, and their enemy, the Empire Puttoria, with its criminal planet Shammat. (ix)

It is clear that Lessing is making history in her space fiction; just a bit further on in her remarks she identifies the Old and New Testaments as two of her many sources. among which she lists *The Popol Vuh* (x-xi). It may be useful to mention that writers such as Lessing and LeGuin construct their fictions from a variety of materials, The Bible being only one. LeGuin's use of Taoism has been widely commented on, and she puns throughout *The Eye of the Heron* on the sanskrit term, "shantih," which all readers of Eliot's

"The Waste Land" will recognize as the peace which surpasses understanding. The people of Shantih Town are just "shanty towners" to the men of the city.

Typological characters and narrative elements develop the themes of the origins of human suffering, the resistance to oppression and slavery, the value of self-sacrifice, and the indomitability of hope for a more perfect future. Typology permits a development of significance on both a horizontal, or temporal axis and a vertical, or eschatological one (Auerbach *Mimesis* 13-4, "Figura" 43-7, Frye 82-3, Jung 115-8). Writers from the early Middle Ages onward, Dante foremost among them, often adapt figures from other than biblical sources, such as classical or contemporary history. LeGuin follows their example also in *The Eye of the Heron.* Figures and their fulfillments inform the structures and shapes of many works of literature. This is especially true of the production of those writers of science fiction who practice the godlike profession of world making, although the vertical dimension is not always exploited in their works. Doris Lessing, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Robert Heinlien, Frank Herbert, Brian Aldiss; the list is too long to complete here. LeGuin effectively employs *figurae* both biblical and secular to establish her characters, inform her structure, and develop her themes in *The Eye of the Heron.*

For example, in *The Eye of the Heron,* the Fall has already happened. The people of Victoria are the recusants of Earth, exiled from their terrestrial homelands to another planet for being either too vicious (the inhabitants of Victoria City), or too virtuous (the folk of Shantih Town). They are the Cain and Abel of the new beginning. Their story explores the possibility of a non-violent renascence for humanity, free from the tyranny of dominance and power trips, but the narrative is not without its struggle, or its sacrificial Lamb. There is a physical as well as a spiritual Exodus of the Shantih folk as they deliver themselves from the yoke of physical, economic and moral enslavement. Apocalypse and rebirth of a new community punctuate the climax and denouement of *The Eye of the Heron.* This pattern of consolation is the theme that Tolkien notices in fairy stories and labels "eucatastrophe." Le Guin indeed plays the part of the deity in *The Eye of the Heron,* employing the techniques of *poesis* established by the Master Story Teller (God) in his comprehensive narrative of human existence (The Bible).

LeGuin applies a typological method throughout the novel to form its structure and establish meaningful resonances with biblical texts. Characters in *The Eye of the Heron,* such as Lev, Luz Marina, and Andre, borrow their names and functions from biblical figures. Narrative elements and patterns are also typological. The exile shared by the people of Victoria is one figure. The fact that the city inhabitants were the first arrivals and hence the older, and that their banishment was a result of their commitment to crime and violence is another. The Shantih Towners as the later arrivals represent the younger, virtuous, and hence oppressed faction, and are thus figures of Abel and the Israelites in Egypt (21-3). The novel commences with the return of a Shantih Towner expedition into the wilderness on a quest for "the promised land" (7). It is a quest begun on their native Earth, where "there was no place left for the Peace," (148), and the promised land becomes the penal colony of Victoria, a little joke played on the People of the Peace by the governments of Earth, which they transform into an earnest reality. Their yearning for the land which was promised is figurally developed in the song, "Oh when we come" which punctuates the novel and is explained at length in the oral chronicle delivered by Hari to their children (145-9).

Even the ships in which the inhabitants were ferried to the planet resemble Noah's ark in that they were intended for only one one-way trip. One of the ships stands on a hilltop overlooking the city (31, 96), just as Noah's ark rests on the fabled and elusive Ararat. Among the typological themes in the novel is that of language. Victoria is a world in which many things, including the planet have no appropriate names and so remain unknown (50). Naming objects becomes a significant activity in the novel (49-50, 169-71).

Furthermore, LeGuin dramatizes with agonizing vividness the impossiblity of communication between two peoples who may have a common language, but who do not share meanings and significances in the words they speak. Here the figures of Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh, and Jesus before Pilate, can be applied. Finally the quests for physical and spiritual, as well as personal and communal freedoms, documented by the Hebrew and Christian Testaments are the central themes of *The Eye of the Heron.*

LeGuin's characters bear figural significances in their names and in their actions. In a way similar to Dante's use of types, LeGuin employs extra-biblical figures, as well as those specifically derived from The Bible. For example, there are two minor characters who are henchmen of the City. They are posted to escort Vera to her hospitable prison in the home of the Chief Councillor of Victoria, Don Luis Falco. They are twins whose names are Anibal and Emiliano. Hannibal and Lucius Aemelius Paulus were the Carthaginian and Roman adversaries who waged "the most terrible battle of antiquity" (Robinson 482), the Battle of Cannae (216 B.C.) in which seventy thousand Romans and their allies fell in a single day. Anibal, nicknamed Scarface, and his brother in blood represent the nature of the people of the city who understand nothing but confrontation, force, extortion and oppression. They are almost comic in their deference to their prisoner, the self-possessed Vera, but they are also among the soldiers of the city who march to the confrontation with the town which ends so catastrophically. LeGuin employs them as a figure of the twinning of violence and bloodshed which has characterized and plagued humanity since ancient times. As ancient wagers of war, some human beings have a common bond in their commitment to violence. They can

understand and appreciate the will to war in each other. In LeGuin's novel, their typological namesakes issue from the same womb.

LeGuin uses such characters as types, or in Jungian terms, archetypes of confrontation to signify the impossiblity of communication between those committed to reasonable discourse and peaceful coexistence and themselves. Anibal and Emilano act as figures of more significant members of the city, Chief Councillor Falco, whose name Luis means "war famous" and Herman Macmilan whose given name means "man of the army." The latter takes upon himself the task of training and equipping "a troop of elite soldiers, young aristocrats, brave intelligent and properly commanded. Men who love fighting, like our brave ancestors of earth" (67) at the suggestion of Don Luis.

There are more strictly defined biblical figures among the more substantial characters of the novel. Lev and Andre from Shantih Town and Luz Marina from the city all derive significance from biblical connections. Their names and their situations are fulfillments of biblical types.

For example, Lev's name in Hebrew, Levi, means" he who binds." Lev's primary function in the novel is to bind his people into a community with the force of his vision, the totality of his commitment to non-violent autonomy for them, and his martyrdom. Furthermore, Levi, Leah's third son (Genesis 29: 34), is the ancestor of Moses who is chosen to lead the Exodus into the wilderness, but is denied entrance to the promised land. Moses as a liberator from oppression and slavery, and as a lawgiver is a prefigure of Christ. As a flawed character who is denied the terrestrial paradise of Canaan, he is a fulfillment of Adam. Both Moses and Christ champion their causes in confrontational interviews with oppressors. As a result of such confrontations, Christ dies a violent death on a hill top.

In *The Eye of the Heron,* Lev is a fulfillment of all three biblical figures. Lev is among the eight explorers from the town who locate a promised land, a sanctuary for his people from the oppressions of the City, a place which describes to his father, Sacha, from the "white visionary heights" of his hope:

> 'Yes. A valley. A river valley. Five kilos from the sea. Everything we need. And beautiful - the mountains above it - Range behind range, higher and higher, higher than the clouds, whiter - You have to look to see the highest peaks.' (7)

The beauty and utility of Lev's valley are themselves elements of the edenic landscape, "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food" (Genesis 2: 9). Lev rescues a contingent of his people who are pressed into forced labor by the City to work on their newest project, large estates, "latifundia," minature kingdoms in which all the production would be coerced from the "peasants" (Don Luis' term) from Shantih Town. When a group from Shantih is recruited under the lash, brutalized and driven to the new area to begin clearing the ground, Lev accompanies them (78-83). One of the Shantih people, a simple old man named Pamplona, has his eye taken out by the slash of a bullwhip. There are two others too sick and old to work in the rain-soaked, shelterless camp. When Lev's appeal to the camp commander for compassion for the sick and wounded fails, he simply leads his people off into the darkness and the fog, leaving the commanding Captain Eden to ponder his reception in the City (demotion, whipping, and/or mutilation) when they learn of his failure to control the "peasants" (88). In contrast, Lev contemplates what he considers the significance of his victory:

> They had won. It had worked. They had won their battle without violence. No deaths; one injury. The 'slaves' freed without making a threat or striking a blow; the Bosses running back to their Bosses to report failure, and begin to understand, to see the truth.... The City would join the Town.... And then indeed the sun would rise over the community of Mankind on Victoria, as now, beneath the heavy masses of clouds over the hills the silver light broke clear, and every shadow leaped black across the narrow road, and every puddle of last night's rain flashed like a child's laugh. (89-90)

Lev's hopeful vision for the harmonious future of a brotherhood of humanity on Victoria will not prove true in his brief lifetime. Like Moses, Lev will not live to see his dream realized. Like Christ, he will suffer a violent death on a hillside in a storm of violence shrouded by a violent storm. Other heroes will lead a vanguard of his people to a promised land he never saw.

Luz Marina is the daughter of Chief Councillor Falco. She was a childhood acquaintance of Lev. She briefly joins her heart and vision to Lev's before the fatal confrontation on Rocktop Hill which ends his life, but not their dream. Her name means "Light of the Sea." It is one of the titles ascribed to Mary, the mother of Christ, *Stella Maris.* The name or title originates with the ancient fertility goddesses, such as Astarte, and the biblical figure, Esther (Goodrich *Priestesses* 18, 89-90, Johnson *Lady of the Beasts* 78, 86-8, 239-40). In the figural structure of biblical narrative, Mary is the fulfillment of Eve. Eve's willful act of disobedience to the divine command, and the expulsion from the Garden which it causes, prefigure Mary's conscious act of submission to the divine will as more fully portrayed in The Gospel of Luke, especially in the Annunciation(1: 26-38), and the Magnificat, Mary's visionary prayer in praise of God's merciful intervention on behalf of humanity which he has effected through her (1: 46-55).

Among some of the early Christian sects, notably the Gnostics, Eve was revered and "the feminine spiritual power she represented- as the source of spiritual awakening" for human kind (Pagels 68, 77). In Luke's version of the Gospel, Mary exhibits an awareness of the spirit of divinity working through her person so that "henceforth all generations shall call me blessed" (1: 48). Specifically, Mary celebrated the Divinity because "He hath put down

the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree" (1: 52). Lastly, Mary goes on an unescorted journey to visit her cousin, Elizabeth who is pregnant with John the Baptist through divine intervention. It is the journey itself that is significant here. Mary initiates it and carries it through without guidance or direction from male parent or spouse.

In *The Eye of the Heron*, Luz Marina grows from a cloistered maiden whose only refuge is an attic room to the woman who becomes the heir to a vision of freedom and peace in the vast, uncharted, wilderness of a world which her father and the men of the City had turned in to a jail. Early in the novel Luz ponders, "A prison, All Victoria was a prison, a jailhouse. And no way out. Nowhere else to go" (30). With the aid of her prisoner-guest Vera, Luz comes to realize the paths to freedom in her own soul. She casts her lot with Lev and the people of Shantih Town. In the process, she becomes part of the pretext for a retaliatory raid of the City men on the Town which leads to the violent confrontation in which Lev is martyred, and her father, Luis, turns on and clubs Herman Macmilan to death with a musket butt. In the painful aftermath of the apocalypse, Luz realizes:

> My father killed Macmilan for the same 'reason' that Lev stood up there facing the men with guns and defying them and got killed. Because he was a man, that's what men do. The reasons come afterward. (143)

Thus Luz Marina's journey to warn the people of Shantih of the city raid becomes both a physical and a spiritual quest. Like Eve, Luz Marina seeks to throw off the yoke of ignorance and male dominance. Like Mary she becomes more and more conscious of the spiritual dimensions of her quest. She muses in her grief over Lev's death:

> She had not known, when she set off toward the hill, where she was going, what she was looking for. This place, this silence, this solitude. Her feet had borne her toward herself. (150)

As in some of the interpretations of both Eve and Mary, out of her suffering and her solitude, Luz Marina is able to forge a new vision for herself:

> And what else is there?
> All the rest of the world. The river there, and the hills, and the light on the Bay. All the rest of this silent living world, with no people in it. And I alone. (152)

In her vision, Luz Marina sees possibilities for freedom and peace to be realized, a new world to people and a new spiritual reality for humanity to forge. She exhorts the people of Shantih not to cease searching for their promised land:

> This is a whole continent, a whole world. Why do we have to stay here, huddled up here destroying each other?... The world, the whole world is there for you to live in and be free, and that would be running away! From what? To what? Maybe we can't be free, maybe people always take themselves with themselves, but at least you can try. What was your Long March for? What makes you think it ever ended? (154-5)

In this exhortation, Luz refers to the terrestrial event for which the people of Shantih were exiled, itself a figure of which resonates between The Bible and *The Eye of the Heron*. Luz Marina's phrasing indicates that she, as a character in the novel, sees history as typological, that history is a series of events whose significances result from a repetitive pattern of figure and fulfillment.

It is Luz Marina who selects the location for the promised land "where we will build the world" (177). In the dialogue which follows, Luz Marina and Andre recreate Chapter Two of Genesis:

> 'This is a new place, Andre. A beginning place.'
> 'God willing.'
> 'I don't know what God wants.' She put out her free hand and scratched up a little of the damp, half frozen earth and squeezed it in her palm. 'That's God,' she said, opening her hand on the half molded sphere of black dirt. 'That's me. And you. And the others. And the mountains. We're all . . . it's all one circle.' (176)

Luz asserts that she wants to stay in this place in the wilderness, to start here and Andre observes with tender humor, "Then I expect we will.... Would we ever have started, I wonder if it hadn't been for you?" (176-7) As the dialogue concludes, Andre concurs, "This is a new place, Luz.... The names are new here." Luz Marina's typology is fulfilled in the above passages. She is the guide and the spiritual force behind the quest for a new genesis. These people have become her people and she has become their *Stella Maris*. She molds the earth in the creative gesture that mimics God's creation of Adam in Genesis. In an event which prefigures her powerful place in the future community on the planet, Luz gives it a name, "Mud" (110). The act of naming in The Book of Genesis is a sign of power reserved for God, or his delegate Adam (Genesis 2: 19). Thus Luz Marina gives form, substance and significance to the new beginning; she shapes its creation.

Andre's figure is a bit simpler to define. His name is derived from the Greek word for manly, about man, or manlike. The significance of the Greek can be connected to the Hebrew name Adam, man of red earth. Consequently, Andre is another figure of Adam, Moses, and Christ. Andre was one of the eight explorers who found the northern paradise, and with whose return to Shantih with the good news the novel commences. Andre will be one of the leaders of the expedition to find another edenic location. The City's Bosses, who fear and oppose the Shantih Towners plans to establish a new settlement beyond the reach of their oppression, were given a map and directions to the first location in the spirit of peaceful, rational cooperation by the delegation from the town led by Vera.

Because, as Luz Marina has observed, the planet named Victoria (or more appropriately Mud by Luz Marina), has many possible beginning places, the second expedition is as successful as the first. They discover their "pleasant place" (173-5), abundant with bog rice, teaming with animals, and washed by a clear running stream. The term "pleasant place" is itself a type, the *locus amoenus* which derives its matter and meaning in large measure from

biblical descriptions of the Garden of Eden and the promised land. (Curtius 195-9). Andre and Luz Marina find mutual consolation, humor and love in this new place which, ironically is "not that far from home" (178). They are Adam and Eve in a communal setting, characters which fulfill figures from creation, exodus and a new Jerusalem. Andre's part in the narrative is one of the elements which give the novel its sense of cyclical wholeness.

Just as characters and settings, the events which structure *The Eye of the Heron* are also typological. The novel is punctuated by confrontation scenes between people from City and Town which are figures of biblical patterns of confrontation in both Hebrew and Christian Testaments. The series of interviews between Moses and Pharaoh described in Exodus, and the many scenes in the Gospels where Christ is accosted by Pharisees, or representatives of Rome, provide significant resonances to the meetings in which townspeople such as Lev and Vera attempt to conduct a reasonable and harmonious dialogue with Councillor Falco, or other city men. In all instances, the reader can observe several elements. First is the fact that the representatives of both factions speak a common language, but cannot understand each other. Vocabulary, such as the term "reasonable," has different connotations, if not denotations for both. Second, resulting miscommunication leads to a stiffening of resolve, or an implacable rigidity. The application of these phrases depends upon with which side the audience is sympathetic. Ultimately, these scenes are fulfilled in violence and destruction for one or the other faction. They provide climactic eucatastrophes from which their narratives will derive denouements of hopeful new beginnings.

In Exodus, Moses attempts to persuade Pharaoh to cease persecuting the people of God and let them go, first to worship God, and then to be altogether free. In the remarkable series of confrontations with which the narrative develops, Pharaoh becomes more oppressive and more adamant even as God's warning plagues demonstrate the impossiblity of maintaining the slavery of the Hebrews. The curious element here is that God orchestrates the interviews, manipulating Pharaoh in order to derive the maximum exposure of divine power in humbling that most powerful of humans. As God reveals to Moses in setting up the interviews with Pharaoh:

> And the Lord said unto Moses, See I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Thou shalt speak all that I command thee: and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh, that he send the children of Israel out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh will not hearken unto you that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth my armies, and my people the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by great judgments. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them. (Exodus 7: 1-5, see also 4: 21-2)

Thus God has a hidden agenda which informs the confrontation scenes between Moses and Pharaoh. Magnification of God's fame through a self-generated opportunity to manifest his power over men creates an impasse in communication which leads to ultimate catastrophe for Pharaoh and his armies (Exodus 14: 1-31).

In the interviews, God's agenda is fulfilled by Pharaoh's responses to Moses' requests, at first modest, to allow the Israelites leave to worship their God in the wilderness beyond the borders of Egypt for three days. Pharaoh's truculent response manipulated by God sets up his chastisement under the divine hand, "And Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go" (Exodus 5: 2). Pharaoh's intransigence is a figure of that of the Pharisees and Pilate who confront Christ, and the men of the City who refuse to comprehend the words of reason and offerings of peaceful cooperation from the people of Shantih.

A remarkable correspondence may be found in Pharaoh's continued refusal which punctuates the eighth and ninth plagues (Exodus 10:1-29). When Pharaoh asks who is to be allowed to go and worship God, Moses says all of the people, their children, and their livestock as well. Pharaoh erupts,

> Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so: go now ye that are men, and serve the Lord for that ye did desire. And they were driven from Pharaoh's presence" (10: 10-11).

Here Pharaoh accuses the Hebrews of duplicity in order to refuse their request. It is a rhetoric of projection employed by oppressors imputing their own bad faith to their victims and thereby making them responsible for their victimization. It renders effective communication impossible, because it is a willful misreading of the statements of the other. One may observe the pattern in Christ's interviews with the deceitful Pharisees who continuously try to trap him into blasphemy. It is also present in the several scenes in which Vera and Lev speak with men of the City.

In The Gospel of Matthew, Christ continually fends off attempts to ensnare him on the part of the Pharisees. Christ's choice of companions, his directions to his disciples, and his decisions to perform deeds and work miracles on the Sabbath are constantly challenged by those who would destroy him. Several times Christ directs the offending priests to "go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (see for example 9: 13, 12: 7-8). The Pharisees' willful misunderstanding of Christ's actions and words lead to his ultimate arrest, trial and execution; all of them necessary eucatastophic preparation for the consolation of the resurrection. At his trial before the Sanhedrin, Christ employs words which echo Moses' final confrontation with Pharaoh (see Exodus 10: 28-9). In the exchange which follows the impossiblity of the Pharisees' comprehending Christ's message even though they speak a common

language and share a common heritage, is manifestly clear:

> At the last came two false witnesses, and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose and said to him, Answereth thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tellest whether thou be the Christ, the son of God. And Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto to you, Hereafter ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold now ye have heard his blasphemy. (Matthew 26: 61-65, see also Jesus before Pilate, 27: 11-14)

Both the report of Christ's words and his response to the high priest's question are heard, but misread by those in power who accuse him. It is in their interest, since they have no real case against him, that they perceive him to condemn himself. Thus the burden of proving his guilt is lifted from them. Similarly, the city men put away from themselves the burden of violence and oppression against the people of the peace in *The Eye of the Heron* by asserting that in their attempts to conduct rational discourse, instead of bowing to the rhetoric of dominance, they brought it on themselves.

Scenes such as the above punctuate the structure of *The Eye of the Heron.* Misunderstanding and willful miscommunication on the part of the power oriented City, represented by Chief Councillor Flaco in most instances, render any possibility of peace between the city and the town impossible. In an early instance, Falco interrupts the town's meeting called to hear Lev and the explorers speak of their new-found promised land, "the wide valley, and the river which they had named Serene" (9). The northern valley is truly a *locus amoenus*, where bog rice grows wild and early autumn is like midsummer. Just as Lev's audience is feeling the enchantment of his words, the spell is broken by Boss Falco accompanied by six guards all dressed in black. He has come to dispel any enthusiasm for new settlements and their proffered hope of peace in freedom. His party line is informed by the fear of the unknown, the squatter's claim to authority established by an earlier arrival on the planet, and oppression in the name of the common good (11). His response to Vera's assertion of the need for deliberation and decision making is simple and ominous, "The decisions have been made Senhora Adelson. They have been made by the Council. Only your obedience is expected" (12).

After Falco effectively ends any possibility for discussion by leaving, Lev makes his own manifesto plain, "As I refuse violence, I refuse to serve the violent" (13), and further, "We're outcasts and the children of outcasts. Didn't the Founder say the outcast is the free soul, the child of God? Our life here in Shantih is not a free life. In the north, in the new settlement, we will be free" (14). Lev's edenic valley, his non-violent defiance of oppression masquerading as benevolent authority, and his assurance of freedom in the wilderness so feared by the men of the city, are all established as figures which the novel will expand and fulfill. In his confrontation with Captain Eden, mentioned above, Lev defiantly faces death in the form of a musket pointed by the captain at his chest. This time the wielder of the weapon can only fire into the air, confused and impressed by the young man's resolution and his own lack of moral center or purpose (84-90). Lev will face the muskets one more time on the wind-swept hilltop. This time the figure of confrontation will be fulfilled in violence punctuated by gunfire, and Lev's corpse will be trampled in the ensuing chaos (131-4). At this meeting Lev presents the reasonable demands for cooperation and mutual respect in four points; freeing the hostages from the Town taken by the City, no more forced labor drafts, discussions to establish fairer trade agreements, and that the Town will proceed with its plan to colonize the north "without interference from the City" (131). Lev then informs the City men that these demands are not subject to negotiation or compromise.

Falco's response is to ignore the demands for dignity and freedom which he cannot comprehend, and to focus only on the final portion of the message which he mistakes because the rhetoric uses words similar to his own. His answer to Lev includes the following words:

> Your show of numbers is impressive. But bear in mind, all of you, that we stand for the law, and that we are armed. I do not wish there to be any violence. It is unnecessary. It is you who have forced it on us, by bringing out so large a crowd to force your demands on us. This is intolerable. If your people attempt to advance one step further toward the City, our men will be ordered to stop them. The responsibility for injuries or deaths will be yours. You have forced us to take extreme measures in defense of the Community of Man on Victoria. (132-3)

The speech fulfills the figure of Falco's first appearance in the novel. It elaborates the dry , "Only your obedience is expected." Like Caiaphas, Falco seeks the pretext for rejecting the message of peace and harmony in misinterpretation of the words of its representative. The pious rhetoric of Falco's speech only thinly masks the commitment to violence and enslavement that are integral aspect of the meaning of his high flown phrase, "Community of Man on Victoria." (See Lev's use of this phrase 89-90, cited above.) The guns are in the hands of the violent as they have always been, whether in literature, or the history of humanity from which literature shapes significance. The novel's scenes of confrontation are based in the reality of many recent events which document the embracing of the rhetoric of force by the oppressors from the pre-civil rights era United States, to Hungary in 1956, to Columbia and Kent State, to Tiananmen Square.

When Herman Macmilan begins the violence by shooting Lev, the hypocritical rhetoric which masks the brutal-

ity of the City is shattered, and Falco turns on his erstwhile protegé, clubbing him to death in a bloody, primitive, and instinctual act. The fulfillment of the figure of confrontation is the chaotic eucatastrophe which frees Lev's soul to become one with his world, and confirms Luz Marina's place as a leader of the People of the Peace.

There are many other *figurae* among the characters and events of *The Eye of the Heron*. The *fauna* of Victoria; wotsits, farfallies, and herons (which are not really herons) are employed as figures of the landscape, at once strange, indifferent to and tolerant of the aliens who have come to claim their planet. The mural frescoes of the violent existence on earth painted in the entry Hall of the capitol building, which greet the Shantih Towners on their arrival in the City to deliberate their proposed colony(33-4), prefigure the army of the City on its way to do violence to the people of Shantih (127). Historical figures such as Ghandi and King (54) and paraphrases of historical commonplaces, such as "If people forget what happened in the past, they have to do it all over again, they never get on into the future" (111) enlarge the figural material from The Bible, though God himself is diminished to a minor role in the novel. Human beings act out their own divinity in *The Eye of the Heron*.

There are figural themes presented by *The Eye of the Heron*. Themes of exile and quest for a beginning place, a homeland in which a new pattern of existence may be formed have been demonstrated to derive from The Bible. The theme of the self-sacrificing hero who expends himself in fearless confrontation with the forces of oppression is clearly present, as is that of the community of the faithful for whom that hero surrenders his life. The theme of the new beginning built upon the rubble of the old orders, the period of mourning which gives rise to new energy for future growth, Tolkien's eucatastrophe and consolation, brings the novel to a guardedly hopeful close. The dark powers of oppression and dominance may not have been overcome at the conclusion of *The Eye of the Heron*, but the irrepressible impulses to peace and freedom have successfully evaded them and discovered their own space in a wilderness expansive enough to accept them and nuturing enough to sustain them. *The Eye of the Heron* develops biblical material into a typology of hope and belief in the larger cosmic rhythms of regeneration and life. Ultimately the novel exhibits a profound faith in the capacity of the human race to heal itself by studying to culivate good will and common sense towards one's fellow human beings and towards the world.

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