

A Study of the Modes of Imagination

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Abstract

Though this study had its origins in the consideration of children's writing and their responses to reading it explores in a wider context the nature of imagination and its relation to the discursive. Within imagination there seem to be three modes that are frequently conflated - fantasy, identification and the imagination itself. Each, however, has distinctive epistemological implications and significance for identity.

In normal discourse imagination is often conflated with fantasy. Whereas fantasy seeks to exercise power in attempting to transform the world into its own terms and imagination shares this capacity for refiguration, the one is associated with obfuscation and the other with insight.

In reading, the distinction is crucial. Generally, children are empowered by the fantasy that texts exploit or stimulate. Yet the absence of significant cognitive control constitutes a kind of blindness. Identification differs from fantasy in that the reader is drawn, say, into the world of the book - this supposes a differentiation, an escape, from the self that is merely placated in fantasy. Yet, here too, is blindness, particularly with regard to the constitutive aspects of the writing. On the other hand to teach texts through exerting cognitive control may shift the text too quickly into the discursive with the danger that students are expected to respond to experiences that they have not had.

The distinctions between identification and imagination are manifest in some of the fictions of Chaucer and Kafka where differentiation is achieved through irony. Imagination is what facilitates the shift from blindness to insight and is associated with holistic understanding - as opposed to the disintegrating scrutiny of the discursive that, for example, bifurcates form and content.

The holistic apprehension associated with Hopkins's inscape or the paintings of Cézanne emerges as a consequence of finding a limiting frame - constituted through poetry or the painter's 'motif' - that renders the material enclosed into an intelligible structure which, in its expressiveness, discloses value. There is a double prescription that involves, an initiating selection implicit in finding the frame, and subsequent affective power that emerges from the holistic structure to shape our responses. This transaction is important

for the argument. It is the source of the sense of purposiveness implicit in symbolism and, in the context of nature, may lead to that ascription of purpose which is one of the ways that we arrive at a sense of the sacred. Double prescription is the paradigm case for imagining in so far as it is associated with creativity and insight.

To arrive at double prescription involves a special act of attention both from the artist and from the observer. It involves subverting habits of perception that constitute what we take to be reality. Yet we are deeply conservative in upholding these habits - our sense of ourselves is bound up in them. There are, then, barriers to imagining which are reflected, particularly, at the interface between cultures. Imagination has implications for identity, for our individuation.

Kant argues that to find something beautiful is to perceive it as an aesthetic whole without a specific conceptual purpose. I argue that conceptual purpose is presupposed in finding aesthetic wholeness - that, for many writers and painters, is the whole point. Imagination cannot be divorced from insight - but disinterestedness is a condition of arriving at it. Was Kant working in a context where the discursive paradigm prevailed so that form and content, head and heart, were inevitably bifurcated?

But if imagination is associated with insight, how, more specifically, does insight come about? An examination of metaphor suggests that it defamiliarises in refiguring some aspect of experience. Refiguring involves projection of holistic structures - it is in this way that metaphor establishes the prescriptive limits that initiate double prescription. Not all metaphor achieves this. The discursive has a role in amplifying aspects of holistic structures but its relation to imagining is dialectical.

The dialectical shift - discursive to imaginative - is clearly reflected in the parables and the Passion as they are presented in the Gospels. The pattern emerges in the fiction of Patrick White in a contemporary reworking of the mystery plays. The centrality of the dialectic points to its significance for individuation and the issue is explored in the context of Nietzsche and Jung.

There are aspects of contemporary culture that put the imagination under assault. On the other hand, we constantly and spontaneously move between the modes of imagination

as easily as passing from sleep to wakefulness. Our fundamental conceptions depend upon holistic structures. Imagining does not *supplement* reality - its structures and refigurings are constitutive of it. In many ways, in the larger context, the imagination is alive and well - but this cannot absolve us from the struggle with ourselves with all its implications for the welfare or suffering of others. The purpose of this study is to bring, perhaps, a little more clarity to some of the conceptual issues so that in our relations and teaching we may be more careful of what we are about.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis embodies the results of my own special work, that it has been composed by myself and that it does not include work forming part of a thesis presented successfully for a degree in this or another University.

Introduction

At noon each day he would emerge from the waves and come ashore to rest in the shelter of the rock. [...] It was the propitious moment to obtain from wise Proteus a revelation of what fate held in store; for he saw into the future and spoke the truth. But [...] it was first necessary to catch hold of him - no simple matter, for Proteus could change shape.¹

Imagination and Values

My interest in imagination grew out of observing children's responses to their reading and their critical and creative writing. No doubt my thinking reflects what might be called the Galapagos syndrome - that in the hothouse of teaching I developed a personal vocabulary that remained, for many years, untested by rigorous scrutiny. I eventually attempted to articulate my responses in the face of an ideologically driven assault on the imagination. It is engendered, on the one hand, in schools, by an ever more prescriptive examination system with its accompanying government rhetoric about 'values', and on the other, by a system of higher education where to find a wise and informed approach to imaginative issues is largely a matter of accident.

In general, the grasp of imaginative issues is frail. Discussion with intelligent, educated adults frequently reveals a notion of imagination that entirely conflates it with fantasy. Fortunately, such people's conduct and judgements often testify to underlying imaginative transactions - the gap between behaviour and casual assumptions may point to a characteristic problem of a system that produces graduates who are *half* educated.

Such a conflation is, perhaps, associated with a reaction to the appropriation of 'creativity' by the practitioners of 'child-centred' learning. Left to itself, most children's writing resolves into third person, chronologically sequential narrative, involving stereotypical situations and characters. Here imagination is more or less undifferentiated from fantasy. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the stimulation of fantasy generates the motivation that draws children into the habit of reading. I shall argue, however, that though such fantasy is constitutive of identification with texts and is, indeed, a mode of imagination, it is associated

¹ *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, trans. by Richard Aldington and Delano Ames (London: Hamlyn, 1959), p.147.

with a kind of blindness. In the case of cartoons there must be a family resemblance with real cats and real mice but, in effect, the animals are hidden by the emotional closed circuitry facilitated by the caricatures. This is not to claim that 'Tom and Jerry' should be 'about' cats and mice - it is merely to observe something of how this mode of imagination works. Give youngsters of eleven or twelve an exercise in extending the story where the lid begins to unscrew on the alien cylinder, and though having no knowledge of the title of H.G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*, their stories will almost inevitably resolve into stereotypical fantasies of violence. The fascination of what would be one of the most extraordinary moments in human history is never engaged because the incident is mediated through fantasies of extermination largely derived from films and computer games. Here is a case where the power of the fantasy needs to be carefully and subtly diverted to facilitate the assimilation of skills and techniques that would generate the expressive power that the mere iteration of fantasy lacks. It is interesting - and crucial - that this process does not serve merely to produce more elegantly expressed *fantasy*; rather, successful mediation transfigures the *vision*. Imagination involves the superseding by transfiguration of the initial stimulus that is derived from fantasy.

In children's responses to reading a similar supersession needs to be achieved. Identification with stories provides the emotional energy and reward for reading and here, too, it constitutes a kind of blindness. I shall argue that identification and, indeed, awareness of its implications, is reflected in stories by Chaucer and Kafka where the natural impulse to identify ourselves with a narrator can blind us to his or her unreliability.

As children move through secondary school the system, rightly, places more and more emphasis on interpretative and critical skills. However, in these areas there are at least two sources of vitiation of the imagination. The first involves the premium paid to the reduction of texts to information. Knowing *about* a text proves to be more important than inhabiting its world. Such an inhabiting is not *simply* an identification, rather, as with writing, the initial response awaits transfiguration - the specifically *imaginative* transaction - through the application of critical skills and techniques, the products of which are ploughed back into *understanding*. The widespread assumption that a 'critical' approach necessarily 'destroys'

unique and fragile personal responses to literature is largely indulgent nonsense. The logic of the unfolding transaction - identification mediated through imagination and thence returning to an enlarged vision of the world of the book - is, as I shall argue, *dialectical*. It should be said, however, that the transaction remains incomplete where the dominant paradigm of understanding is *fixed* in the discursive. Assimilation through identification, fantasy and the discursive effect different kinds of vitiating - though all may be superseded in subsequent imagining.

The other obvious source of erosion lies in the nature of the examination system in so far as it involves large amounts of time spent in learning the skills necessary to *play the game* implicit in the eccentric nature and discourse of the examinations themselves. What is tested is too much a matter of skill - both of examination candidates and teachers - in the negotiation of a *system*.

Attitudes that assume that language and literature constitute a *subject* invoke a paradigm of learning at odds with the nature of the enterprise. Nowhere is this modal contradiction more obvious than in discussion about values. It is assumed, on the one hand, that schools are somehow enclaves that can detach youngsters from their social contexts so that nobly motivated individuals can go about instilling 'values'; or, on the other, that the endorsed values of a middle class may be seamlessly 'transmitted' to the next generation. Education about values must be dependent, in the end, upon children's *understanding* of their *situations* - whatever these may be - and that can only be brought about through the mediation of the imagination. I shall argue that imagination has relevance to value, broadly, on two counts: imaginative transactions in the context of literature *rehearse* the processes involved in moral transactions generally; secondly, value is disclosed in the very process of imagining. In other words, imagination is relevant both to the *means* and to the *ends* of our moral lives. To practise education exclusively within a discursive paradigm is to destroy the possibility of its moral efficacy.

Some Conceptual Issues

Perhaps the roots of any discussion of imagination are to be found in Aristotle's discussion of the nature of *Phantasia*. He begins by considering the notion that 'both thinking and understanding are thought to be something like perceiving. In both cases,' he continues, 'the soul discerns and has cognition of the things that exist.'² However, he argues that 'perceiving and understanding are *not* the same'. (p.197). I would argue that in most cases Aristotle is right but that when imagination is manifest in the form of seeing something *as something else* - i.e. metaphorically - then the *seeing* and the *understanding* are inseparable. There is a hint of this in common usage where 'to see' may be associated with a straightforward perception or with the dawning of understanding. It is interesting that the etymology of 'idea' points to the Greek *idein, oida*, meaning 'form' or 'kind' with its root in *id* - 'see'. The Latin, *videō*, means 'I see' and the clearly related Sanskrit, *veda*, means 'knowledge', or 'sacred knowledge'.³

Clearly, the imagining that produces insight by way of metaphor can be clearly differentiated from *fantasy* which may or may not involve imagery but is circumscribed by an altogether different intention. In his Introduction to Aristotle's *De Anima*, Hugh Lawson-Tancred suggests that Aristotle,

[...] under the single heading of *phantasia* [...] wanders from the treatment of the interpretation of sense-perception to that of the production of mental imagery. In both cases, two legitimate subjects of philosophical study are under consideration but their related separateness is not acknowledged by Aristotle. (p.85).

It may be that in so far as imagination is manifest in metaphor the image is *precisely* a means of interpreting sense perception. In anticipating Kant's notion of imagination as the capacity to conceive of structures holistically, one means of so conceiving is surely through the mediation of 'seeing as'.

Already there is a clear indication here that imagination has epistemological implications. Perhaps my fundamental point is that imagination should be understood as a *family of modes of relation*. Children approach books as sources of fantasy, sources of identification and as

² Aristotle, *De Anima*, trans. By Hugh Lawson-Tancred (London: Penguin, 1986), p.197.

³ See J.G.F. Powell, 'Introduction to Philology for the Classical Teacher' (Cambridge: University Printing Services, 1988), p.16.

imaginative resources: each approach has its characteristic epistemological implications - and that suggests that each constitutes a *mode* of relation. In the experience of reading they - and we - move, apparently, seamlessly from one mode to another. As a generic concept imagination includes all three modes: on the other hand, following Coleridge, I shall argue that 'seeing as' is a function of that distinctive mode of imagination that produces the insight that we associate with creativity. A fourth mode of relation important to the argument but which lies outside the concept of imagination I shall designate the discursive. Obviously, children must be educated in handling its associated skills. On the other hand, its epistemological characteristics are generally ignored so that it becomes the source of endless confusions and conflation with the modes of imagination.

The Argument

That there can be no neutral observers is supposed in our day to day struggles to achieve impartiality. What *criteria* for neutrality could there conceivably be? That what we see of the world, the book, the play is selective and shaped by habit, convention - favoured perspectives - is well documented, indeed, the very possibility of seeing supposes our employment of prescriptive structures of interpretation. Yet we remain committed to the idea that at least some of our imaginative transactions involve the disclosure of truth. It may be that some of the contentious issues associated with this paradox can be usefully approached through the consideration of the *modes of relation*, the fundamental and exclusive kinds of orientation, that are prior to whatever we find to say about art or, indeed, persons. Some evidence for how the modes function is to be found in responses and critical discourse that are at cross purposes.

Our most characteristic relation with texts involves a rather passive mode of cognition. We tacitly recognise and affirm the world of the book but we hardly arrive at insight. This I call *identification*. On the other hand, *imagination* is that dynamic *process* involving the shift from identification into what, retrospectively, can be designated as abstractive cognition. I shall designate this retrospective cognition as the *discursive*. That identification is the

primary mode of assimilation is reflected in texts ancient and modern.

We move between identification, imagination and the discursive, each stage representing a mode of relation with distinct prescriptive effects. The discursive allows us to posit the conceptual distinction between form and content. On the other hand, in the process of imagining, form is submerged, latent in a kind of seeing that is also understanding and involves a synthesis of head and heart. Both Hopkins, in his disclosure of inscape, and Cézanne in his pursuit of the motif, find individuating forms in the context of nature. Such disclosures seem to be products of a *double prescription* whereby the imposition of a frame structures the content within it in such a way as to render that previously latent structure expressive - the initial prescription makes manifest an holistic structure which, in turn, shapes the complex of our responses. In such imaginative transactions content is form is content. The nature of double prescription is explored more fully in Chapter 2 and elaborated throughout the text.

It is possible to conceive of some primal state where the discerning of inscape - holistic structures - had implications for survival. The phenomenon of camouflage in animals - the disruption of pattern - supposes this. However, in a modern, urban context such a faculty is hardly exercised - indeed, our environment is saturated with cues that invite ready identification rather than discernment. However, in reducing the world to manageable proportions we effectively consign areas and aspects of it to redundancy. In order to reach this substrate - with its potentiality of wider and richer experience - our habits of perception have to be subverted. Our sense of ourselves, however, is profoundly dependent upon conservative paradigms - this makes the passage to a widened experience difficult not least because such paradigms are inescapably competitive. Once superseded, a paradigm that has engaged identification will appear to its former inhabitant as absurd - thereby generating a pervasive sense of disturbance. There is, then, a deeply problematical psychological dimension to our modes of imagining.

The issues concerning the modes in which we, as individuals, inhabit paradigms are reflected on the larger scale at the interface between cultures. This is evident in the

circumstance of colonisation, involving the projection of European values and modes of thought, and within European societies themselves in periods of social change. The modes of imagination are revealed in how we assimilate experience in both the geographical and historical contexts. The expressive power of the historical novel supposes an imaginative transfiguration of history which is no different in principle from the rendering of other experience which we have considered so far.

Failure to acknowledge distinctions between identification, imagination and the discursive, and the shifting relations between them, results in muddles. To borrow E.M. Forster's terms, 'mysteries' are manifest as 'muddles' to discursive scrutiny - put in another way, 'muddles' obstruct our 'passage' to 'mysteries'.⁴ In his analysis of dreams, Freud distinguishes the manifest dream from its latent content. Priority is thereby given to the discursive. This strategy inevitably reduces the content of dreams to signs and referents whereas there are hints in Freud's own examples that the logic of dreams is fundamentally analogical. Discursive explication then effects that vitiation characteristic of the fate of other expressions of the imagination. In some of his short stories James Joyce reflects parallel issues in distinguishing between the experience of children and adult interpretation of it.

It follows that just as the nature of an artefact changes according to the mode in which it is apprehended so the nature of the self changes - the imagination has implications for identity. Viewed discursively the self appears as an object, or an object that cannot be found, or a collection of selves. On the other hand, in the context of imagining, the self and the world and the self and the other are engaged in reciprocal extension. In the context of the nihilism that follows from the apparent contraction of the Romantic imagination into mere subjectivity, Virginia Woolf seems to find a more modest role for imagining that escapes the charge of subjectivity: through the mediation of art, we manufacture our own meaning and, thereby, further our individuation. In some ways her thought seems similar to that of Nietzsche in that the rejection of Romanticism and its metaphysics leads to nihilism - what

⁴ E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India*, ed. by Oliver Stallybrass, reprinted from the Abinger Edition 1982 (London: Penguin Books, 1936).

Nietzsche calls a 'sure nothing'⁵ - and out of the far side of this suffering we struggle to some kind of aesthetic affirmation.

But is it safe to generalise about Romanticism and its association with subjectivity? Is it possible to distinguish the Romantic concept from the underlying nature of the imagination itself? Rather than reflecting some subjective escape, what seems to distinguish much of Wordsworth's writing is precisely the clarity of his observations of nature and its topographical accuracy. On the other hand, he is emphatic that certain imaginative transactions involve not only a shaping power in the observing eye but power as disclosed in nature itself. His poetry would seem, then, to reflect an awareness of double prescription - but his rationalisations of the phenomenon resort to metaphysics. Paradoxically, Wordsworth is at the height of his powers in lamenting the passing away of his imaginative capacity - his account of such experience is, characteristically, retrospective. Romantic symbolism seems to presuppose double prescription but within the context of a strong sense of the purposive: in this way imagination is associated with access to the sacred. It follows that when the imaginative capacity is lost, so too is the numinous. What may be the natural history of every imagination becomes taken up in a myth of inevitable decline.

The consideration of the possible distinctions between the Romantic Imagination and imagination as we conceive it may be reconstrued in terms of differences in outcomes, specifically, between subjective pleasure and insight. Such a discussion, it seemed to me, demanded an excursion into Kant.

Beauty, for Kant, seems to involve the disinterested engagement of the imagination in aesthetic structures. In finding them beautiful we conceive of such structures as purposive wholes but wholes without a specifically conceptual purpose. This bears a strong resemblance to Hopkins's notion that poetry is speech 'employed to carry the inscape for the inscape's sake.'⁶ Such an argument would seem to confine beauty to relatively trivial experiences in the context of the fine arts. But inscape depends upon a logic that supposes

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. by R.J. Hollingdale, repr. 1990 (London: Penguin Classics, 1973), p.40.

⁶ Gerard Manley Hopkins, 'Poetry and Verse', in *Gerard Manley Hopkins: Poems and Prose*, ed. by W.H. Gardner, repr. 1985 (London: Penguin, 1953), p.xxii.

internal relations between that which is represented and forms of life. Is it that in representational art, Kant's finality of form *presupposes* finality of ends - that art is inseparable from insight? What, perhaps, in the end, distinguishes formal finality from finality of ends is a specific kind of intention. This aesthetic mode can be directly engaged by forms in nature - in which case purposiveness can be reconstrued as purpose. Through such a transaction nature becomes symbolic, it points towards a creator - the concrete points to the abstract. My point is, that where the imagination arrives at insight the very nature of the transaction renders it available to the further step of the ascription of purpose - but that ascription depends upon a distinctive metaphysical rationalisation: this specific aspect of the religious has its *ground* in the aesthetic.

It may be then that imagination has the capacity to illuminate reality but how, more specifically, does this come about? It seems that the epistemological issues are sharply focused in the nature of metaphor. But this would seem to involve a peculiar paradox: how is it that 'seeing as' - seeing some state of affairs through the mediation of *something else* - can lead to insight?

The mediation effected through metaphor in the process of imagining supposes both a semantic context and a projective reference whose power of depiction is manifest in an holistic structure. On the other hand, the explicative power of the discursive is confined to a cumulative series of signs and referents. In other words, consideration of the epistemological issues *must take account of the relational modes within which our relations with the world and texts are mediated*. This is a fundamental point in my argument. Critical discourse tacitly assumes that its characteristic discursive relation is the paradigm case of understanding. However, its structures of interpretation must be beside the point, establishing a sort of critical idealism, unless their role as elements in the dialectic of imagining is understood. The dialectic involves *passage between modes*. Metaphor supposes insight in so far as it refigures aspects of the world and extends our ways of being in it. This involves the disclosure of internal relations in the context of *projective reference* - Wittgenstein refers to 'the law of

projection which projects the symphony into the language of musical notation.⁷

It seems to me that this dialectic, though it may be obscure in my exposition, is in fact reflected with extraordinary power and clarity in the Gospels. There, figuralism emerges as a characteristic device in the engendering of meaning. Figuralism involves an internal relation projected through time. Both metaphor and figuralism effect closure but the latter is, characteristically, couched in terms of the fulfilment of God's purposes. Such closure is peculiarly vulnerable to ideological appropriation. But the parables and miracles of Jesus exhibit a pattern where ideology is transcended in the dialectic of imagining. The dialectic is exemplified, above all, in the climax of Christ's Passion where ideological man is transcended in the revelation of the larger - in this case, unconditional - self. This pattern is reiterated in the fiction of Patrick White where, in effect, a contemporary re-working of the mystery plays is offered. The centrality of the dialectic suggests, that in the psychological context, imagining is a key process in facilitating the evolution of the self from the ego-identity - the point is anticipated in the discussion of *To the Lighthouse*.

Important aspects of the issues regarding both epistemology and individuation are reflected in *The Birth of Tragedy* - though Nietzsche's immediate aim is to explore Hellenic art and culture. In his responses both to Nietzsche and Schiller, Jung acknowledges their contributions to the understanding of individuation - he can see reflected in their work his theory of psychological types - but judges that their 'aestheticism' is a serious shortcoming. Jung would locate the psychological issues in the religious domain. Any discussion of aesthetics that assumes a Kantian disinterestedness may be open to Jung's charge. However, our imaginative transactions and their evolution into symbolism - the revelation of value in a purposive context - are one avenue to the sacred and may take us further than Jung had supposed. Indeed, refiguration through metaphor and the contingent achievement of impossible perspectives through fictions would seem to be important means of achieving differentiation from the 'shadow'. Jung observes:

⁷ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. by D.F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness, 3rd impression 1966 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p.39.

Through the withdrawal of projections, conscious knowledge slowly developed. [...] All gaps in our actual knowledge are still filled out with projections. We are still so sure we know what other people think or what their true character is. We are convinced that certain people have all the bad qualities we do not know in ourselves [...]. We must still be exceedingly careful not to project our own shadows too shamelessly; we are still swamped with projected illusions.⁸

All the modes of imagination must have roles in facilitating or obstructing individuation. As we shift from one to another so Proteus changes his shape - but only in one mode will he surrender his revelation.

⁸ Carl Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, trans. by R.F.C. Hull, 2nd edn. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 83.

Chapter One

Identification and Imagination

There can be no neutral observers. That what we see of the world, the book, the play is selective and shaped by habit, convention - favoured perspectives - is well documented, indeed, the very possibility of seeing supposes our employment of prescriptive structures of interpretation. However, that there are prior modes of relation, fundamental and exclusive kinds of orientation, seems less clearly understood: the evidence is to be found in responses and critical discourse that are at cross purposes. Our most characteristic mode of relation with texts involves a rather elusive, passive mode of cognition, where we are hardly pushed into insight. This, I call identification. On the other hand, imagination is that dynamic process involving the shift from identification into what, retrospectively, can be designated as abstractive cognition. That identification is a primary mode of assimilation is reflected in texts ancient and modern.

Christopher Hampton's play *Savages* is set in Brazil in the early 1970s. It expresses his outrage at the genocide practised against the Brazilian Indians in recent times - though the process has been under way since the sixteenth century.

The specifically dramatic impact of the play emerges from the tension generated by the kidnapping of a British diplomat by left-wing guerrillas. On this plot is hung, on the one hand, scenes depicting something of the rich traditions of myth and legend associated with the forest Indians and on the other, accounts of atrocities which they have suffered. The details are shocking. The horror is well established before the diplomat's attendant captor recounts the following incident, an incident, which, in my experience, makes many students laugh:

CARLOS I've had a good day, very successful operation.

WEST Really?

CARLOS Yes, I rang the police this morning and told them the American Embassy was being attacked by a gang of thugs disguised as an army unit and then I rang army headquarters and told them the American Embassy was being attacked by a gang of thugs in police uniform. Then, I went and watched from a safe distance. Most satisfactory.

WEST You mean it worked?

CARLOS Three dead, a dozen or so wounded and a certain amount of damage to property.¹

¹ Christopher Hampton, *Savages*, repr. 1990 (London: Faber and Faber, 1974), p.63.

Why is it that the ready sympathy for the predicament of the Indians generated in earlier parts of the play is not, generally, available for human kind slaughtered in these different circumstances?

It is as if the power of the grim detail concerning the atrocities against the Indians, and the skill of its representation, draw us into *identification* with their plight: a favoured method of extermination was to distribute blankets from the smallpox wards of hospitals; sacks of sugar laced with arsenic were dropped from aircraft into villages. Such detail is placed in a context of myth and legend that invites recognition of common humanity and common strategies for coping with the vicissitudes of life. Yet the paradox remains: it seems that the very success of this presentation effects a kind of blindness to the humanity of what could be identified as *the enemy* - though not even the *specific* enemies with regard to the predicament of the Indians. That *somebody* suffers we seem to find a source of satisfaction.

The pull of identification is considerably enhanced by the gratifying complementarity of the intrinsic *irony* of the incident. To see the irony supposes a detached, 'aesthetic' response. As we enjoy it we are blinded to the suffering engendered by the mayhem. To arrive at the suffering is now a conceptual problem involving a shift in Gestalt: for an adult to protest against *Tom and Jerry* on moral grounds involves a conceptual mistake which is the *reverse* of this problem.

In *Savages*, identification is not the final response calculated by the playwright. West and Carlos extend the scene by trading stories about the atrocities of the Brazilian Death Squad and it concludes with an observation concerning the behaviour of children cutting up worms, pulling the legs from lizards and so on, thereby drawing to our attention a basic disposition to inflict suffering. (p.68) The theme is developed in the following scene where there is a numbing account of a young Indian girl being chopped in half with a machete; it is taken from the transcription of an actual interview recorded by Padre Edgar Smith, S.J. sometime in 1963. (pp.68-71)

In my experience it is at this point that the weight of emotion generated by the predicament of the Indians is now sufficient to crystallise into an abstractive cognition that

allows connections to be made with *all* who suffer. The concomitant value generated in the recognition - however momentary - is the unconditional value of human life. There is a change in Gestalt, a shift in paradigm that transcends the partiality of identification. We are shifted from natural sympathy - grounded in the specific case and, therefore, of its nature, partial - through an abstractive cognition, to an insight universal in its application. Crucially, the insight is charged up with *experience* of the value.

Though *grounded* in the affective, the shift in Gestalt is associated with the emergence of a controlled, sequential *pattern* of events in the play; given the affective response, the pattern allows Hampton to engineer the potential abstractive responses of the audience without incursion into the didactic. We arrive at insight through *experience of and in* the text. It is the *pattern* that, in effect, serves to universalise - in a sort of Kantian sense - the moral values adumbrated in the fictional events; insight can now be reproduced through our controlled imagining. The 'imperative' here is not, of course, 'categorical', it does not have the force of *logical* necessity. On the other hand its sanction lies precisely in its being *reproducible* - given access through the imagination. In general, the aesthetic imagination *rehearses* the activity of the moral imagination - that is its great educational value - and in some cases, as in *Savages*, these operations coincide.

I shall argue that *identification* is a necessary but not sufficient condition for *imagination*. By 'identification' I mean something akin to Edmund Burke's 'sympathy':

For sympathy must be considered as a sort of substitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in many respects as he is affected [...] It is by this principle chiefly that poetry, painting, and other affecting arts, transfuse their passions from one breast to another.²

David Hume observes:

[...] wherever we go, whatever we reflect on or converse about, every thing still presents us with the view of human happiness or misery, and excites in our breast a sympathetic movement of pleasure or uneasiness [...].

² Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. by Adam Phillips, World's Classics, repr. 1992 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.41.

Every movement of the theatre, by a skilful poet, is communicated, as it were by magic, to the spectators; who weep, tremble, resent, rejoice, and are enflamed with all the variety of passions, which actuate the several personages of the drama.³

Natural sympathy is the basic resource out of which, by means of a series of nudging, abstractive cognitions, Hampton generates our insight. The insight involves bringing to consciousness the cognition that is latent in identification but which is, in this case, characteristically, blocked by indignation. This shift from identification to the abstractive is my first, tentative, definition of imagination: it is manifest as the process, grounded in empathy, of bringing latent abstractive cognition to consciousness. Given the sympathetic ground of imagining, value is the inevitable accompaniment, indeed, is *bound in*, to the emergent abstractive cognition before its polarisation into fact and value - a characteristic of ratiocination. I shall designate the mode of relation associated with ratiocination as the *discursive*. Imagination *facilitates* abstraction.

It is not my intention to discuss at this point the psychological nature of identification but to explore some of its epistemological implications with regard to our assimilation of texts and artefacts. Nevertheless, Freud's discussion of identification is suggestive. In discussing the 'transmutation of instincts of the super ego' he writes:

The basis of the process is what we call an identification, that is to say that one ego becomes like another, which results in the first ego behaving itself in certain respects in the same way as the second, it imitates it, and as it were takes it into itself. This identification has been not inappropriately compared with the oral cannibalistic incorporation of other persons. Identification is a very important kind of relationship with another person, probably the most primitive.⁴

Here identification is associated primarily with the response to authority figures; generalised, identification becomes a species of 'the libidinal cathexis of objects'. (p.464.) It is in this broader sense that I would adapt the concept for my own purposes - usefully retaining the association of the artist's authority. Freud clearly relates identification to the positing of the super ego. I would argue that in the context of art, imaginative transactions are brought about through abstractive activity arising out of identification which is, indeed, 'the most primitive' relation - but it requires to be transposed through abstraction to attain

³ David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. by J.B. Schneewind (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983), p.44.

⁴ Sigmund Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (London: Hogarth, 1949), pp.85-86.

its aesthetic or moral efficacy. It may be, then, that identification is the *ground* of the imaginative and moral life. It is an elusive and subtle relation that can shift and merge into fantasy or imagining. Fantasy can be blindness; imagination is associated with insight.

Mimesis and Imagination

Plato's attack on tragedy depends on his analysis of the logic of imitation - mimesis - and the inherent distortion effected by representation upon reality. Furthermore, the imitative poet is tempted by what is easiest to imitate - there is little dramatic potential in the depiction of 'the temper, which is wise and calm': his business is with the 'peevish and changeful temper'.⁵ Drama thrives on tension. The scope of Plato's indictment is obvious in its applicability to much that occurs in the popular media, in things 'that are worthless when tried by the standard of truth.' (p.349) Yet, his heaviest indictment fell upon his beloved Homer, in that in representing the suffering hero the poet excites sympathy so powerful that we 'give ourselves up to be led along.' (p.350) The capitulation to emotion runs counter to that self-control through the exercise of reason that we 'pride ourselves upon.' (p.350).

Traditionally, the attack on tragedy and the poets has been countered by the assertion of the didactic function of poetry and the appropriation of Aristotle in the rationalisation of that end. Sir Philip Sidney presents a typical case in conceiving of poetry as a sort of inspired propaganda 'full of virtue-breeding delightfulness.'⁶ But his defence does not adequately address the *logic* of imagination that would allow for the emergence of art as didactic - Sidney merely asserts that it is so. In effect, the moral typology is, mercifully, a function of a retrospective rationalisation that *presupposes* prior imaginative engagement: Sidney *talks* as if poetry is propaganda but his discourse presupposes prior imagining.

On the other hand, in his *Poetics* Aristotle seems to regard the ethical as incidental and is quite clear that mimesis in tragedy is primarily concerned with the plot:

⁵ *The Republic of Plato*, trans. by J.L. Davics and David James Vaughan (New York: Macmillan, 1900), p.349.

⁶ Sir Philip Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry*, this edition 1984 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), p.74.

[...] it is not for the purpose of presenting their characters that the agents engage in action, but rather it is for the sake of their actions that they take on the characters that they have. Thus, what happens - that is, the plot - is the end for which a tragedy exists, and the end or purpose is the most important thing of all. What is more, without action there could not be a tragedy, but there would be without characterisation. In fact, the tragedies of most of our recent playwrights are lacking in the ethical element.⁷

Whereas a casual account of a dramatic *plot* would probably represent it as a chronological sequence of events, Aristotle seems to have something more subtle in mind. Tragedy presupposes *mimesis*, but involves the imitation of a completed action - that is, the magnitude of the action must be contained within a period of time 'which can be easily embraced by the memory.' (p.53) It is as if the plot could be understood only retrospectively when all its components were revealed.

The beginning generates a necessity or probability developed through the middle and connected by necessity or probability to the end. That is, the plot is conceived of as an autonomous, causal system - it constitutes an intelligible structure extended through time. The structure is to be comprehended as a whole; it generates its own probabilities and necessities; its time is not clock time - it is a function of the structure itself.

Aristotle's conception seems to have much in common with Socrates' comments in the *Phaedrus*:

[...] every discourse must be organised, like a living thing, with a body of its own, as it were, so as not to be headless or footless, but to have a middle and members, composed in fitting relation to each other and to the whole.⁸

The organic nature of Aristotle's conception of plot is confirmed in the dependence of its parts:

[...] the events [...] must be so organised that if any one of them is displaced or taken away, the whole will be shaken and put out of joint.⁹

In the work of a superior poet, *pity* and *fear* are generated by the *inner structure*. In other words, pity and fear are manifestations of our experience of the structure in its expressive mode - we are caught by the affective power of the plot. These emotions are a function of

⁷ Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. James Hutton (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), p.51.

⁸ Plato, *Phaedrus*, from *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, trans. H.N. Fowler (London: Heinemann, 1926), p.529.

⁹ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.54.

the action itself, and can be experienced as *structure* only retrospectively. In this way, experience - grounded in immediate, spontaneous identification - is rendered through imagination into abstraction so that the plot may then be apprehended as a connected, discrete structure, framed by the limits of its autonomous causality - the resolved action of the play.

It is my contention that the defining, holistic cognition emerges in the *process of catharsis* - emotions are purged *in the act of understanding*, in seeing the plot as a completed structure. For the Pythagoreans, catharsis, purification, was associated with the practice of *philosophia*, the extraction of *limit* from the *unlimited*:

[...] the purification and salvation of the soul depended not merely [...] on initiation and ritual purity, but on *philosophia*; and this word, then as now, meant using the powers of reason and observation in order to gain understanding.¹⁰

The more extended the plot, 'while still remaining perspicuous',¹¹ the more beautiful: here the tension between what has been *unresolved* and the *resolution* achieved in the process of imaginative apprehension is nicely caught.

T.S. Eliot touches upon the significance of the emergent pattern in 'Four Quartets':

[...] Words, after speech, reach
Into the silence. Only by the form, the pattern,
Can words or music reach
The stillness, as a Chinese jar still
Moves perpetually in its stillness.¹²

Transposed into the context of a *life* the pattern that emerges in moments of imaginative apprehension bestows a sense of higher purpose:

It seems, as one becomes older,
That the past has another pattern, and ceases to be a mere
sequence [...].
The moments of happiness - not the sense of well-being,
Fruition, fulfilment, security or affection,
Or even a very good dinner, but the sudden illumination -
We had the experience but missed the meaning,
And approach to the meaning restores the experience

¹⁰ W.K.C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, repr. 1997 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), p.205.

¹¹ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.53.

¹² T.S. Eliot, 'Burnt Norton', from *Four Quartets*, repr. 1968 (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), p.19, l.139.

In a different form.¹³

It is the location of such patterns of life in the larger *teleological* context that accounts, for example, for the sense of fatality in Greek drama and, generally, goes some way to explaining the characteristic association of the imaginative and the religious, particularly, in Romantic art.

It would seem that in the *Poetics*, catharsis is a precondition for and, indeed, constitutes the experiential context for the very process of concept formation itself - in so far as that involves the emergence of an intelligible structure in a teleological context. The plot, therefore, as Aristotle claims, is precisely 'the soul of tragedy'. (p.51) In this way the element of reason is reinstated at the heart of the unfolding *process* of imagining: what begins in the excitation of pity and terror is resolved in the understanding of an implacable logic.

In his *Biographia Literaria*, Coleridge argues that the practice of philosophy involves making distinctions. He suggests that the concept *imagination* includes the concept *fancy* - 'two conceptions perfectly distinct are confused under one and the same word'.¹⁴ Fancy is the mechanical process whereby the memory is exploited to find appropriate imagery in which to dress pre-existing ideas. The examination of any soliloquy by Hamlet, for example, shows him *thinking* in imagery - he is *imagining*; on the other hand, Claudius thinks, then dresses his thought in the colours of rhetoric - this is an operation of *fancy*. I would suggest that imagination contains within it yet another concept - *identification* - and is precisely that which Plato attacks in his polemic against the poets.

Identification is that unthinking, appropriative fantasy that, in Plato's terms, gratifies 'that senseless part which, instead of distinguishing the greater from the less, regards the same things now as great, and now as small, and manufactures fantastic phantoms that are very widely removed from truth.'¹⁵ We 'earnestly praise as a good poet the writer who can bring us as much as possible into this frame of mind.' (p.350)

¹³ T.S. Eliot, 'The Dry Salvages', from *Four Quartets*, l.85.

¹⁴ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, ed. by George Watson, repr. 1977 (London: Dent, 1965), Chapter 4, p.50.

¹⁵ Plato, *The Republic*, p.350.

It follows that Aristotle's argument *complements* but does not refute the Platonic attack for Plato has, in effect, outlined the pitfalls of *identification*. On the other hand, in describing the process whereby the plot emerges in the context of catharsis Aristotle has acknowledged that an imaginative transaction is at the heart of the drama facilitating the emergence of an abstractive, holistic cognition. The distinction between Plato and Aristotle resolves into that between different modes of assimilation - identification and imagination. Perhaps for his own didactic purposes, Plato conflates these. Nevertheless, Plato's indictment of fantasy stands.

There is, though, a further complication: the nature of the artefact changes in relation to shifts in the assimilating modes - that is to say, whether the text is mediated through identification or imagination has *epistemological* implications. The experiencing of a text as tragedy depends, *logically*, in the experience of catharsis, whereas, the text may be engaged at the prior level of identification only. On the other hand, some level of cognition is implicit in identification - at least, its immediate affects presuppose *recognition*.

Imagination can be understood as a generic concept, which includes the concepts of fancy and identification. On the other hand, more specifically, it is that process of understanding that posits the text/artefact as a coherent whole and, indeed, includes moments of insight on the lesser scale - say, the delight in the shock of metaphor. It is a dynamic process, a moment of transition before insight decays into information. The text too is dynamic: it is not the passive object of alternative kinds of scrutiny - the modes of connection that we make with it are prescriptive so that the nature of the artefact changes according to the mode in which we apprehend it.

In order to illustrate the didactic power of poetry Sir Philip Sidney cites the story of Nathan and David as recounted in Samuel - the context is David's love for Bethsabe and his arranging for the death of her husband, Urias:

And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him and said unto him: there were two men in one city, a rich and a poor. And the rich had exceeding great abundance of sheep and oxen. But the poor had nothing save one little lamb which he bought and nourished up. And it grew up with him and his children, and did eat of his own meat

and drink of his own cup, and slept in his house, and was as dear unto him as his daughter. And there came a stranger unto the rich man. And he could not find in his heart to take of his own sheep nor of his beasts to dress for the stranger that was come unto him. But took the poor man's lamb and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David was exceeding wroth with the man, and said to Nathan: as surely as the Lord liveth the fellow that hath done this thing is the child of death and shall restore the lamb fourfold because he did this thing and because he had no pity. Then Nathan said to David: thou art the man.

Then said David unto Nathan: I have sinned against the Lord.¹⁶

The story strikingly demonstrates the power of identification - manifest in David's indignation. This is the *ground* of imagination. Subsequently, Nathan pushes David into recognition, there is a shift through imagination into the abstractive that brings *insight*. In this ancient story the logic of imagination is displayed. In rationalising the process to illustrate the didactic function of art, Sidney has inadvertently misled his readers by concentration upon the *outcome* at the expense of looking at *how the outcome comes about*. The result of this is to imply that the imagination is *fundamentally* abstractive. Poetry is thereby implicitly conceived as the work of Fancy. The conceptual basis of imagination is not explored. This cannot be said of Aristotle's analysis of tragedy.

Identification involves the affective appropriation of texts. Even so, it supposes some level of recognition. Imagination involves the emergence of intelligible structure from the ground of identification - we experience this as insight. Plato's attack on poetry can be understood as an attack on identification. Aristotle's notion of catharsis may encompass the experience of abstractive cognition emerging from identification - seen retrospectively. Subsequently, such cognition can be rationalised into a didactic defence of art. The text is dynamic and changes according to the mode of assimilation: it can be mirror or insight.

Identification

In Ovid's account of the story, Pygmalion seems unable to cope with the 'many faults which nature has implanted in the female sex.'¹⁷ and, more specifically, seems disgusted by female

¹⁶ II Samuel 12; from *Tyndale's Old Testament*, ed. by David Daniell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p.437.

¹⁷ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. by Mary M. Innes (London: Penguin, 1955), p.231.

sexuality. Yet, using all his skills as a sculptor, he makes a statue 'lovelier than any woman born' (p.231) then falls in love with his own creation. As a result of the beneficence of Venus, Pygmalion's statue becomes a human body. The imagery suggests though, that this human will have no autonomy, that Pygmalion's power over his creation will be sustained:

She seemed warm [...] at his touch the ivory lost its hardness [...] his fingers made an imprint on the yielding surface, just as wax [...] worked by men's fingers, is fashioned into many different shapes, and made fit for use by being used. (p.232)

Is it significant that the story is located between accounts of Apollo's fatal love for Hyacinth and Myrrha's incestuous love for her father? Is there a suggestion of perversity?

The element of perversity is certainly present in *The Merchant's Tale* where wax is used by Chaucer as a charged, tactile metaphor to express old Januarie's desire for a beautiful, naive, compliant young woman:

But certeynly, a yong thing may man gye,
Right as men may warm wex with handes plye.¹⁸

The aesthetic criteria by which Pygmalion's artefact is to be judged - they are later to be incorporated into the ideology of the Renaissance as articulated, for example, by Vasari - are clearly expressed:

...] with marvellous artistry, he skilfully carved a snowy ivory statue [...] the statue had all the appearance of a real girl, so that it seemed alive [...]. So cleverly did his art conceal its art. (*Metamorphoses*, p.231)

The *art that hides art* serves to create an illusion so compelling as to make the girl seem *alive*. Arguably, we are presented here with the type of both the artist and his creation as understood by the classical world.

Obviously we have no means of reaching this artefact other than through the assimilating mode that is represented in the story and that, clearly, is identification: the statue is a trigger for male fantasy.

It is fun to see the employment of such triggers in popular fiction, say, in the work of Ian Fleming:

¹⁸ Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Merchant's Prologue and Tale*, ed. by Maurice Hussey, repr. 1975 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p.44, l.217.

It was a naked girl, with her back to him. She was not quite naked. She wore a broad leather belt round her waist with a hunting knife in a leather sheath at her right hip. The belt made her nakedness extraordinarily erotic [...]. She stood in the classical relaxed pose of the nude, all the weight on the right leg and the left knee bent and turning slightly inwards, the head to one side as she examined the things in her hand.

[...] The whole scene, the empty beach, the green and blue sea, the naked girl with the strands of fair hair reminded Bond of something [...]. Yes, she was Botticelli's Venus, seen from behind.

[...] It was a beautiful face [...]. It was a serious face and the jawline was determined - the face of a girl who fends for herself. And once, reflected Bond, she had failed to fend. For the nose was badly broken, smashed crooked like a boxer's.¹⁹

It is as if this Venus had resisted Pygmalion's enveloping fantasy - hence, the broken nose. In Botticelli's painting the woman's neck is twice as long as it should be and her left arm seems to emerge from half-way down her chest - the painter had his eye on painterly matters. The allusion in Fleming's writing is impressionistic, almost as if he assumed that the passage would be only skimmed. The invocation of Venus is appropriate but its very vagueness invites us to boost the content with our own fantasy - the broken nose is a sort of masterstroke. The vagueness of 'made her nakedness extraordinarily erotic' functions as a blank cheque: we appropriate Honey Rider through our own wish-fulfilment.

There is a rich aura of value here manifest in the power of the erotic attraction. This value is experienced as fascination, exercised, apparently, by the *stereotype*. The person is obscured by the dazzle. Abstractive cognition would locate the value as an identifiable aspect of the stereotype: but then it would no longer *function* as a stereotype - Honey Rider would be an *example*. Here, one way or another, the male imagination will struggle if it is to arrive at the woman's otherness as a person. Fantasy posits a self only ambiguously differentiated from the object of attention so that it constitutes a kind of blindness. A closed circuit is established so that the object is reduced to a mere cue for the appropriating subject.

The impulse to transform some aspect of the world through fantasy points to an absence of something which the self needs to fulfil itself. Such a 'fulfilment', however, is at the same

¹⁹ Ian Fleming, *Dr No* (London: Heinemann 1963), pp.56-57.

time a starvation: in other words, what subsumes fantasy and identification is power, rendered ever more urgent in the escalating poverty of the fulfilment. It is as if Pygmalion's creation assuaged, but

[...] what she gives, gives with such supple confusions
That the giving famishes the craving.²⁰

That absence is merely intensified in such a vicious circle is implicit in the relational logic whereby the subject effects, paradoxically, an objectification of the artefact or person appropriated. In this case the issue is sharply focused in so far as what is objectified is a woman. The artefact or person, in being transformed into a mirror, *cannot* function in a mode in which a reciprocating fulfilment could be transacted.

This paradox - objectification through assimilation into subjectivity - is clearly illustrated in the imagery of *The Merchant's Tale* where young girls can be seen to be represented in the Merchant's fantasy as 'warm wax' whereas the actual girl, May, is 'brought abedde as stille as stoon.' (p.57, l.606) Wax and stone - fantasy and objectification.

Such objectification is a denial of the potentiality of that which, thereby, is reduced to a cue. Yet, in teaching children and young adults, identification, appropriation through fantasy, is a precondition for the assimilation of texts. That the condition has not been met is evident in the declaration that a text is boring. Teaching then, initially, involves lifting the recalcitrant into identification through the exploitation of triggers for more or less controlled fantasy. The frank declaration - boring - is a useful starting point and healthier than knowing rationalisation. In both cases though, the text is effectively locked away. Perhaps the most widespread and characteristic problem of teaching literature is to expect students to articulate responses to experiences that they haven't had. For the teacher to resort to presenting *information* about texts is to reinforce the problem - this involves a category mistake. The vitiation of texts that follows from such mistakes also results in objectification. This is not to deny a function for, say, contextual information that would help to make meaning clear - the relation between the imaginative and the discursive will be discussed more fully in Chapter 9.

²⁰ T.S. Eliot, 'Gerontion', from *Selected Poems*, this edn. 1966 (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), p.32.

Thus it is that the reduction of texts to information and appropriative fantasy have a common result in objectification. Identification, though, presupposes latent value; rationalisation is emotionally barren - except in so far as there is a certain satisfaction in control. If realised, the latent value in identification would resolve the wax/stone paradox in the newly found integrity of the other. In such transactions the moral implications of imagination are clearly disclosed.

Though identification is a precondition for assimilation it is the further shift into imagination that frees the text to autonomy. The process is reciprocal in that the reader too is simultaneously freed - it is in this mode of imagination that the grounds for self-knowledge are posited. Transposed into the context of human relations - a relational possibility that Pygmalion never reaches, trapped as he is in his gleeful adolescence - this mode of imagination underpins the very possibility of morality itself. Pygmalion's relationship with his statue *was* perverse but contained the possibility of self-realisation for both.

Identification and Blindness

Identification constitutes the initial motivating engagement with artefacts and this motivation finds its reward in the self-aggrandisement characteristic of fantasy. In discussing the imaginative life, Roger Fry observes:

[...] one of the first effects of freeing experience from the necessities of responsive action is to indulge recklessly the emotion of self-aggrandisement. The daydreams of a child are filled with extravagant romances in which he is always the invincible hero. Music [...] at certain stages of people's lives, has the effect merely of arousing in an almost absurd degree this egoistic elation.²¹

Identification fuels the pleasure in assimilating texts but that it is also a blindness is often exploited by Chaucer; subsequent *seeing* is achieved through the liberation of irony or symbolism. Indeed, in *The Franklin's Tale* this process seems to constitute a major theme in itself.

In order to establish his credentials the nameless magician presents the love-lorn

²¹ Roger Fry, *Vision and Design*, quoted in *Supplementary Texts*, The Open University (Portsmouth: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1978), p.105.

squire, Aurelius, with a vision:

He shewed him, er he wente to sopeer,
Forestes, parkes ful of wilde deer;
Ther saugh he hertes with hir hornes hye,
The gretteste that evere was seyn with ye.
He saugh of hem an hondred slain with houndes,
And somme with arwes blede of bittre woundes.
He saugh, whan voided were thise wilde deer,
Thise fauconers upon a fair river,
That with hir haukes han the heron slain.
Tho saugh he knightes justing in a plain;
And after this he dide him swich plesaunce
That he him shewed his lady on a daunce,
On which himself he daunced, as him thoughte.²²

As in the Pygmalion story, the climax involves the triggering of a response in fantasy that makes the woman seem real so that he seems to be dancing with her. Such is the power of the fantasy that he is instantly prepared to enter into a contract for a thousand pounds - a fortune. The impulsiveness, the blindness to the consequences of his actions is symptomatic of a more comprehensive blindness.

The magician has spectacularly established his credentials - not least, as a businessman - but, paradoxically, he seems to go out of his way to lead Aurelius to the insight that his adulterous infatuation is folly. The shift into recognition from fantasy is built into the symbolism of the passage or, rather, to see it as symbolic would be to achieve liberation. Amidst the representations of pastimes guaranteed to provoke the identification of a young squire there is a subtext of cuckoldry - 'hertes with hir hornes hye' - and violence. One particular image has long been prepared for. The many references to the *herte* have exploited the iconography of Courtly Love:

His brest was hool, withoute for to sene,
But in his herte ay was the arwe kene. (p.73, l.439)

But in the vision it is precisely the *hertes* that with 'arwes blede of bittre wounds'. The pun, with its liberating perspective, is not *seen* by Aurelius - he has been unable to read it, his identification remains intact.

²² Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Franklin's Prologue and Tale*, ed. by A.C. Spearing (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), p.75, l.517.

Reading, though, is precisely what we are doing in recognising what Aurelius doesn't see. But what of *our* identification with the Franklin's story? We are suddenly involved in a vertiginous fall through the levels of the text. Where do we come to rest?

The magician conjures up his vision in his study:

And yet remoeved they nevere out of the hous,
Whil they saugh al this sighte merveillous,
But in his studie, ther as his bookes be. (pp.75-76, l.533)

There is a splendid note in my edition of the text:

ther as his bookes be This clause, as its recurrence [...] indicates, is little more than the kind of time- and space-filler that belongs to the diffuse style of a poem intended for oral delivery. But, though a formula, it has certain significance here, for it is presumably his books that have enabled him to create the illusions. (p.101)

There is, of course, the famous woodcut of Chaucer reading at a lectern, but the magician is in his library and the *space-filler* urgently draws our attention to precisely where we are likely to be reading the story: where I sit at this moment - in my study. The fall stops here.

Who, then, is the magician? Is it the Franklin? He is certainly a self-conscious storyteller, and proud of it - this is evident in the *diminutio* where he denies his skill in *The Prologue of the Franklin's Tale*: in denying his skill he displays it. He clearly attempts to blind us with science - reinforcing his illusion - in his account of the magician's method.

Yet, that he himself is part of the fiction is slyly hinted at in a wonderful passage where the Franklin is represented as Janus, the god of doorways - for the Romans, potent with numinosity. This is the verbal equivalent of an illumination in a medieval calendar or book, i.e. something that is looked at or read:

Phebus wax old, and hewed lyk laton,
That in his hoote declination
Shoon as the burned gold with stremes brighte;
But now in Capricorn adoun he lighte,
Wher as he shoon ful pale, I dar wel sen.
The bittre frostes, with the sleet and reyn,
Destroyed hath the grene in every yerd.
Janus sit by the fyr, with double berd,
And drinketh of his bugle horn the wyn;
Biforn him stant brawen of the tusked swyn,

And 'Nowel' crieth every lusty man. (p.77, l.573)

What is the point of identifying the Franklin with Janus? Certainly the Franklin hoped to reconcile two contradictory styles of human relationship - marriage and Courtly Love. But Chaucer drives the Franklin to irreconcilable paradox in the endeavour:

Thus hath she take hir servant and hir lord -
Servant in love, and lord in mariage.
Thanne was he bothe in lordshipe and servage. (p.63, l.20)

Janus looks in two directions - past and future - and like the Franklin's paradox these are irreconcilable. The Franklin is a fictional character with a contradictory vision. Through identification we would be trapped in that vision, sharing, ultimately, his fatal conflation of material and spiritual values:

For he was Epicurus owne sone,
That heeld opinioun that pleyn delit
Was verrey felicitee parfit. (p.109, l.339)

The escape from identification is engineered through the emergence of the cognitive - in the case of the passages we have considered, largely through symbolism. In such symbolism the concrete detail points beyond itself to a transcendent idea or values, the abstract made available in a sort of retrospective counterpoint. In terms of imagination this pushes the text towards the didactic. We become aware of an omniscient, directing intelligence. On the other hand, such clear differentiation may not have been available for a contemporary of Chaucer reading in the context of a culture sensitive to the power of icons - it was this dangerous power that the Renaissance turned from in contempt in its pursuit of the *real*.

In a modern context the spell of identification is nowhere more startlingly revealed than in the work of Franz Kafka. For example, *The Trial* begins with the treacherous assurance:

Someone must have been telling lies about Joseph K., for without having done anything wrong he was arrested one fine morning.²³

Generations of readers have been trapped into identification with the predicament of the protagonist. The standard response was articulated by George Steiner:

²³ Franz Kafka, *The Trial*, trans. Willa and Edwin Muir, repr. 1993 (London: Minerva, 1992), p.7.

[...] the key fact about Kafka is that he was possessed of a fearful premonition, that he saw, to the point of exact detail, the horror gathering.²⁴

The book is seen to be prophetic of the anonymous, totalitarian forces gathering against the individual. Such a view succumbs to the kind of projection which is at the root of the protagonist's predicament - identification, not with an artefact, but with reality itself.

The phenomenon whereby the individual projects his guilt on to, or into, the world Kafka designated *motivation*. Guilt is seen as a quality of the world, something not *motivated* by the self.²⁵ This is a kind of identification and in *The Trial* is a constituent of the book's formative, if latent, irony.

Kafka's wry humour is bound up in irony. Identification with the story, on the other hand, is experienced as a pervasive Angst. The irony is often established through literal metaphor. In *The Castle*, for example, Olga's description of her father's roadside vigil outside a market gardener's property categorises the old man as a vegetable:

[...] he was convinced that his job was to go on waiting in Bertuch's garden, and as he was in no state now to go there every day himself, we should have to push him there in a hand-barrow.²⁶

The first chapter of *The Trial* is richly seeded with theatrical metaphors - 'if this was a comedy he would insist on playing it to the end' (p.11) and 'K. felt he must put an end to this farce'. (p.13) The metaphor becomes literal with the addition of spectators - 'watching from his pillow the old lady opposite [...] seemed to be peering at him' (p.7) and

Across the street the party of three were still on the watch, and their original enjoyment of the spectacle received its first slight check when K. appeared at the window. (p.20)

On the night after his arrest, K., with typical childish urgency, obliges Fräulein Bürstner to listen to his story. She has been to the *theatre* and when she returns she is treated to another *performance*:

²⁴ George Steiner, *Language and Silence*, abridged edn. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), p.163.

²⁵ Theodore Ziolkowski, *Dimensions of the Modern Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), p.45.

²⁶ Franz Kafka, *The Castle*, trans. by Willa and Edwin Muir, repr. 1964 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957), p.206.

‘You must picture to yourself exactly where the various people are, it's very interesting. I am the Inspector[...]. Oh, I've forgotten about myself, the most important person[...]. The Inspector shouts as if he had to waken me out of my sleep [...].’ Fräulein Bürstner, who was listening with some amusement, put her finger to her lips to keep K. from shouting, but it was too late, K. was too absorbed in his role. (p.35)

It is precisely in his self-absorption that his blindness lies - the inspector, like many others in the story, attempts to waken him 'out of [...] sleep'. (p.35)

The evolving irony depends on the discrepancies between his egocentric vision and the reader's capacity to reconstruct the effects of this partial vision on the world around him. The Law by which he is eventually judged is constituted of the values and standards implicit in the expectations and judgements which he espouses but so desperately fails to confirm in his own behaviour. As Kafka puts it:

Rossmann and K., the innocent and the guilty, both executed without distinction in the end, the guilty one with a gentler hand, more pushed aside than struck down.²⁷

The brilliance of the book is in its capacity to absorb us in K's experience so that his failure is ours - the judgement upon us is devastating.

In considering the logic of motivation it is predictable that in extreme form it will be manifest as paranoid fantasy and this is, indeed, frequently confirmed, notably, in the first paragraph of the penultimate chapter. Such fantasy is also confirmed in the strong identification that would see Kafka as a prophet of doom.

In these stories Chaucer and Kafka share some common purpose and common strategies in attempting to liberate both characters and readers from the entrapment of identification. At first sight this may seem a rather startling a-historical claim that would wish away the gap in time and differences in tradition. On the other hand, the roles of relational modes involved in the working of the imagination are logically prior to the contexts that shape expression. As with Samuel in his account of the story of Nathan and David, these storytellers are perfectly familiar with the phenomenon of identification and, in effect, provide ostensive definitions and comprehensive analyses of its ramifications. Their common

²⁷ *The Diaries of Franz Kafka: 1910-1923*, ed. by Max Brod (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), pp. 343-344.

intention is to have the reader undergo the transition from blindness to awareness - the imaginative transaction.

They do not set out a prescriptive set of standards and values - morality as information - *they reproduce the process of arriving at moral insight itself.* This, surely, is the role of imagination in education: if the moral life is to be awakened - there must be stories.

Chapter Two

The Possibility of Imaginative Synthesis

The traditional differentiation between form and content is a result of abstraction and indicative of a shift into the discursive mode. In the process of imagining, form is submerged, latent in a kind of seeing that is also understanding and involves a synthesis of head and heart. Hopkins, in his disclosure of inscape, and Cézanne in his pursuit of the motif, find individuating forms in the context of nature. Such disclosures seem to be products of a double prescription whereby the imposition of a frame structures the content within it in such a way as to render that structure expressive. In such imaginative transactions content is form is content.

In both *The Trial* and *The Franklin's Tale* release from identification is achieved largely through irony. The contriving of ironic distance makes possible a resolution in terms of a double perspective upon events and motives. On the one hand, identification seduces us into the view of the protagonist; through the irony we achieve some critical detachment. Inevitably, such irony establishes a favoured perspective sanctioned by the author's omniscience. That the imaginative transaction is thus precisely controlled supposes, ultimately, didactic intent. Given awareness of the dual perspective the reader is hardly free to choose. The modes of relation subsuming the perspectives are characterised by identification or abstractive cognition: it is a case of either/or - though it is imagination that allows for the *shift* through the mediation of irony. Our pleasure is in the *seeing* and our tacit approval of what is seen is supposed.

On the other hand, it is a capacity of certain kinds of art to *bind in* the potentially abstractive cognition. Such cognition is anticipated in a distinctive kind of *understanding*. Drawn out of the imagination through abstraction and made available for ratiocination, such understanding *changes its nature*, is vitiated. Bound in, understanding is an integral product of imaginative synthesis - to think is to feel - and the artefact functions as a correlative for some complex of human experience characterised by a conspicuous expressiveness. Such a correlative is very different from T.S. Eliot's conception:

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an "objective correlative"; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion; such that when the external

facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately experienced.¹

This dualistic differentiation, where events are conceived as a 'formula' for emotions, misses the point that emotion is *already* inherent in the *understanding* of the situation that is represented. In other words, in imaginative apprehension a correlative is, indeed, posited but its autonomy is a function of its expressive power. That power is released in the transcending of identification which, left to itself, reduces art to mirror images. Autonomy is impossible where identification is sustained and destroyed where scrutiny shifts into the discursive. The autonomy of art is partly a function of the mode of its apprehension - a function of the process of imagining. We transform the ontology of the artefact through the modes in which we see it. This supposes, of course, that the artefact is conceived so thoroughly as to be expressive. Such potentiality, together with apprehension in the appropriate mode, is constitutive of autonomy.

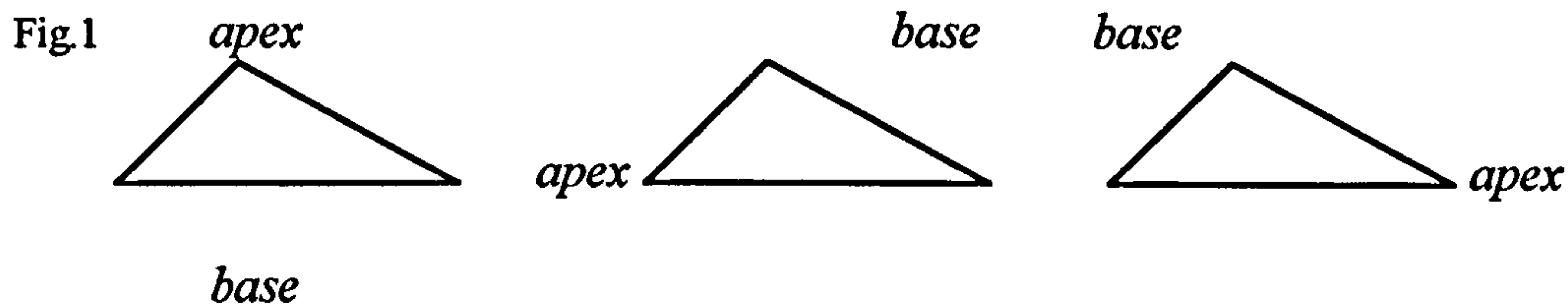
In Kafka and Chaucer the ironic distancing is made *possible* by imagining though that process ends in judgement - the mode shifts into the didactic. In so far as that is the case the imaginative disclosure is a means to an end - autonomy is compromised. On the other hand, Ben Jonson's poem, 'On My First Son' involves, as I shall argue, disclosure contingent upon the binding in of a triple perspective. Such diversification strikingly illustrates the prescriptive nature of language.

Common sense suggests that *naming* things is the fundamental activity of language, that words *describe* things rather like labels on jars. Such a view allows for a comfortable identification where, as Locke puts it, 'Men [...] often suppose their Words to stand also for the reality of Things.'² It is intriguing then - following Wittgenstein - to glimpse something of the prescriptive power that we experience in the peculiar twisting that follows the renaming of the parts of 'identical' triangles.³

¹ T.S. Eliot, 'Hamlet and his Problems', from *Selected Essays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950), pp.124-125.

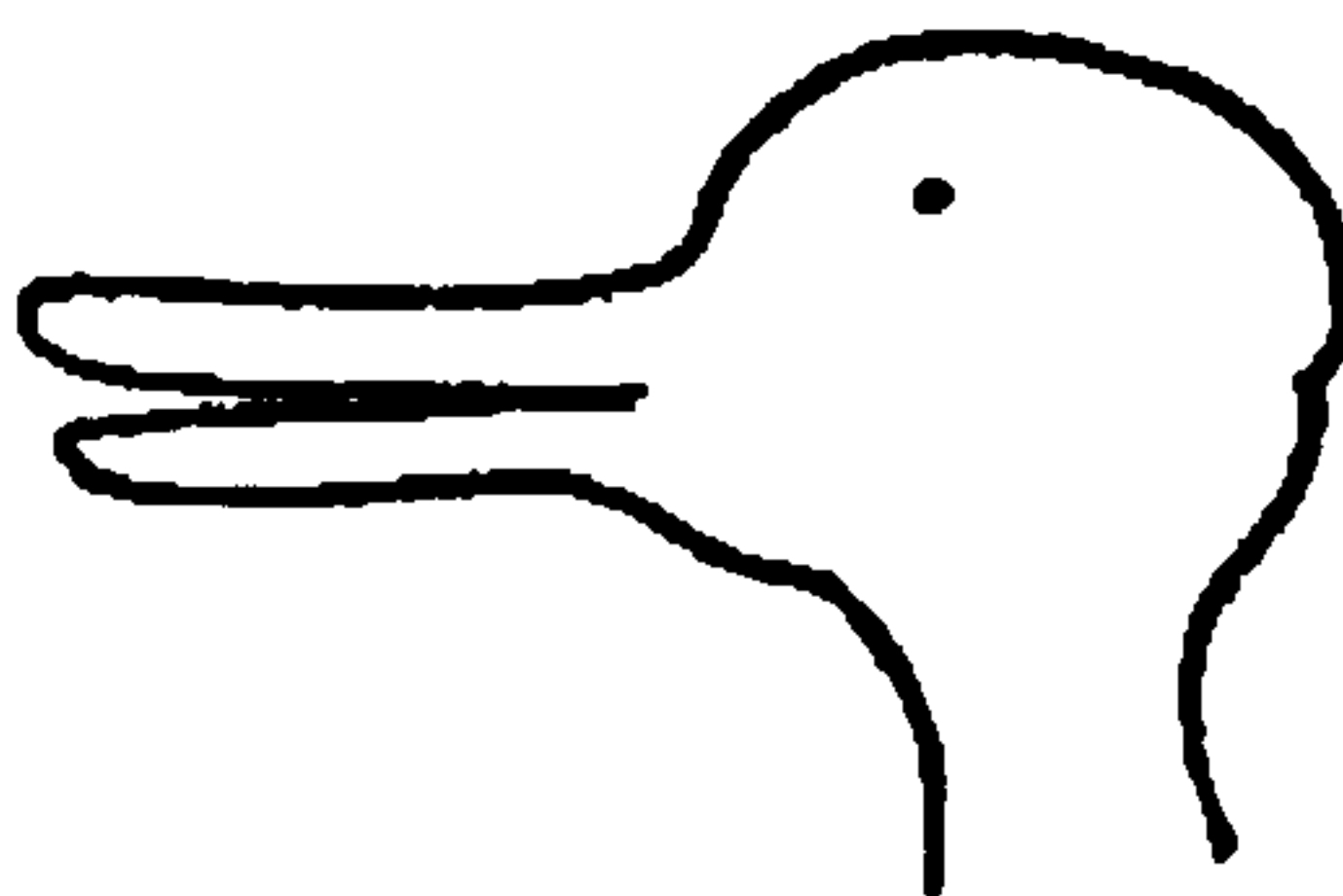
² Quoted in, *Locke on Human Understanding*, by E.J. Lowe (London: Routledge, 1995), p.149.

³ Adapted from an illustration in Ludwig Wittgenstein's, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1963), p.200e, IIxi.



It is easily suggested that the figure that Wittgenstein derives from Jastrow's duck-rabbit (p.194e, IIxii) is a rabbit, so that the duck remains to be discovered:

Fig.2



Wittgenstein distinguishes between the *continuous seeing* and the *dawning* of an aspect. The dawning here involves the emergence of an alternative Gestalt or stereotype.

On the other hand, the dawning in Ben Jonson's poem involves the disclosure of a state of emotion which, in its raw complexity, cannot be mediated through the controlling familiarity of a stereotype:

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy;
 My sinne was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy,
 Seven yeeres tho'wert lent to me, and I thee pay,
 Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.
 O, could I loose all father now. For why
 Will man lament the state he should envie?
 To have so soone scap'd worlds and fleshes rage,
 And, if no other miserie, yet age?
 Rest in soft peace, and, ask'd, say here doth lye
 Ben Jonson his best piece of *poetrie*.
 For whose sake, hence-forth, all his vowes be such,
 As what he loves may never like too much.⁴

⁴ Ben Jonson, 'On My First Sonne', from *Poets of the English Language*, vol. II, ed. by W.H. Auden and N.H. Pearson (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1952), pp.327-328.

Jonson's son died in 1607 when he was seven years old. The poem appears to present a number of strategies to find meaning in the event. The imagery suggests a contract which has been broken - in that Johnson invested too much love for his child in this sublunary world. If he had sufficient faith he would accept his son's elevation to a higher existence, find consolation in the thought that the miseries and vicissitudes of life had been left behind.

Three perspectives seem to open from the word 'lye'. On the one hand, it is as if Jonson is absorbed in the sight of the dead child. The mystery of the child and the joy in him are caught in the thought that he was his father's 'best piece of *poetrie*'. On the other hand, reaching some understanding of the event resolves into acceptance of its 'justice' and the record of that mediation lies before him - the poem in paper and ink. Yet this resolution is achieved not without tension, a sense of ingenuity in such rationalisation - the characteristic tension between extreme emotion and ideology. The unease constitutes a subtext for the poem. This is suddenly brought to consciousness - a *dawning* - in the pivotal verb *lye*. The collection of words on the page that constitute the poem lie in front of him; yet these very words are now seen to be a *lie*, an untruth. As Nietzsche might have put it, the language is no longer an adequate defence against the agony. The unspeakable event in the here and now is overwhelming. The poem floods with bitterness.

At least three possibilities are *simultaneously* present: joy in the child; the strained understanding in terms of religious orthodoxy; the collapse into despair. We realise that this is not a case of either/or - that the intractable stuff of grief is characterised by states of mind that oscillate between meaning and meaninglessness in agonised bewilderment.

Ambiguity at the conceptual level - alternating paradigms for the meaning of the poem - *is itself expressive* and constitutes a correlative for a complex state of emotion. It is the seeing, the *dawning* - the emergence of understanding - that unlocks the richer meaning of the poem. The emotion is now structured - that is, rendered autonomous - because it is *reproducible* in the experience of the beholder. We shift from a powerful *identification* with the father - grounded in empathy - to *understanding* something of what it is to grieve.

Dawning and Inscape

Again and again in his poetry Gerard Manley Hopkins takes the reader through *dawning* to realisation of structure - he calls this structure *inscape*. Hopkin's first ambition was to be a painter. Two of his brothers were professional artists and the poet himself was an excellent draughtsman.⁵ It is as if *inscape* emerged from the contemplation of *landscape*:

Hard frost, bright sun, a sky of blue 'water'. On the fells with Mr. Lucas. Parlick Pike and that ridge ruddy with fern and evening light. Ground sheeted with taut tattered streaks of crisp gritty snow. Green-white tufts of long bleached grass like heads of hair or the crowns of heads of hair, each a whorl of slender curves, one tuft taking up another - however these I might have noticed any day. I saw the inscape though freshly, as if my eye were still growing, though with a companion the eye and the ear are for the most part shut and instress cannot come.⁶

Inscape is elusive, it must be worked for, its manifestation seems to require a rapt concentration:

[...] I had always taken the sunset and the sun as quite out of gauge with each other, as indeed physically they are, for the eye after looking at the sun is blunted to everything else and if you look at the rest of the sunset you must cover the sun, but today I inscaped them together and made the sun the true eye and ace of the whole, as it is. It was all active and tossing out light and started as strongly forward from the field as a long stone or boss in the knop of the chalice-stem: it is indeed by stalling it so that it falls into scape with the sky. (p.119)

By *stalling* I think he may mean *placing* - in the sense of *placing a face*. It is through the visual analogy with the chalice stem (or *scape* - from the Greek *skapos*) that the relation between sun and sky 'falls into scape'. The inscape is clinched through the *dawning* of the analogue. This seems to be confirmed in another Journal entry:

This skeleton inscape of a spray-end of ash I broke at Wimbledon that summer is worth noticing for the suggested globe. (p.121)

Hopkins's interest in the onomatopoeic theory of language reflects his sensitivity to *aural* analogues but, clearly, visual analogues too have generative power:

⁵ See, Norman White, *Hopkins: A Literary Biography*, paperback ed. 1995 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p.163.

⁶ Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems and Prose*, op.cit., p.127.

The various lights under which a horn may be looked at have given rise to a vast number of words in the language. It may be regarded as a projection, a climax, a badge of strength, power or vigour, a tapering body, a spiral, a wavy object, a bow, a vessel to hold withal or to drink from [...]. From the shape, *kernel* and *granum*, *grain*, *corn*. From the curve of the horn, *κορῶνις*, *corona*, crown. (p.89)

Inscape is associated with the emergence of intelligible structure - for Hopkins, language itself is analogical: there is no difference in principle between the discovery of inscape in the world around us and concept formation itself. Inscape, intelligibility, is potentially everywhere:

[...] and looking at the great rudely arched timberframes - principals (?) and tie-beams, which make them look like bold big *A*'s with the cross-bar high up - I thought how sadly beauty of inscape was unknown and buried away from simple people and yet how near at hand it was if they had eyes to see it and it could be called out everywhere again. (p.126)

It is this ubiquitous potentiality that allows Hopkins to reconcile his art with his vocation as a priest, for to discover inscape is to have the nature of God's creation revealed in the celebration of poetry.

There are hints that at its most intense the dawning of inscape takes him across a threshold into the numinous:

I do not think I have ever seen anything more beautiful than the bluebell I have been looking at. I know the beauty of our Lord by it. It[s inscape] is [mixed of] strength and grace, like an ash [tree]. (p.120)

He touches upon this more directly in his 'On the Origin of Beauty: A Platonic Dialogue':

[...] I am sure there is in the higher forms of beauty - at least I seem to feel - something mystical, something I don't know how to call it. (p.104)

In 'The Windhover' there are more subtle hints that the threshold is crossed in that the energy of the imagery in the octave is characteristically kinetic:

I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in
his riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! then off, off forth on swing,
As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend. (p.30)

The falcon is 'dawn-drawn', then the eye follows the bird upwards; the extravagant 'riding' and 'striding' are both kinetic and psychological images - the *manner* of the action is crucial. The 'rein of a wimpling wing' gathers its potential energy to release it in 'swing' and the incisive cutting of the 'skate's heel'. Exhilaration is experienced through identification with movement and power and these energize the many other effects of the imagery. The kinetic also replicates the moving towards recognition of inscape.

The volta marks a change to the abstract - 'beauty', 'valour' and 'act':

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion
Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier! (p.30)

The dawning reaches consummation in 'buckle!'. The enjambement, the alliterative effects making this the explosive climax of the poem: the inscape is made manifest, and lest we miss it Hopkins 'overs and overs' it through the rhetorical 'billion/Times told lovelier'. At 'buckle' the inscape is disclosed - a moment of illumination - both for Hopkins *and in the imagination of the reader*.

It is as if the real subject of the poem were not so much the Windhover as the *process of arriving* at inscape itself. The first verb in the poem is 'caught' - the process of being taken out of himself has begun: 'My heart in hiding/stirred for a bird'. The images that conclude the poem suggest transfiguration. In the first, humble, case from energy to burnished beauty and, ultimately, to death and resurrection - 'blue-bleak embers [...] gash gold-vermilion.' The power of the instress draws him from introspection to rapt concentration and finally across a threshold into the numinous.

The concept of *instress* is intriguingly illustrated in a journal entry:

Mesmerised a duck with chalk lines from her beak sometimes level and sometimes forwards on a black table. They explain that the bird keeping the abiding offscape of the hand grasping her neck fancies she is still held down and cannot lift her head as long as she looks at the chalk line, which she associates with the power that holds her. This duck lifted her head at once when I put it down on the table without chalk. But this seems inadequate. It is most likely the fascinating instress of the straight white stroke. (p.123)

Whether he was right in his reading of the situation is beside the point - the significance is in his conception of the power of instress to *bind in* the duck to the inscape of the line. Generally, Hopkins seems to use instress in two related senses: it sustains the constituent elements of inscape and it is the means by which inscape is assimilated.

Conversation, indeed, this discourse, is always arching forward to complete its inscape, which exercises a prescriptive power over manifold possibilities. The stress passes between the interlocutors, the *apex* seeking its *base* in the consummation of intelligibility. What then distinguishes poetry from normal discourse?

Some matter or meaning is essential to [poetry] but only as an element necessary to support and employ the shape which is contemplated for its own sake. (Poetry is in fact speech employed to carry the inscape of speech for the inscape's sake - and therefore the inscape must be dwelt on.) (Introduction, p.xxii)

Instress is that dynamic tension that both holds inscape in being and negotiates its passage to understanding.

The sequence that is displayed in 'The Windhover' - the *process* of arriving at inscape - is characteristic of many of the poems, as is their resolution in terms of Hopkins's Christian ideology. In other poems, the experience is *reported* rather than realised. Such poetry pushes the assimilating mode into *identification*. Acceptance or rejection, then become the polarised possibilities and the potential autonomy of the artefact - which would be achieved through imagination - is destroyed. Ideology and identification are *logically* related - for identification is the source of the power of ideology. In the poems that can be apprehended mostly through the imagination the immediacy of the realised experience is frequently powerful enough to make the ideological resolution a mere confirming footnote - though for the *believer* the passage across the modes would be apparently seamless.

Perhaps the most striking example of the pattern is displayed in the first ten stanzas of 'The Wreck of the Deutschland'. The 'Joy's grape' of Keats,⁷ with its mildly astringent melancholy, becomes Hopkins's burst sloe:

⁷ John Keats, 'Ode on Melancholy', from, *A Selection from John Keats*, ed. by E.C. Pcttet, fourth impression 1982 (Harlow: Longman, 1974), p.87, l.28.

How a lush-kept plush-capped sloe
Will, mouthed to flesh-burst,
Gush! - flush the man, the being with it, sour or sweet,
Brim, in a flash, full! (Hopkins, p.15)

In this extraordinary moment the disintegrating paradoxes of the poem - focused in the irreconcilability of our experience of suffering with God's Grace - are simultaneously synthesised in the overwhelming dawning that only through suffering and, thence, through identification with the suffering of Christ can the love of God be understood. Within the world of the poem, whatever our beliefs, the imaginative power of the writing brings us to recognition - in the same way, one doesn't have to be a king, and eighty, to enter into the world of King Lear. The imagery draws us into the experience of dawning and thereby becomes an analogue of the realisation that Hopkins wishes the reader to undergo: in this way we are carried through identification to understanding.

In the second part of the poem, with the paradigm established, Hopkins goes on to reconstruct the shipwreck. There is, though, for all its beauties, a pervading sense of the didactic. The poetry *invites* identification - Luther becomes the 'beast of the waste wood': we are driven merely to agree or disagree. Crucially, the dawning is not so much displayed as dramatically *reported* with the use of anacoluthon and ellipsis:

But how shall I ... make me room there:
Reach me a ... Fancy, come faster -
Strike you the sight of it? look at it loom there,
Thing that she ... there then! (p.21)

Criticism, as such, is always dangerous, in so far as judgement - compare with the experience of Joseph K. - may be based in an inadequate imaginative grasp of the text, a sort of *negative* identification. This merely confirms, though, the logic of the elusive phenomena under discussion and how, in the process of reading, imagination can pass into identification and back again as easily as waking into sleeping, though with such dramatically contrasting results as insight and blindness.

But to categorise inscape as structure is to reduce the experience merely to abstraction. *Placing a face* is not just recognition, it is accompanied by a surge of satisfaction - 'Ah yes! It's Bill Fordyce!' Such satisfaction is complex, incorporating a sort of egotistical

component and an evaluation of the individual - even if we hated Fordyce the satisfaction in the *recognition* might survive. But whatever the reaction the individuality of Bill Fordyce is presupposed in it - the face is resolved in recognition of identity and *simultaneously* evaluated. Hopkins saw in the work of Duns Scotus corroboration of the idea that arriving at inscape was reaching the individuating *form* or *haecceitas*:

[...] like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves - goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,
Crying *What I do is me: for that I came.*⁸

For Hopkins the affirmation in the recognition was affirmation of divinity:

These things, these things were here and but the beholder
Wanting; which two when they once meet,
The heart rears wings bold and bolder
And hurls for him, O half hurls earth for him off under his feet.⁹

In the context of imagination our apprehensions of the world are value laden precisely because inscape is also a correlative for value itself. The value is bound into the understanding: meaning and value are one and the same. They can be separated only retrospectively and then according to the use for which the insight is required. This, characteristically, shifts value into the mode of power, where it no longer functions as value, rather, it provides sanctions. This explains why Hopkins again and again returns in his poetry to depicting the process of arriving at inscape; its purpose is to charge up the sanctions for his faith. The numinous is, characteristically, hijacked by his ideology.

To experience the arrival at inscape through Hopkins' poetry bears at least a 'family resemblance' to the process of understanding experienced in *catharsis*; and the Pythagorean arriving at *ekstasis* through the practise of *philosophia* would surely recognise the nature of the passage that Hopkins frequently makes.

Children will often make emphatic outlines of the figures and objects in their paintings. This may reflect their education in the time-honoured exercise of 'colouring in' - equally, it

⁸ Hopkins, 'As Kingfishers Catch Fire', p. 51.

⁹ Hopkins, 'Hurrahing in Harvest', p.31.

may reflect the urge to define. If the figures are already sufficiently realised the outlines will be redundant; if the outlines are necessary to establish identity then the content is not sufficiently realised. Form is implicit in intelligibility. Individuation *presupposes* the disclosure of form. The discrimination between form and content supposes an abstractive rationalisation in the discursive mode. In imagining, content and form are synthesised.

The Conceptual Basis of Imaginative Synthesis

Setting a map involves the adjustment of the diagrammatical representation by means of a compass so that points of contact can be established between the map and the landscape itself. The map is read, a route is chosen in response to the available information - is that a slope to be avoided? The depiction in two dimensions can be translated into three - there are rules of transformation for this.

Envisaging the route brings selected areas of the map to our attention, leaving huge areas redundant. The landscape becomes structured round an intention. It becomes possible to debate alternative routes. The criteria involved normally suppose facility of resultant action. What are the difficulties? How long will it take? Behind these criteria, though, are others. Pride in achievement might include another Munro; perhaps the view from that ridge is spectacular.

By transforming a section of the map into a vertical analogue the representation now offers potential for a different kind of intentional relation:

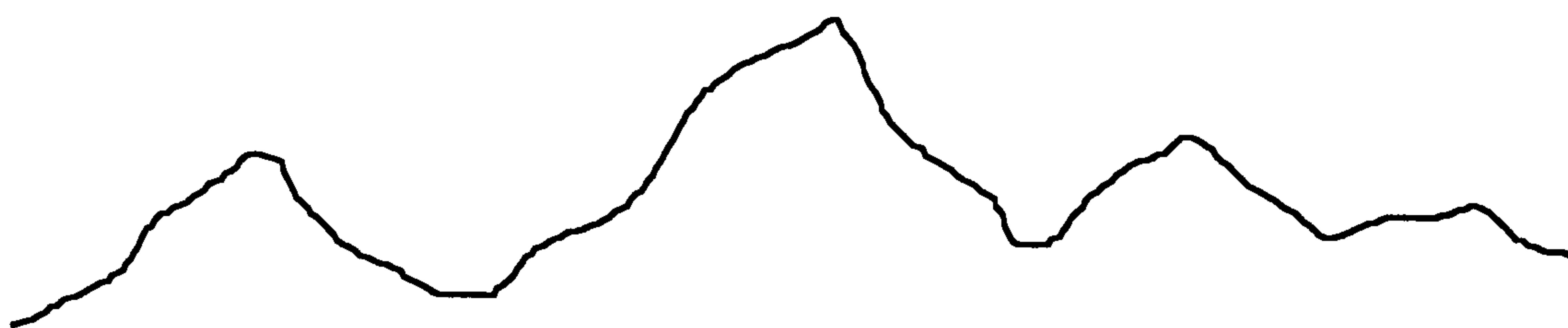


Fig.3

Frame an area of the new analogue and it resolves itself into a characteristic structure:

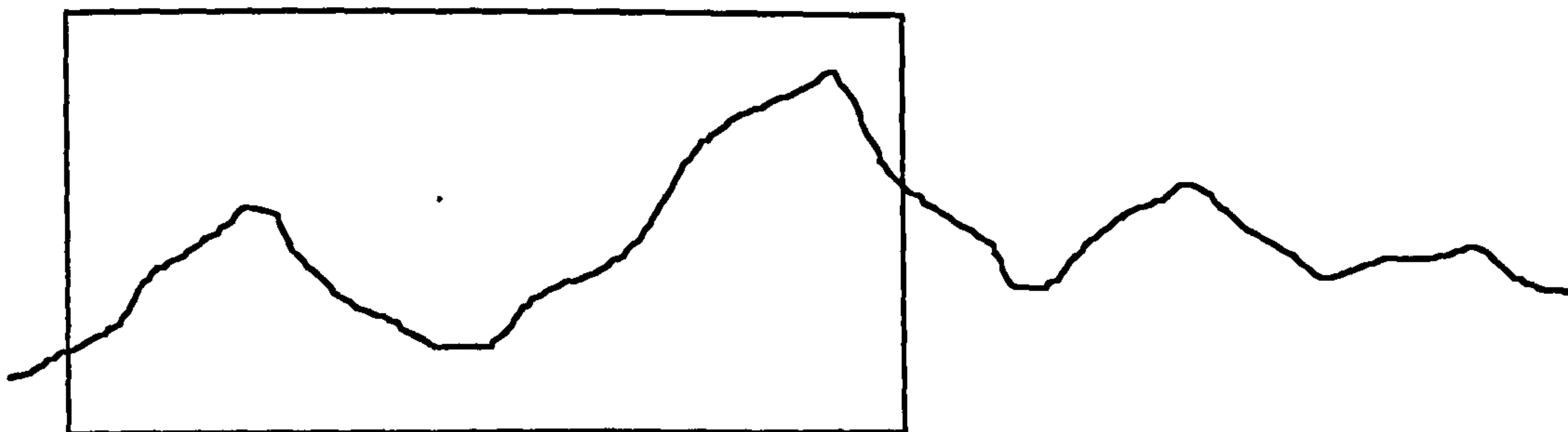


Fig.4

There are strong diagonals and the focal point is slightly off-centre. The structure is inscaped into something resembling a classical landscape. With other framings the landscape cannot be 'read' until the intention is clear:

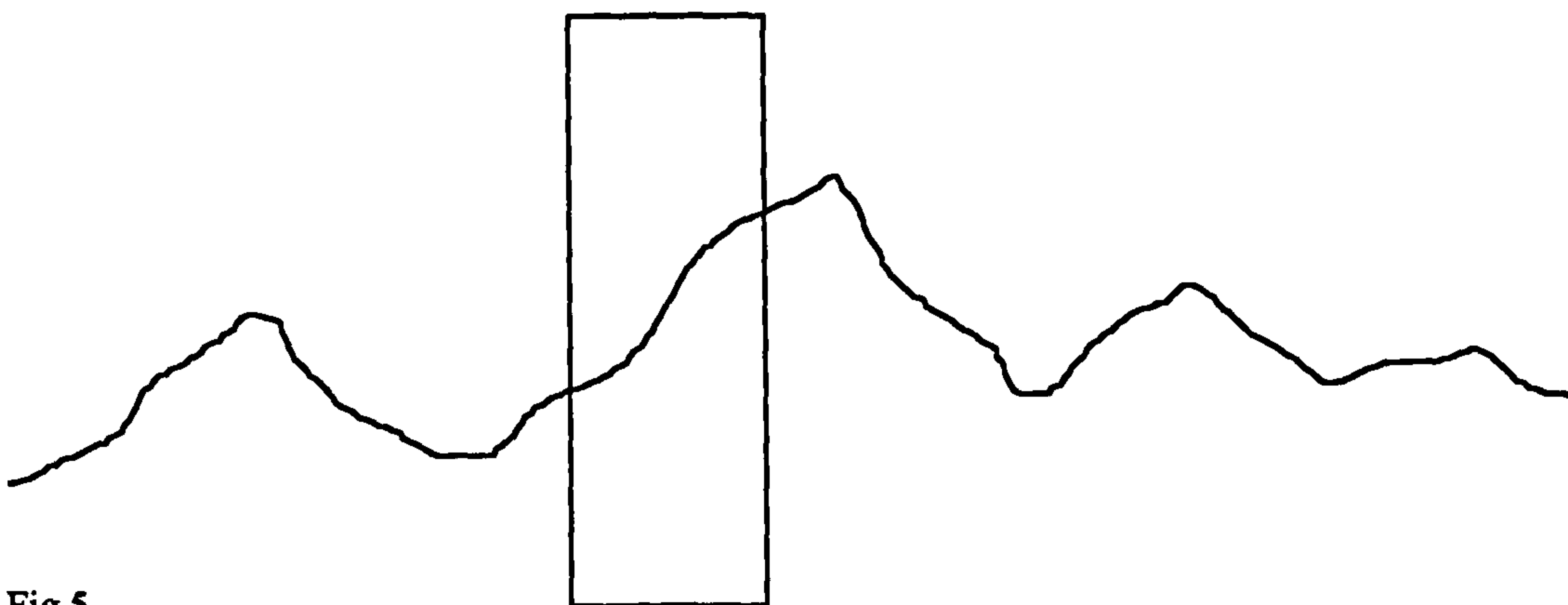


Fig.5

Switch the intention from engagement with classical landscape to the consideration of responsive action. Now the structure becomes intelligible: that slope is very steep - is there an easier route? On the other hand, it might make a challenging climb. Whatever significance is extracted is at the same time a sort of limit that pushes the other manifold possibilities into redundancy. What might these mountains be for a deer stalker, a geologist, a raven, a bee?

There is no passage to the 'landscape' itself except in terms of some prescriptive structuring - the prescriptions presuppose possibilities but these can only be inferred through a transcendental argument. That the world is intelligible at all is the mystery.

Hopkins selects that genus of intelligibility disclosed in the exhilaration of foredrawing, through the imagination, inscapes that are at the same time celebratory illuminations of his

creator God. That poetry is 'inscape of speech for the inscape's sake' is at a great remove from 'Art for Art's sake'.

Clearly, for Hopkins, inscape is characteristically apprehended in a context of vivid sensation. Light and shadow are favoured, for in combination they display sharpness of definition:

Down roughcast, down dazzling whitewash, wherever an elm
arches,
Shivelights and shadowtackle in long lashes lace, lance and
pair.¹⁰

(The *loss* of such definition is crucial in 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves'.) Visual and kinetic images catch the complex movements of the shadows cast by the elms in the 'boisterous' wind. Yet this clarity of definition is not a precise, literal reconstruction of visual experience - it has the powerful, because compact, efficacy of cartoon. Later in the poem our fate as individuals is vividly realised:

But quench her bonniest, dearest to her, her clearest-selvèd
spark
Man, how fast his firedint, his mark on mind, is gone! (p.66)

Like sparks from God-the-blacksmith's forge, we glow in momentary incandescence before being swallowed 'in an unfathomable [...] dark'. (p.66) Here inscape itself is inscaped. Our essence - inscape, the divine spark - is inscaped through the 'firedint'. The radical simplification 'illuminates'.

But to talk of a *context* of emotion presupposes a dualistic categorisation of abstractive cognition and sensation. Rather, as I have already suggested, *in the mode of imagination*, inscapes are analogues for complex states of mind and emotion. Prescriptive intentions are what ultimately switch the modality - abstractive cognition or imagination. That inscape can carry the complex amalgam of cognition and sensation is implicit in Wittgenstein's remarks:

4.014 A gramophone record, the musical idea, the written notes, and the sound-waves, all stand to one another in the same internal relation of depicting that holds between language and the world.

¹⁰ Hopkins, 'That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire', p.65.

They are all constructed according to a common logical pattern [...].

4.0141 There is a general rule by means of which the musician can obtain the symphony from the score, and which makes it possible to derive the symphony from the groove on the gramophone record, and, using the first rule, to derive the score again. That is what constitutes the inner similarity between these things [...]. And that rule is the law of projection which projects the symphony into the language of musical notation. It is the rule for translating this language into the language of gramophone records.¹¹

An implication of this is that, in the mode of imagination, inscape cannot be value free - there is no intelligibility without value. Or is it, more radically, that intelligibility itself cannot be value free, for value is bound in by the very logic of intentionality? The value in the apparently incoherent fig.3 emerges simultaneously with finding the intention that makes it expressive; but there is no value until it *becomes* expressive, that is, an intelligible structure.

It may be that poetry is the paradigm case for the intelligibility that is manifest in language. Then problems arise in discourses that *purport* to be value free - and that takes us into the territory of Derrida, who asks us

[...] to study the philosophical text in its formal structure, in its rhetorical organization [...] drawing upon the reserves of a language, cultivating, forcing, or making deviate a set of tropic [metaphorical] resources older than philosophy itself.¹²

The skill of the poet is to 'over and over' such intelligibility, above all, through metaphor, which provides prescriptive analogues that *render* structure from that potentially rich source of experience which, in the blindness of identification, we consign to redundancy. Such rendering is also manifest through the different skills of the landscape painter.

The early work of Cézanne displays the characteristics of identification. The paintings often present triggers for sexual fantasy and, generally, exhibit a strong iconoclastic urge. Furthermore, some of the work is derivative. *The Feast*, 1870, is typical - the influence of something like Rubens's *Nymphs and Satyrs* seems not far away. There is a violence of theme and execution. Some of the works seem to find their rationale in the need to shock -

¹¹ *Tractatus*, op.cit., p.39.

¹² Jacques Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), p.293.

but that, perhaps, is to misread a passionate integrity that is struggling for adequate expression.

The Rape, 1867, depicts the rape of Persephone - Mount Etna figures in the background, a detail from Ovid's account that confirms the scene is in Sicily. The unspecific title generalises the theme, suggests typicality. The generality is reinforced by the symbolism: the volcano, and Pluto - the manifestation of chthonic darkness - struggling with the 'pallid', 'swooning' Persephone.¹³ In Rubens's *Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus*, male and female are differentiated in terms of dark and light. Cézanne came to distrust the literary in art. The assimilation of allusion involves a reaching out beyond the immediate imaginative transaction which compromises the autonomy of the painting. The case of, say, 'The Waste Land' suggests that allusion need not necessarily function in this way but here the combination with symbolism pushes the response into the cognitive. The painting has a rich potential to engage identification through its sexual content. This could provide the ground for imaginative synthesis but the cognitive is destructively obtrusive. It is as if the cognitive is used to *balance* the potentially powerful fantasy - but the result is polarisation rather than imaginative integration.

Richard Verdi's account of *The Rape*, (p.35) by linking its content with the *Page of Studies*, 1865-69, depicting male advances upon reclining females, fails to distinguish between the obvious invitation to fantasy contained in the sketches and the cognitive control of *The Rape*. Cézanne eschews the possibility for wholesale identification. It remained for him to find the means of synthesising his work, of rendering it autonomous.

By 1880 we see him working to bind the cognitive into the motif. He was later to say that he wished 'to re-do Poussin over again according to nature [...] to become classical by way of nature, that is to say by sensation.' (p.120-121) As Richard Verdi puts it, this was a classicism which was to be '*found* rather than *made*'. (p.121) In *Le Château de Médan* (fig.6 overleaf.) the issues are clearly displayed.¹⁴

¹³ Richard Verdi, *Cézanne* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), pp.34-35.

¹⁴ Illustration from Richard Verdi, *Cézanne and Poussin: The Classical Vision of Landscape* (London: National Galleries of Scotland, Lund Humphries, 1990), p.121.



Figure 6. Paul Cézanne, *Le Château de Médan* 1879-81

At first sight the painting appears to be rigidly structured, through the stratification into five layers and by the vertical proportioning round the axis of a more or less central tree trunk. A degree of unity is also achieved through the brush strokes, the greatest proportion of which run diagonally from top right to bottom left.

The dearth of conventional depth cues suggests, to the casual glance, flatness. But depth is achieved by other means, for example, by modulation through the strata. The river in the foreground, distinguished by horizontal brush strokes, is integrated into the next stratum through the reflections of the vegetation of the bank. The ochres and browns of the bank are reflected in the colours of the houses above and in the greenery - the brush strokes here tend to the vertical. The greenery is extended into the boscaje of the fourth stratum which, in turn, is tied to the sky by obtruding trees. We experience this modulation as a kinetic impulse directed into the painting by the strong verticals of the eight trees. These are symmetrically disposed round the axis of the central trunk that is made emphatic in its centrality by the two black windows.

Zola's house, pushed into the final vertical quarter at the right is strangely anomalous in the tones of its façade. The other habitations almost defy identification. They are distanced by the barriers of the river and the bank of encaging trees. In this way potential human content, anecdotal interest, is neutralised, the houses transmuted to pictorial sensation. It is through methods such as these that Cézanne seeks to integrate the scene, *inscape* it - though Zola's house remains personalised.

It is interesting to compare *The Road at Pointoise*, 1875, painted by his friend and mentor, Camille Pissarro, with Cézanne's painting of the same motif, 1875-77.¹⁵ (fig.7 overleaf) Pissarro invites identification with his anecdotal, rural scene. The leisurely sweep of the road is structured by a horse and cart left of centre and by counterbalancing human figures with an ox cart on the left. Remove the figures and the painting becomes oddly diffuse. Its composition is strongly dependent on its anecdotal content which provides triggers for identification.

¹⁵ Illustration from Verdi, *Cézanne*, p.77.



Figure 7a. Camille Pissarro, *The Road at Pontoise*, 1875



Figure 7b. Cézanne, *Road at Pontoise*, 1875-77

On the other hand, Cézanne pulls the scene much closer. The treatment is structurally bold and dramatic. The scene is conceived in three integrated strata. Did Pissarro reduce his trees to fit his frame? Cézanne decapitates his for the sake of a bold triangular form, the line of the trees extending in a strong diagonal. Buildings are dramatically drawn forward to clinch the controlling structure. Characteristically, there are no human figures to distract from the simplifying logic.

Cézanne re-locates a tree, shifts it to the far side of the road - or is it another tree pushed many yards to the right? He takes the tree out of the top of his canvas - framing trees are characteristic of Poussin's landscapes. The location of the buildings in the middle ground anticipates *The Château de Médan* and the road is pulled down to the horizontal to frame that stratum. In the Pissarro the road curves into the centre of the picture. One senses that the edges of the painting could be extended laterally without much rearrangement; on the other hand, the frame of the Cézanne constitutes an emphatic, structuring limit.

It may be, though, that the structure of *The Château de Médan* is too emphatic, that despite the vividness of its colours the controlling intellect is dominant. With the series of L'Estaque paintings, however, the imaginative synthesis seems to be achieved.

In May 1883 Cézanne wrote to Emile Zola:

I have rented a little house and garden at L'Estaque [...]. I am still busy painting - I have here some beautiful views but they do not quite make *motifs*. - Nevertheless, climbing the hills as the sun goes down one has a glorious view of Marseilles.¹⁶

Of this letter and the series of L'Estaque paintings, Richard Verdi writes:

In this distinction [...] Cézanne reminds us of how carefully he deliberated over his choice of a landscape subject [...] As L'Estaque demonstrates, the latter was a scene in nature which was itself intrinsically balanced and harmonious and already contained the germ of a composition. Once discovered, such sites may have aroused in the artist a sense of their potential for formal integration even before he picked up a brush.¹⁷

The 'motif', the 'potential for formal integration' Hopkins would recognise as 'inscape', the discovery, the disclosure of which - 'these things were here and but the beholder wanting'¹⁸

¹⁶ *Cézanne: Artists by Themselves*, ed. by Rachel Barnes (London: Bracken Books, 1990), p.26.

¹⁷ Verdi, *Cézanne and Poussin*, p.133.

¹⁸ Hopkins, 'Hurrahing in Harvest', p.31.

- would be the central transaction in his writing about it. There is, though, a distinction between Cézanne at this stage and Hopkins in that the disclosure for the poet would occur in a teleological context whereas we begin to sense such a context only in Cézanne's late paintings.

In the L'Estaque painting in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, (fig.8 overleaf) there is a characteristic stratification into four areas but all are linked by the strong verticals of the framing trees.¹⁹ Indeed, the trunks on the right and the factory chimney resolutely demand the attention of the eye. The integrating 'Z' bend of the main trunk sweeps us down into the framing foliage, then up through the foliage on the left. Indeed the bosage functions as a sort of informal, naturalistic window, framing the ochres and oranges of the roofs of L'Estaque which are modulated through green to the blue-with-green that finally resolves itself into the intense blue of the Mediterranean.

Through such modulation Cézanne attempted to realise his aim of rejecting conventional depth cues - 'I try to render perspective solely by means of colour.'²⁰ The kinetic effect achieved in *The Château de Médan* by the juxtaposition of modulation and strong verticals is here fascinatingly enhanced by the *reversal* of depth cues. The dominant factory chimney that projects into the sea initiates a strong diagonal running to the left that picks up a second factory chimney then the chimney of a house. But the size of the chimneys *diminishes* as they approach the foreground thus reversing the classical cue. The effect of the accelerated movement of the eye is to induce a sense of depth between the framing trees and the roofs.

The small house chimney is the apex of an inverted triangle which is completed by the conspicuous church tower in light ochre. This functions as a formal analogue for the naturalistic frame - 'overs and overs' it.

Of all the verticals perhaps the most subtle runs through the centre of the picture: the two foreground boulders are structural analogues of the island - L'île Maire - on the

¹⁹ Illustration from Verdi, *Cézanne and Poussin*, p.132.

²⁰ Quoted by Frank Elgar in *Cézanne* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969), p.242.



Figure 8. Paul Cézanne, *Vue de l'Estaque*, 1880

horizon, the blue of the tallest cliffs being reflected in the parallel blue brushstrokes on the central rock. The tones, though, are reversed out - the light rocks against the dark foliage and the dark mountains against the lighter sky. This vertical is extended through the middle factory chimney and through a modulation of green into the sea. The effect of this is to draw the eye up through the modulations in a kinetic experience of perspective.

It is in considering devices such as this that it becomes possible to envisage what Cézanne meant by his intention to 'become classical'. The vividness of sensation through colour - and, thence, through colour, the formal control - the subtle proliferation of formal analogues, the assured prescriptions controlling the eye, the extraordinary coherence, achieve precisely that autonomy towards which he was working in his earlier paintings:

There are two things in the painter, the eye and the mind; each of them should aid the other. It is necessary to work at their mutual development, in the eye by looking at nature, in the mind by the logic of organized sensations which provides the means of expression.²¹

In summary, the dawning associated with Wittgenstein's ambiguous figure involves the emergence of an already familiar Gestalt. Cézanne's *motif* and Hopkins' *inscape* involve the emergence of form from contexts whose content has previously been perfectly *familiar* - trees, house, whatever - but here the dawning constitutes a *discovery*.

Obviously, there are areas of art that are confined to the decorative. On the other hand, there are certain kinds of imaginative transactions that involve discovery through the simultaneous emergence of rendered forms together with their inherent expressive power. That which has been discovered has been latent in the world and is released through the artist's depiction in paint or imagery. The notion that art is merely a decorative supplement confines our responses to the pleasurable and denies the essential connection between certain kinds of art and insight.

Double Prescription

The following sequence of illustrations is based on a fanciful reconstruction of how an artist

²¹ Cézanne: *Artists by Themselves*, p.58.

may have found her 'motif'. The end point is a postcard I received from the Lake District entitled, 'Wasdale Showers'.²² The first represents a panoramic view:

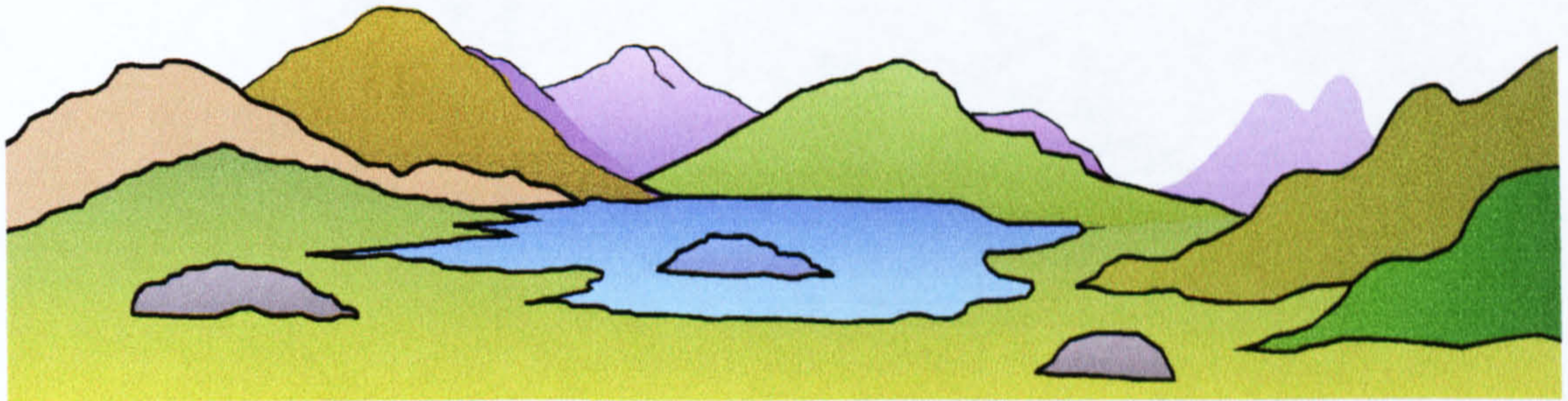


Fig.9

The second shows that the artist has selected a motif:

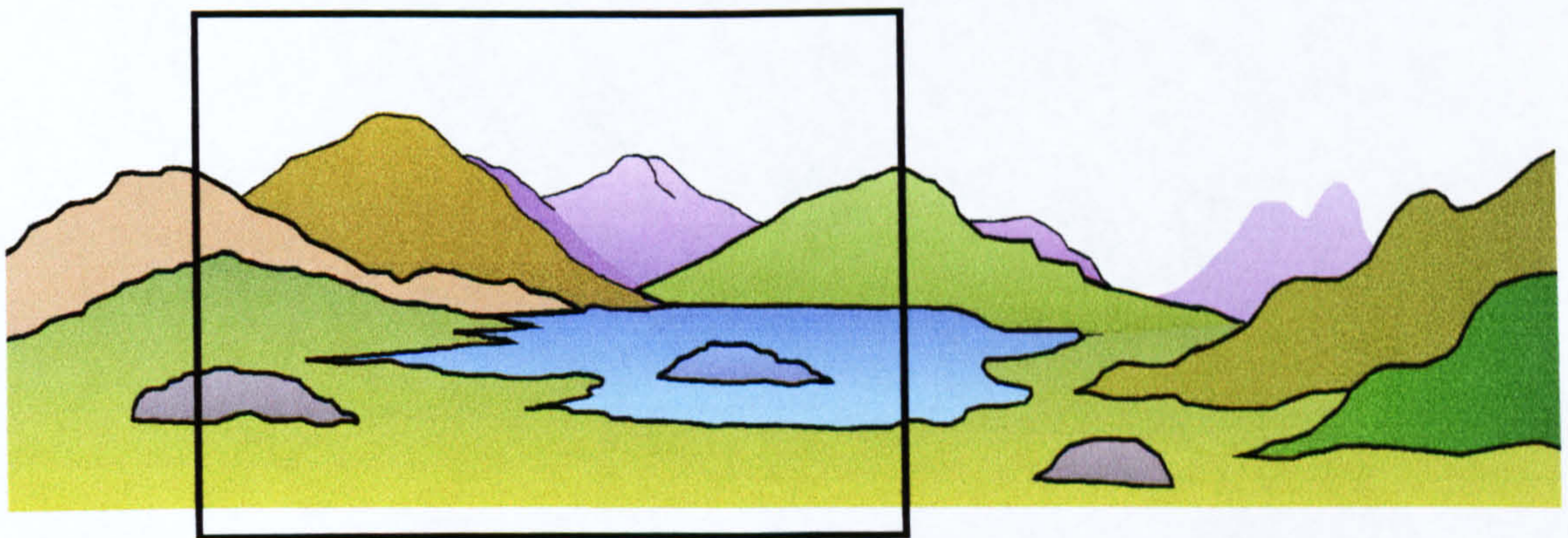


Fig.10

The artist's intention constitutes a prescriptive limit, a foredrawing, that renders intelligible that which is thereby limited. In the process of 'cropping' artists manipulate the limit - adjust the frame - so that the motif will emerge the more strongly. From this initial prescription there emerges a structure which is overed and overed, *consciously enhanced* in its expressiveness by the painter's skill:

²² Jill M.Aldersley, *Wasdale Showers!* (Ambleside: Aldersley and Hilton).

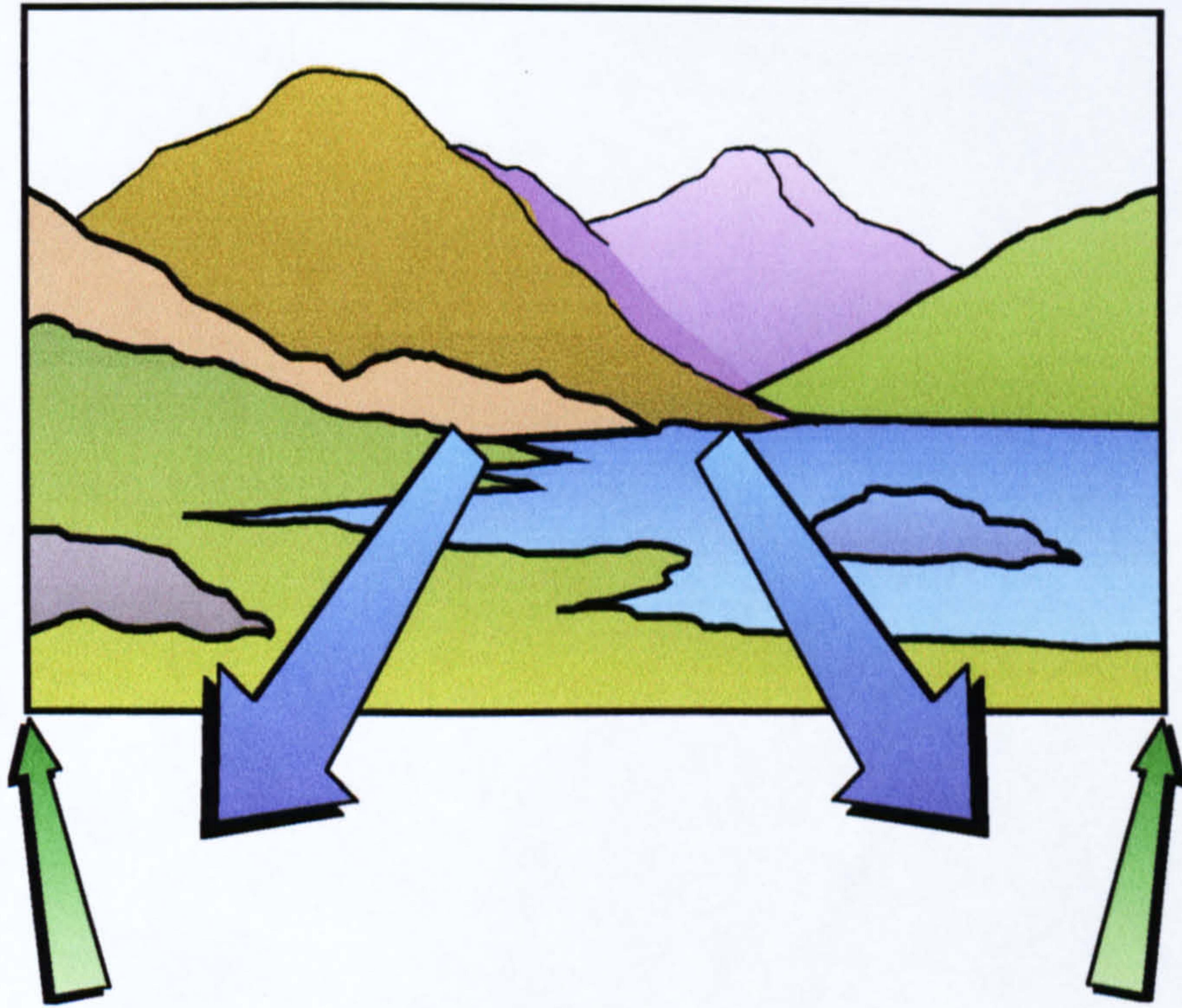


Fig.11

The motif, the inscape, presupposes a *double prescription*: through it the selected fragment of the world becomes *expressive*. The first prescription is effected through the selecting focus of intentionality; the second is simultaneously directed *from the world itself*. Value is *bound in* to the emergent intelligibility as a function of the double prescription. This is the conceptual basis of imagination in so far as it is engaged with the world around us. That metaphor functions in a similar manner - by framing, structuring and disclosing inherent value - I shall argue in later chapters. Art supposes a mode of intentionality that is responsive to the inscape for the inscape's sake: but, paradoxically, that essential autonomy is a condition for disclosures about the world.

The end product is the achieved painting – but it awaits the imaginative transaction that will release its impact. Such a disclose *cannot* be illustrated:



Figure 12. Jill M. Aldersley, *Wasdale Showers!*

Fig. 12

In *double prescription* form and value are *simultaneously* disclosed: the differentiation into head and heart presupposes a shift from imagining to a discursive mode. The *painter* must inevitably *say*: 'I want knowledge in order to achieve deeper feeling, and I want feeling in order to achieve deeper knowledge.' That is his *discursive* rationalization of his *imaginative* pursuit.²³

²³ Quoted by Elgar, p.181.

Chapter Three

Paradigms: Entrapment or Freedom

Our day to day lives are negotiated by our engaging a relatively narrow range of intentions. In reducing the world to manageable proportions we effectively consign areas and aspects of it to redundancy. In order to reach this substrate - with its potentiality of wider and richer experience - our habits of perception have to be subverted. Our sense of ourselves, however, is profoundly dependent upon conservative paradigms - this makes the passage to a widened experience difficult, not least because such paradigms are inescapably competitive. Once superseded, a paradigm that has engaged identification will appear to its former inhabitant as absurd - thereby generating a pervasive sense of disturbance. There is, then, a deeply problematical psychological dimension to our modes of imagining.

Redundancy and Perception

In *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche berates the modern reader:

As little as a reader today reads all the individual words (not to speak of the syllables) of a page - he rather takes about five words in twenty haphazardly and 'conjectures' their probable meaning - just as little do we see a tree exactly and entire with regard to its leaves, branches, colour, shape; it is so much easier for us to put together an approximation of a tree. Even when we are involved in the most uncommon experiences we still do the same thing: we fabricate the greater part of the experience [...]. All this means: we are from the very heart and from the very first - *accustomed to lying*.¹

The point about reading is merely one example of what he takes to be a pervasive carelessness in the way we perceive. Typically, Nietzsche invests the epistemological point with moral disapproval. Setting aside the value judgement, Nietzsche strikingly anticipates contemporary theories of reading:

Reading is a selective process. It involves partial use of available minimal language cues selected from perceptual input on the basis of the reader's expectation. As this partial information is processed, tentative decisions are made to be confirmed, rejected, or refined as reading progresses.

[...] reading is a psycholinguistic guessing game [...]. Efficient reading does not result from precise perception and identification of all elements, but from skill in selecting the fewest, most productive cues necessary to produce guesses which are right the first time. The ability to anticipate that which has not been seen [...] is

¹ *Beyond Good and Evil*, op. cit., p.115.

vital to reading, just as the ability to anticipate what has not yet been heard is vital in listening.²

In his discussion of visual perception Hochberg extends a similar point:

*[...] most or all visual perception [...] involves highly skilled sequential purposive behaviours, and [...] some large component of the perceptual process in the adult is best understood in terms of the "expectations" and "maps" that underlie these skilled behaviours.*³

The expectation shapes an informed *guess* that is tied into the text at intervals:

The better the reader, the more widespread can be the fixations by which he samples the text - just so long as the text provides him with contextual redundancy. (p.67)

Fluency and speed of reading depend upon such redundancy - a certain kind of skilled writing would anticipate the needs of such dependency. On the other hand, some imaginative writing might aspire to *subvert* the norm, to disrupt the sequences.

Presumably, scanning a book is no different in principle from scanning other aspects of potential experience. In other words, there must be areas of redundancy in both texts and the world and these are presupposed in the nature of perception itself. In addition to what is posited by its conceptual nature, there is a psychological aspect to redundancy. Leibniz observes:

*[...] there are hundreds of indications leading us to conclude that at every moment there is in us an infinity of perceptions, unaccompanied by awareness or reflection; that is, of alterations in the soul itself, of which we are unaware because these impressions are either too minute and too numerous, or else too unvarying, so that they are not sufficiently distinctive on their own [...]. Memory is needed for attention: when we are not alerted, so to speak, to pay heed to certain of our own present perceptions, we allow them to slip by unconsidered and even unnoticed. But if someone alerts us to them straight away, and makes us take note [...] then we remember it and are aware of just having had some sense of it.*⁴

There are then at least two sources of redundancy: what we cannot see because selection is a condition of seeing itself and what we 'see' but do not 'notice'.

² Goodman, Kenneth S., 'Reading: A Psycholinguistic Guessing Game' in *Language and Literacy: The Selected Writings of Kenneth S. Goodman: Vol.I, Process, Theory, Research*, ed. by Frederick V. Gollasch (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), p.33.

³ Julian Hochberg, 'The Representation of Things and People', from *Art, Perception and Reality*, E.H. Gombrich, Julian Hochberg and Max Black, paperback edn., 1973 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), p.63.

⁴ G.W. Leibniz, *New Essays on Human Understanding*, trans. and ed. by Peter Remnant and Jonathan Bennet, abridged edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp.53-54.

It is identification and its concomitantly posited redundancy that allows for the triggering ironies of Chaucer and the literal metaphors of Kafka to pass unnoticed, that constitutes the gaps that subsequently allow us to notice for the first time an image or a line from a very familiar Shakespeare play. How could I have missed it? I return from sight seeing in Prague and find, for a short time, that I am seeing aspects of architecture in Edinburgh that I have never seen before. My Edinburgh *map*, shaped by the practical urgencies of day to day actions, has pushed aesthetic triggers into redundancy.

In a modern city the stress associated with successful responsive action ruthlessly narrows the range of intention. This constitutes the theme of e.e.cummings's 'what a proud dreamhorse':

what a proud dreamhorse pulling(smoothloomingly)through
(stepp)this(ing)crazily seething of this
raving city screamingly street wonderful

flowers And o the Light thrown by Them opens

sharp holes in dark places paints eyes touches hands with new-
ness and these startled whats are a(piercing clothes thoughts kiss
-ing wishes bodies)squirm-of-frightened shy are whichs small
its hungry for Is for Love Spring thirsty for happens
only and beautiful

there is a ragged beside the who limps
man crying silence upward

-to have tasted Beautiful to have known
Only to have smelled Happens-skip dance kids hop point at
red blue yellow violet white orange green-
ness

(o what a proud dreamhorse moving(whose feet
almost walk air). now who stops. Smiles.he

stamps ⁵

More often than not, students are bewildered by this loosely adapted 'sonnet' - there are two quatrains, *abcd*, *abcd*, and a more vague sestet. That bewilderment is often expressed in hostility - the value of the familiar map is presupposed in this. Paradoxically, the *least* well read are the *most* conservative - in other words, the least responsive are the most map-

⁵ E.E. Cummings, 'What a Proud Dreamhorse', *Complete Poems: 1913-1935*, (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1968), p.437.

dependant. The use of an underlying traditional form draws attention to the anomalies with a spice of irony. The syntactic landscape is unfamiliar because Cummings deliberately eliminates much of the redundancy that is latent in conventional patterns of meaning.

To take but a few points, the measured tread of the horse is rhythmically paralleled in *(step)this(ing)*. The new prescription displaces and restructures the familiar concept so that it is made to illustrate itself. Conventional syntax is, indeed, frequently latent, but the absence of punctuation - the familiar syntactic cues - means that the syntax must be worked for: 'the light thrown by them opens sharp holes in dark places, paints eyes, touches hands with newness. And these startled "whats?" are a [...] squirm of frightened shy, are "whichs." To find the frame - the syntax - is to find the sequence expressive. There is a double prescription at work. The familiar is rediscovered by a more rigorous act of attention.

It is striking how, in engineering our reading, Cummings reflects the concerns of the Russian Formalists. For Shklovsky the devices of poetry serve to defamiliarize, to challenge the mere *recognition* of words so that they can be recharged with *sensation*:

The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived, and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects 'unfamiliar', to make forms difficult, to increase the difficulty and length of perception, because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged.⁶ The form is unearthed with a shock of surprise - but the most fundamental rediscovery is reflected in the central theme.

It is revealed in Cummings's ingenious use, or misuse, of pronouns: passers by, in the turmoil of the city, are designated 'whats', 'whichs' and 'its'. Their estrangement is precisely caught in the use of pronouns that conventionally designate animals or things - the 'whats' is expressive of surprise. These dehumanised entities are hungry for 'Is' - for being. Their hunger, the product of their alienation, is met in experiencing beauty - the cart full of flowers.

⁶ Viktor Shklovsky, 'Art as Technique', quoted in *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*, by Raman Selden and Peter Widdowson (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993), p.31.

Efficient negotiation of a complex environment - responsive action in the city - depends on the effective elimination of distractions. What, in other circumstances, would constitute cues, is pushed into redundancy. The *human* cost of this is objectification - to act mechanically is a condition for efficiency. On the other hand, the poem demands closeness of attention by ruthlessly reducing possibilities for redundancy. It refuses to allow access through conventional cues. It makes itself strange in order to achieve greater impact in the engineering of dawnings. In this way Cummings contrives that *reading itself should be therapeutic* in that the theme is not so much discussed as *undergone* in the imaginative transactions that are, at the same time, the emergence of meaning.

It is the capacity of imagination to *render* what has been redundant into expressive structure. We see a mature painting of Cézanne first as a *reduction* of experience - an abstracting, because of the dearth of familiar cues - before we see it as *inscape*. What has been redundant is now brought, through sensation, to cognition - the landscape is inscaped. On the other hand, *it is the prescriptions of the familiar that constitute the conceptual basis of identification*:

To apprehend a pattern is to discern the principle on which its elements are ordered. To see the elements only will not suffice, for the pattern does not reside in the elements [...] (but) in the rule which governs their relations to each other [...]. Stereotyped vision sees only those patterns which its stereotypes have permitted it to anticipate.⁷

It is identification, for example, facilitated by the projection of stereotypes, that underpins the possibility of camouflage. We are predisposed to structure experience through canonical forms⁸ the edges of which constitute depth cues that allow us to separate shapes from their contexts. The bold pattern on the flank of the tiger imitates such cues so that the identifying form of the cat is effectively disintegrated. The success of the tiger as hunter presupposes the efficacy of the visual norm.

⁷ J. Taylor, *Design and Expression in the Visual Arts*, quoted by Hochberg in 'The Representation of Things and People', op.cit, p.68.

⁸ Hochberg, p.74.

In a sense, Chaucer and Kafka exploit identification in a similar way. The Franklin's comfortable conflation of material and spiritual values effectively camouflages a form that emerges only when the latent cues are brought to consciousness through our awareness of Chaucer's irony.

In the absence, or disguising, of many conventional cues Cummings refuses to allow us easy reading. It is interesting to contrast his intentions with those of Petrarch in the *Canzoniere*, cxxvi:

Waters fresh and sweet and clear
where the fair limbs reclined
of the one creature who to me seems woman;
and gentle tree-trunk where,
with sighs I call to mind,
the leaning side once loved to find a column;
flowers and grass that often
the light gown hid from sight
with the angelic breast;
airs breathing holy rest
where Love with those fair eyes opened my heart:
come, and together grant
a hearing to my last lament.⁹

In his choice of imagery Petrarch is deliberately unspecific. Where, say, Hopkins is characteristically precise - his burn is 'horseback brown' and the 'fawn-fróth/Turns and twindles over the broth/Of a pool'¹⁰ - Petrarch is content with a generic noun - 'waters' - and three rather unspecific adjectives - 'fresh [...] sweet [...] clear'. In his introduction to his translations of some of Petrarch's poems Anthony Mortimer notes:

The nouns are generic and the adjectives obviously fitting rather than strikingly accurate. We may look for the details of a specific landscape, but we find only the basic elements from which a landscape may be composed. (p.6)

The pattern is extended throughout the stanza - 'fair limbs', 'tree trunk', 'flowers and grass', and so on.

⁹ *Petrarch: Selected Poems*, trans. by Anthony Mortimer (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1977), p.51.

¹⁰ *Hopkins, 'Inversnaid'*, from *Poems and Prose*, op.cit., p.50.

There is, perhaps, a parallel with some of the backgrounds in Giotto. The Renaissance pursuit of depth has begun but in, say, his fresco *The Raising of Lazarus* the background detail could reasonably be called generic.

Petrarch's strategy is *deliberately* to invite identification. The syntax is a little complicated in that the main verb is in the twelfth line, but that is the price paid for drifting us past a series of cues which are augmented by our own emotional dispositions - that is, they invite identification. Thus primed, there is a seamless transition into the sentimentality of the third stanza: the persona imagines his mistress returning to this place, finding him dead, then being moved to pray for his soul. We are now in the grip of a familiar fantasy.

The exquisite fourth stanza reconstructs his first sight of Laura in this location. She sits in a rain of flowers like Flora herself. The implication of divine origin is developed in the following stanza:

How often I exclaimed,
seized by a sudden fear:
"For certain she was born in Paradise!" (p.55)

Having skilfully engineered the reader's identification, Petrarch now pushes us into a cognitive dilemma:

so faintly did I seize
the image truth would show,
that I said sighing then:
"How came I here, or when?" (p.55)

Was Laura real or imaginary? The spell of nostalgia is destroyed but the warmth of the fantasy lingers like the memory of an erotic dream. The *congedo* - the poet's address to the poem - directly confronts us with the artifice of what we have read:

Song, had you beauty as you have desire,
intrepidly you could
go out among the crowd and leave this wood. (p.55)

The pattern - the inducing of identification, luxurious fantasy, ambiguity with regard to the reality of the vision, final awakening - strikingly anticipates the patterns of imagination in some of the great Odes of Keats. Indeed, in 'Ode on a Grecian Urn', in the context of

music, Keats celebrates the complete *absence* of cues - aural fantasy proliferates from triggering pictorial cues derived from the urn:

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone.¹¹

Trapped in the spell, the poetry evolves into rather vague erotic fantasy:

More happy love, more happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
For ever panting, and forever young -
All breathing human passion far above. (p.85)

Such writing is characterised by considerable areas of redundancy. This loss of control, of the actual, is extended in the inconsequential fantasy that leads him far from the vase:

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer [...]? (p.86)

The reader's attention is sustained through identification. Keats, like Petrarch, finally wakes up - 'Cold Pastoral'. (p.86) Only the memory of the distinctively rapt contemplation implicit in the imagery that opens the poem - 'Thou still unravished bride of quietness,/ Thou foster-child of silence and slow time' (p.85) - is now available. The vase speaks to him of what he has lost - 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty' (p.86) - not through the attrition of time, but by indulging in more or less free-wheeling fantasy. The inverted commas are, effectively, cues for the double prescription characteristic of imagination - in that mode, beauty *must* be truth.

The poem begins in precision, displays the decay of imagination into fantasy, then redeems itself through its knowing differentiation between fantasy and imagination. Aware of the dangers of such indulgence in fantasy - he calls it *poesy* - it was in the aborted 'Hyperion' and 'Fall of Hyperion' that Keats fought to spell out his manifesto of the imagination.¹²

¹¹ John Keats, 'Ode on a Grecian Urn, from *A Selection from John Keats*, op.cit., p.85.

¹² 'Hyperion' and 'The Fall of Hyperion' are discussed more extensively in Chapter 11.

Cummings eschews redundancy; Petrarch skilfully exploits it to catch the ambivalence of the spell of love; Keats loses control but seeks to recover himself in the insight learned through that experience. In both Petrarch and Keats the poems display an evolution in imagining from identification to the abstractive-cognitive. It is crucial that the reader undergoes these imaginative transitions so that he can be freed from the spell of identification with its inherent seduction of sentimentality. Cummings mounts a radical challenge and demonstrates how in imagining we can transcend the limitations of our habits.

The creativity of imagination lies in its exploitation of potential cues hitherto cloaked in redundancy. It thereby challenges the familiar, not necessarily in *deliberate* iconoclasm, but *by its very nature* it extracts alternative patterns of intelligibility. The familiar also supposes intelligibility, but arrived at in the pressing need for responsive action in a dangerous world. The capacity to select canonical cues quickly is an obvious evolutionary adaptation.

Nietzsche's judgement is appropriate in so far as it indicts the blindness of identification, but inappropriate in so far as it fails to acknowledge, at this point, its efficacy. Nietzsche's analysis would, in any case, be impossible to conceive without the insight contingent upon that exercise of imagination that leads him to a concept of redundancy - it presupposes his own escape. In failing to acknowledge that possibility he commits himself to paradox.

Inhabiting Paradigms

The capacity to interpret from a minimum number of easily anticipated - canonical - cues is crucial where speed of reaction is important. The assumption, though, that new patterns of interpretation become available merely through the *leisured* scrutiny of previously redundant cues is hardly tenable. It supposes that redundant cues are there for the seeing - but the 'seeing' is a function of an already familiar model or paradigm. Inscape does not gratuitously disclose itself - it must be *rendered* through the struggle with words or paint. Furthermore, the limits or edges of a paradigm are not generally available from perspectives within it. Awareness of limitations emerges from scrutiny of internal anomalies :

Discovery commences with the awareness of anomaly, i.e., with the recognition that nature has somehow violated the paradigm-induced expectations that govern normal

science. It then continues with a more or less extended exploration of the area of anomaly. And it closes only when the paradigm theory has been adjusted so that the anomalous has become the expected. Assimilating a new sort of fact demands a more than additive adjustment of theory, and until that adjustment is completed - until the scientist has learned to see nature in a different way - the new fact is not quite a scientific fact at all.¹³

Anomalies *cannot* be apparent where the mode of relation of the observer involves identification. Paradigms inhabited in identification are inevitably entrapping. Releasing readers from entrapment by obliging them to negotiate anomalies is precisely what has been recorded in Chaucer, Kafka and Cummings.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, in developing part five, 'On the Natural History of Morals', Nietzsche can be seen working towards the notion of entrapment:

It was precisely because moral philosophers knew the facts of morality only somewhat vaguely in an arbitrary extract or as a chance abridgement, as morality of their environment, their class, their church, the spirit of their times, their climate and zone of the earth, for instance - it was precisely because they were ill informed and not even very inquisitive about other peoples, ages and former times, that they did not so much as catch the sight of the real problems of morality - for these come into view only if we compare *many* moralities [...]. What philosophers called 'the rational ground of morality' and sought to furnish was [...] only a scholarly form of *faith* in the prevailing morality, a new way of *expressing* it, and thus itself a fact within a certain morality. (*B.G.E.*, op.cit., pp.108-109)

Trapped within their paradigms the 'philosophers' were condemned to circularity. Postmodernism could be said to have its origins in just such self-consciousness of the prescriptive nature of paradigms as Nietzsche exhibits. Indeed, Modernism itself reflects the impulse to explore multiple perspectives and in doing an incipient self-awareness is inevitably engendered. In the context of '*many* moralities' the very notion of comparability may be questionable.

Ibsen's notion of the Saving Lie that he elaborates in *The Wild Duck* (1884) - *Beyond Good and Evil* was published in 1886 - involves Hjalmar Ekdal living and working within a sustaining fiction that Gregers Werle destroys by introducing a new perspective on events that makes Hjalmar's 'paradigm' untenable. So caught up is he in his own obsessions that

¹³ T.S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd edn. 1970 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp.52-53.

Gregers cannot *see* the effects of his actions.¹⁴ Here Ibsen focuses upon a characteristic moral paradox: in the dubious urgency of our intention we can read neither the subtlety of our motives nor the situation of the recipient of our actions. This could be said to involve an *identification* with our own endorsed purposes that awaits the liberating distance of imagining.

In *Heart of Darkness* (1902), on the other hand, Marlow cannot bring himself to destroy the Intended's sustaining vision of Kurtz and, hence, the vistas, values and 'lies' of that vision remain intact. Perhaps the supreme value for Marlow at that moment is that the Intended *loved* Kurtz:

"I heard his very last words [...]." I stopped in a fright.

"Repeat them," she murmured [...]. "I want [...] something [...] to live with."

I was on the point of crying at her, "Don't you hear them? [...] The horror! The horror!"

"His last word - to live with [...]. Don't you understand [...] I loved him!"

I pulled myself together and spoke slowly.

"The last word he pronounced was - your name."¹⁵

Here our urgent and poignant need to find meaning is acknowledged as a component in a typically Modernist dilemma whose options are illusion or nightmare. Yet this predicament is as old as the first choice - innocence or knowledge. But only in *fiction* is the choice *possible*. Eve cannot, conceivably, be in a position to make a choice until *after* she has made it.¹⁶

As he arrives at the Intended's door, Marlow is arrested by the sight of Kurtz in the 'glassy panel'. (p.117) It is, of course, himself that he sees - but does Marlow ever make the connection? The meaning, however, is clear *for the reader*. We are given privileged access through the writer's art. Marlow *himself* has no Archimedean point from which to prise apart his own illusions from reality - though he can do so in the case of Kurtz. From this parable we realise that only through the *impossible* privileged access is it *possible* for us

¹⁴ Henrik Ibsen, *The Wild Duck*, trans. by R. Farquharson Sharp, Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Linda Hannås, this edn. 1958 (London: Dent, 1910).

¹⁵ Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*, repr. 1985 (London: Penguin, 1973), p.120.

¹⁶ For the Eve paradox, see David Jasper, *Readings in the Canon of Scripture: Written for our Learning* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), pp.79-80.

to realise that we are deluded. From the *inside* - the only *possible* perspective from our quotidian lives - the Intended and Halmar Ekdal live in incorrigible realities. Following the insight visited upon him by Gregers, Ekdal will come to live, literally, in a *different* - and intolerable - world.

We touch here upon an unnerving capacity of imaginative fictions - and in that, perhaps, lies their fundamental moral efficacy. Kafka's *The Trial* is striking for the scrupulous integrity with which it depicts Joseph K's experience. It serves as a paradigm case both for our experience as individuals and for reading itself: the reciprocal logic of fiction allows for an impossible existential perspective in so far as we are enabled to shift from identification to imagining.

Inhabited in the mode of identification, paradigms can never be neutral in that they incorporate an incalculable sanction - they constitute reality. The relatively undifferentiated consciousness of identification deepens the sanction through the binding in of the *self* to that posited reality. This helps to explain the murderous tenacity of certain political, religious and historical paradigms. Even imagining itself, in its inherent instability, decays because its disclosures of value degenerate into canonical conventions inviting identification and thereby engendering new entrapment. In this way value slides into ideology in preparation for aggressive defence.

Such conventions are the *traces* of value, the photographic plates of decayed phenomena. The world of the other, the painting or the book can, though, be re-inhabited, though it will be a world of, at least, a subtly different nature.

Aggressive defence points to the psychological dependency that we have upon conservative paradigms. Indeed, how could one live *except* within the conservative paradigms - cultural, ideological - that sustain identification and, thence, the ego identity? Such paradigms are *structurally* conservative - they include what might otherwise be seen as radical perspectives: it is the *mode of habitation* that counts.

It is as if in our quotidian lives we existed in a complex 'space' or, rather, series of spaces, posited by paradigmatic relics that may or may not be compatible. Each space posits an

aspect of self. The conceptual issues suggested here are given psychological expression in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1885), another precursor to Modernism:

[...] I thus drew steadily nearer to that truth [...] that man is not truly one, but truly two. I say two, because the state of my own knowledge does not pass beyond that point [...]. I hazard the guess that man will be ultimately known for a mere polity of multifarious incongruous and independent denizens.¹⁷

Each space is tethered to the knowing self only through disjunctive - because objectifying - pragmatically sanctioned rationalisations. Dr Jekyll, in potential, is a fictional embodiment of Nietzsche's 'many moralities' - now to be understood as existing simultaneously in *any* individual, each seeking rationalisation in the elaboration of their 'forms of faith'. Outwith a monolithic ideology - in life - identification *presupposes* fragmentation. The disturbance generated by such alienation is given visual expression through the multiple perspectives of, say, Van Gogh's *Bedroom at Arles*. Though questions of identity can, in normal circumstance, be more or less resolved within a confederation of shared relics - a family, a class, a country and so on - we cannot *exactly* inhabit the same spaces and, indeed, the prescriptive nature of paradigms suggests that we modify and *are modified by* the spaces of others - in a sort of social relativity. In the larger scale, this reciprocity is manifest in transculturation.

Individuation - in contrast to ego identity - is not the once-for-all discovery of a 'self' - an ideological stasis - it is what is posited in the committed process of imagining in a context of relics. The ethical is that mode of imagination which characteristically negotiates, in good faith, with the spaces of others and *avoids* identification with canonical cues - *conventional* behaviour and judgement is the mode of action of identification, and its sustaining motive is power.

Viewed from the perspective of the outsider, intentional behaviour within a closed - that is, a superseded - paradigm is experienced as *absurdity*. Behaviour is seen in terms of stereotypes, language becomes cliché. Yet relics can be reinvested with significance when regarded as illustrative.

¹⁷ Robert Louis Stevenson: *The Complete Short Stories*, ed. by Ian Bell, vol.2 (Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing, 1993), p.150.

In *The Birthday Party*, a difference between Stanley's compulsive fantasy and conversations overheard at bus stops is that through Pinter's art the characters' predicaments are made expressive. Clichés themselves become significant - but this presupposes the imaginative involvement of the observer:

Then after that, you know what they did? They carved me up. Carved me up. It was all arranged, it was all worked out [...]. All right, Jack, I can take a tip. They want me to crawl down on my bended knees.¹⁸

All language is, in an obvious sense, conventional, but in Pinter's world cliché involves a quite specific use of convention - in Austin's terms, it becomes a distinctive illocutionary act. In the case of Stanley, cliché is employed to achieve the *entrapment* of his interlocuter, to *invite* identification. This constitutes a subtle - indeed, a *sophisticated* - use of language. Generally, we might ask: is the use of cliché *ever* as naïve as it seems? Is this partly Pinter's point? We are nowhere wiser than in the knowledge of how to manipulate others. It is precisely through double prescription - by *framing* the cliché - that our imaginations achieve psychological insight.

Stanley's space is structured by sustaining paradigmatic relics. A witness trapped within the same relics must find the unfolding spectacle bewilderingly boring. (As in *The Trial*, there is an uncomfortable potential for self revelation on the part of the observer.) Meg wants a little boy - Stanley needs a mother: the paradigmatic fantasies partly, but only accidentally, coincide, providing momentary definition and stability. This unstable 'accommodation' - symbolised in the boarding house - cannot be sustained in the face of a stronger, intrusive alliance of the paradigmatic relics characteristic of suburban man, circa late 1950s:

GOLDBERG [...] You know one thing Uncle Barney taught me? Uncle Barney taught me that the word of a gentleman is enough. That's why, when I had to go away on business I never carried any money. One of my sons used to come with me. He used to carry a few coppers. For a paper, perhaps to see how the MCC was getting on overseas. Otherwise my name was good.
(p.28)

¹⁸ Harold Pinter, *The Birthday Party*, Student Edition 1981 (London: Methuen, 1960), p.23.

Like a vulnerable caddis grub, Goldberg, sensitive to his Jewish background, has constructed a protective case from fragments of relics. He identifies with the hierarchic social order in that, like the Queen, he carries no money. From the basis of this strength he destroys Stanley then reconstructs him in his own image:

GOLDBERG We'll make a man of you. [...] You'll be re-oriented. [...] You'll be adjusted. [...] You'll be a mensch. [...] You'll be integrated. [...] You'll make decisions. (p.28)

Mccann, too, joins in the game:

MCCANN You'll be rich. [...] You'll be our pride and joy. [...] You'll be a success. [...] You'll give orders. (pp. 83-84)

Pinter takes a step beyond Chaucer or Kafka in that there appears to be no latent irony - that would suppose an alternative paradigm, an omniscient perspective from which we could glean a set of favoured values. In the absence of such a privileged perspective we experience *unease*, we have no *purchase*. We are aware of absurdity - the paradigms are washed up - but we are offered no resolution. We experience the disturbing disorientation that is the hallmark of Pinter.

In *Hamlet* a possible psychological consequence of the dislocation of a sustaining paradigm is disclosed in the fate of Ophelia. With this potentiality established, Hamlet is left to pursue the logic of his disintegration into the absurdity that is finally confirmed in the graveyard. Interestingly, it is precisely the heroic paradigm that has been *closed* - seen from the outside - which is restored in Fortinbras:

Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake.¹⁹

It is as if the outsider's vision - that of the estranged Hamlet - must not be allowed to challenge a conservative paradigm justifiable in terms of its social utility. From within this paradigm the experience of the outsider appears, retrospectively, as a mere aberration.

¹⁹ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by T.J.B. Spencer (London: Penguin, 1980), IV.4.53.

That we experience the conclusion of the play as ironic, however, presupposes that we are no longer comfortable in identification with the ruling paradigm. We are left with an unresolved question - that is, anomalies have been brought to our awareness.

By contrast, in the case of King Lear, the sustaining ideology with which he identifies is monolithic. Lear, thereby, begins by exhibiting a power which Hamlet has already irretrievably lost. However, *King Lear* is concerned not so much with rival paradigms as with *how* paradigms are *inhabited*.

Goneril and Regan appear to conform to the conventions of Nature but their conformity is merely manipulation. They intuitively grasp that for their father, trapped in identification, their conventional responses must appear authentic. They share with Edmund a knowing exploitation which, in his case, is characteristically expressed in parody. For both Lear and Gloucester, Nature is a source of conventions that provide authenticating criteria - their love is, thereby, *conditional* and that conditionality constitutes its blindness. It follows, that the play must make extensive use of the imagery of 'seeing'. Indeed this binary logic is startlingly confirmed in Gloucester's *seeing* precisely at the moment that he is *blinded* - the emergence of a dawning: 'I stumbled when I saw.'²⁰ The failures of ideological man, of Lear and Gloucester, are failures of *imagination* - the context prescribes that we see these as failures of love.

The power of the first scene of 'King Lear' is largely derived from its ritualistic nature. Ritual is enacted symbolism. From within, it is experienced in strong identification. But ritual has an inherent fragility in that the paradigm would close if a participant were tipped into abstractive cognition - in which case other participants would be revealed as *actors*. Self-dramatisation is one of Lear's characteristic resorts:

Does any here know me? This is not Lear.
Does Lear walk thus, speak thus? Where are his eyes?
Either his notion weakens, his discernings
Are lethargied - Ha! Waking? 'Tis not so? (I.4.226.)

²⁰ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. by G.I. Duthie and C.B. Young, repr. 1969 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960), IV.1.19.

It is the vestigial awareness of this instability that generates, at times, a compensating, fanatical adherence. The ritualised paradigm of Nature - mythic, rigidly hierarchical and prescriptive - is Lear's characteristic space and integral to his identity.

Cordelia's dumb challenge rocks the inherent fragility of Lear's paradigm and this instantly establishes her as an outsider - literally, she is *banished*. The knowing machinations of her sisters establish them, too, as outsiders - so they are capable of manipulating the system. They are *actors*, therefore, aware of their power.

Edmund, the bastard, may espouse an alternative 'Nature' appropriate for a 'natural' child, but the full power of his first words comes from their being the ringing declaration of an *outsider* who revels in the manipulation of a conservative paradigm that he sees at ironic distance:

Thou, Nature art my goddess [...]
Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom [...] (I.2.1)

Like Iago, he intuitively recognises how others are psychologically dependent on conservative paradigms. Their own exhilarated sense of themselves, founded in villainy, is derived from a sort of epistemological parasitism. The shared standpoint allows for temporary confederation with Goneril and Regan, temporary, because their wills to power are fervently individualistic and share no ideological commitment.

The Fool and Edgar, through different circumstances, stand outside the magic circle of the play's ideological centre. Again, Shakespeare uses madness, feigned madness, as with Edgar and Hamlet, to warn us of a potentiality, and actual madness, as with Lear and Ophelia, to illustrate the terrifying disintegration that awaits those who cross, or are pushed, across the magic threshold. Shakespeare is, inevitably, a man of his time - but is fascinated by the vistas over the edge.

Kent and Albany exist within the paradigm. Kent's service, ironically, would re-stabilise what Lear has been. In the pressure of the circumstances the well-meaning Albany can produce only moral platitudes - the conventions of the conservative paradigm - which are devastatingly undercut by events:

ALBANY All friends shall taste
 The wages of their virtue, and all foes
 The cup of their deservings [...].
LEAR And my poor fool is hanged! (V.3.302.)

At the other side of his disintegration Lear, too, arrives at a situation of detachment - having assimilated the Fool's, he comes to God's standpoint:

 And take upon's the mystery of things,
 As if we were God's spies. (V.3.16.)

The paradigm has been seen at a wry distance:

 So we'll live,
 And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
 At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
 Talk of court news. (V.3.11)

Lear's dawning was depicted in literal metaphor - an awakening. Cordelia's *space* is acknowledged in reconciliation. He now operates at the level of the personal rather than the mythic - his individuation is presupposed in this.

The *means* of such arrival is more fully explored in the experience of Gloucester. His blinding makes him, in effect, another exile, takes him beyond the magic circle of the dominant paradigm. At the *sight* of the mad Lear he effectively provides a definition of imagination:

LEAR [...] you see how this world goes.
GLOUCESTER I see it feelingly. (IV.6.146.)

In order to avoid the pitfalls of the obstructive loyalty of Kent, the reconciliation with Cordelia must come as Lear emerges from the far side of madness, otherwise, she too, would seek to sustain the mythic self - Royal Lear.

Implicit in this is an important paradox. It points to the understanding of why the play resolutely refuses to resolve itself in affirmation of the 'justice' that Albany - and the audience, perhaps - would envisage. Such a resolution would constitute the restoration of a paradigm whose fatal seductive power is now understood. Value is reconstituted through the rediscovery of the personal, through the operation of imagination.

There are, then, good reasons why imagining can be difficult. It challenges our habits of perception and our very sense of ourselves.

Chapter Four

Frontiers

The issues concerning the modes in which we, as individuals, inhabit paradigms are reflected on the larger scale at the interface between cultures. This is evident in the circumstances of colonisation involving the projection of European values and modes of thought and within European societies themselves in periods of social change. The modes of imagination are revealed in how we assimilate experience in both the geographical and historical contexts. The expressive power of the historical novel supposes an imaginative transfiguration of history which is no different in principle from the rendering of other experience which we have considered so far.

The cover of Mary Pratt's book, *Imperial Eyes Travel Writing and Transculturation* depicts an

Andean *silletero* carrying a European across the Cordillera on his back. But for the rain, the passenger would probably have been depicted reading a book, the recommended way to pass the time while riding this way.¹

Elevated to the cover, this image comes to symbolise European hegemony; it grows in power and significance as the book unfolds.

In *Waverley*, Walter Scott describes to us, through a clansman, the retinue of the Highland chieftain, Fergus Mac-Ivor, Vich Ian Vohr:

[...] there is his *hanchman*, or right-hand man; then his *bard*, or poet; then his *bladier*, or orator [...] then his *gilly-more*, or armour bearer [...] then his *gilly-casfliuch*, who carries him on his back through the sikes and brooks.²

That Mac-Ivor maintains these men is a matter of pride for his clansman, Evan Dhu. At least in certain circumstances the images - *silletero* and *gilly-casfliuch* - would be interchangeable; but each assumes very different values according to the prescriptive paradigm within which it is placed.

Clearly, Mary Platt selected the image to express her indignation. Interestingly, she refers to a letter from David Livingstone as 'from an Englishman in Africa to his nephew'. (p.4) By designating a Scotsman an Englishman she unwittingly confirms the dominance of a habit of thought that conflates English with British, an unthinking, benign, conflation that

¹ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), caption for an illustration, p.154.

² Sir Walter Scott, *Waverley*, repr. 1976 (London: Dent, 1969), p.153.

reflects her *identification* with assumptions that appear from the *outside* as arrogant. She thereby unconsciously reinforces the very mode of inhabiting paradigms that she is at pains to expose: we *cannot* be conscious within the paradigmatic relics that we inhabit because such assimilation would change the condition of our seeing. We become responsible only *retrospectively* - this is the essence of the Eve paradox: we cannot reasonably chose until we know. We inevitably inhabit a range of paradigms, characteristically, in happy ignorance of their inherent contradictions and prescriptive power.

Because paradigms are not value free they seem, whether viewed from within or between cultures, to be inescapably competitive. Is it possible to engineer neutrality? In 1667 Bishop Thomas Sprat published the *History of the Royal Society*, the aims of which had been incorporated by Royal Decree in 1662:

Their purpose is, in short, to make faithful *Records*, of all the Works of *Nature*, or *Art* [...] that so the present Age, and Posterity, may be able to put a mark on the Errors, which have been strengthened by long prescription [...]. And to accomplish this, they have indeavor'd, to separate the knowledge of *Nature*, from the colours of *Rhetorick*, the devices of *Fancy*, or the delightful deceit of *Fables*. They have labor'd to inlarge it, from being confin'd to the custody of a few; or from servitude to private interests. They have striven to preserve it from being over-press'd by a confused heap of vain, and useless particulars; or from being strait'ned and bounded too much by General Doctrines. They have try'd, to put it into a condition of perpetual increasing; by settling an inviolable correspondence between the hand and the brain. They have studi'd, to make it, not onely an Enterprise of one season, or of some lucky opportunity; but a business of time; a stedly, a lasting, a popular, an uninterrupted Work. They have attempted, to free it from Artifice, and Humors, and Passions of Sects; to render it an Instrument, whereby Mankind may obtain a Dominion over *Things*, and not onely over one anothers *Judgements*. And lastly, they have begun to establish these Reformatations in Philosophy, not so much, by any solemnity of Laws, or ostentation of Ceremonies; as by solid Practice, and examples: Not, by a glorious pomp of Words; but by the silent, effectual, and unanswerable Arguments of real Productions.³

The phenomena of Nature are to be *recorded*. Truth has lain *neglected* or remained *unrevealed*. The reasonable and laudable assumption is, that once the great liberal principles are established - that science should be free from considerations of religion,

³ Thomas Sprat, *History of the Royal Society*, quoted in *The Craft of Prose*, ed. by A.F. Scott (London: Macmillan, 1963), p.105.

politics and accident of birth - an objective science will be possible: the world can be *described*.

To all appearances, Karl Linné's system of classification of plants would seem to exemplify the aims and principles that the Royal Society had in mind. It is a popular myth that Linné invented the system of classification - he merely rationalised it. Mary Pratt discusses at length Linné's apparently benign, neutral paradigm.

Linné published his *Systema Naturae* in 1735:

Here was an extraordinary creation that would have a deep and lasting impact [...] on the overall ways European citizenries made, and made sense of, their place on the planet [...]. It was a descriptive system designed to classify all the plants on the earth [...] according to the characteristics of their reproductive parts. [...] Born out of earlier classificatory efforts [...] Linnaeus' approach had a simplicity and elegance unapproached by his predecessors. [...] His schema was perceived [...] as making order out of chaos.⁴

In their excitement in extending the range and scope of their project, taxonomists used the facilities and routes already established by overseas trading companies. Indeed, the international scientific expedition became, 'one of Europe's proudest and most conspicuous instruments of expansion'. (p.23)

The Royal Botanic Garden in Edinburgh precisely reflects the paradigm in terms of its tradition of plant collection, work in taxonomy, and in the very layout of the garden itself - according to genera. It also contains within it a statue of Linnaeus. The Garden was established on its present site between 1820 and 1823 incorporating a collection from a physic garden established elsewhere in 1630.

Darwin's involvement in the voyage of the *Beagle* - begun in 1831 - was typical. Captain FitzRoy had two objectives: to continue charting the South American coast and to establish a more accurate fixing of longitude by carrying out a series of chronological reckonings round the world. The refining of the geographical/ navigational paradigms was, though of obvious scientific import, at the same time indicative of the impulse to extend European influence - in this case associated with sea power. To extend the exploration, however, into the hinterland, as practised by Darwin when he could find the opportunity, was typical of

⁴ *Imperial Eyes*, pp.24-25.

the power and influence of the Linnean paradigm, characteristically associated with opening up territories through *discovery*.

There is, then, an obvious sense in which the Linnean paradigm was sustained and extended through pathways directly associated with the expansion of economic and political power. Yet there is a more subtle, prescriptive power which was, and still is, manifest in the very vocabulary which naturalists use. The following describes a miniature Brazilian orchid, *Laelia regina*:

This tiny laelia is named after Regina Angerer, who flowered the type specimen in cultivation after she discovered it while collecting in the Serra da Caraça in Minas Gerais.⁵

The concept *discovery* is revealing. In an ongoing survey of one hectare of forest in the Serra do Mar, the Botanical Garden of Rio de Janeiro have *discovered* three new species of tree. We hear of this with delight, and a kind of awe: new species are still being discovered in an area so well documented as Rio State?

On the other hand, there are no indigenous Indians left in this area of Brazil. Characteristically, the knowledge of indigenous peoples has been ignored in the *discovery* and description of *new* species. Yet the knowledge of these people is extensive:

The Amazon Indians and other rainforest peoples have learnt to adapt to the phenomenal species diversity of their forests. They have found uses for many of the plant species that surround them.

Brian Boom, of the New York Botanical Garden, worked first with the Chácobo Indians of Bolivia. His sample hectare contained 649 trees of 94 species [...]. The Indians had uses for 76 species (79.7 per cent) either as food or in building, crafts medicines or commerce.⁶

This account is typical.

I do not wish to deny the scientific efficacy of the Linnean paradigm. I merely wish to draw attention to one of the hidden consequences of involvement in an apparently neutral, indeed, benign construct. Practical knowledge has, characteristically, been undervalued as a

⁵ Carl L. Withner, *The Cattleyas and their Relatives, Volume 2: The Laelias* (Portland: Timber Press, 1990), p.117.

⁶ Ghilleen France, 'Fruits of the Rainforest', in *New Scientist*, 1699 (1990), 42-45 (pp.42-43).

consequence of the unselfconscious inhabiting of a scientific paradigm associated with geographical and economic expansion.

It is at the edges of paradigms - at frontiers - that the discovery of their distinctive prescriptions becomes possible. Insight is often available with the passage of time, the achievement of historical perspective.

My copy of *The Lake Regions of Central Africa* was awarded as a school prize in 1893 - this would seem to guarantee its political correctness and assumptions about value. It is pervaded by the language of discovery. Indigenous peoples provide a context for *adventure*. The myth of cannibalism lends a pervasive spice - 'the countries occupied by the Nyam-Nyam tribes, that singular region of dwarfs and cannibals.'⁷ We are informed that, 'the Dinka tribes [...] are among the lowest in the scale of human beings. Utterly innocent of clothing [...] they are equally destitute of moral qualities.' (pp.43-44) The inhabitants of 'intertropical Africa' like 'other Africans [...] are children of impulse, credulous, suspicious, often lying, cowardly, and treacherous.' (p.47) We learn of a project to establish an 'ethnological museum' in Cairo, 'for the reception of curious specimens of the human family.' (p.94) Were the specimens to be stuffed? Negro kings are 'the greatest nuisances in Africa.' (p.49) On the other hand, there are exceptions: Karagwe is 'ruled over by a respectable and mild-mannered old black king' (p.56) Imagine Queen Victoria described by a black contemporary as 'a respectable and mild-mannered old white queen.'

Values associated with the natural world are revealing. The characteristic, and contradictory, designations of nature as *paradise* and as *green hell* are well represented. We learn that,

In many parts of savage Africa [...] the "game laws" are as strictly enforced as in civilised England, and a usual arrangement is for the hunter to share his booty with the black "lord of the soil." (p.252)

Presumably the following reflects the values of the hunt transposed from 'civilised England':

Elton's party enjoyed several days of most exciting elephant-stalking [...] the herd was at last sighted; two or three of the elephants dozing under the shade of some trees, others engaged in munching branches [...]. They were soon aroused from this

⁷ John Geddie, *The Lake Regions of Central Africa* (London: Nelson, 1889), p.38.

delightful Elysium [...] by the hunters, who had crept up to within ten or fifteen yards unseen. Singling out the biggest elephant [...] Elton and [...] Rhodes, each planted a bullet behind his shoulder. He trumpeted, staggered forward, tripped over into the rocky bed of a "nullah", scrambled out on the other side, and there receiving other two shots, crashed down lifeless [...].

Chase was then given [...] to the next largest elephant - a cow accompanied by her calf - which deliberately charged [...]. Allowing her to approach to within about three yards, he gave her a forehead shot, which turned her round; and then Rhodes "doubled her over like a rabbit." The retreating herd were pursued to the top of the pass, where [...] a big bull elephant, receiving a shot, stumbled and fell [...] "holding my Henry rifle like a pistol, I shot him again at the root of the tail. The shock was irresistible; over the edge of the ravine he went, head foremost, the blood gushing out of his trunk [...]." Still the hunt was continued [...] many a man at home would have given one thousand pounds for such a day's sport. (pp.266-267)

On the other hand, throughout the book, slavery, as it was still practised by Arab slavers, is roundly condemned. In his exploration of what proved to be the headwaters of the Congo, begun in 1866, Livingstone writes: 'I am heart-broken and sick of the sight of human blood.' (p.142) Stanley, though, seems to have fought a private war in his exploration of the Congo (1877). His trip is reported to have cost the lives of 114 members of his own party and countless casualties amongst the native peoples. (p.189)

It was following his reading of Sir Roger Casement's report on the atrocities committed in the Belgian Congo that Conrad inveighed against the situation that prevailed in that fiefdom of the King of the Belgians. Even in Conrad's vision, though, certain European paradigms prevail. The myth of the *green hell* is proliferated and despite the open-eyed description of atrocities and the heavy indictment of European practice, the African people remain more or less invisible behind a typically reductive paradigm. Conrad's perspective reflects a passionate assumption of guilt but there is a concomitant identification which precludes the alternative perspective from the point of view of the victim. Conrad's values are operative within a paradigm beyond the edges of which he cannot see - I do not intend this as a judgement, but as an observation on how we inhabit paradigms.

The transactions of imagination are not confined to words comfortably contained within the covers of a book, or to paint contained within the limit of a frame. They have effected, and continue to effect, basic issues of life and death wherever cultures meet - at the

interface of paradigms. The consequences of failing to differentiate between imagination and identification are reflected, in the larger scale, in the cost of human lives.

Imagination and History

Specifically imaginative issues are raised by Sir Walter Scott, typically, in *Waverley*, a novel which explores a clash of cultures and the resultant psychological tensions within the mind of its protagonist, Edward Waverley. The very name - 'Waverley' - reflects how the young man is swayed by conflicting paradigms.

His father, Richard, a *second* son, has, for that very reason, to make his own way 'in the race of life'. Under this pressure, 'adopting a political creed more consonant both to reason and his own interest [...] entered life as an avowed Whig, and friend of the Hanover succession.' (*Waverley*, op.cit., p.67)

Edward, though, is heir to his uncle, Sir Everard, with 'Tory or High-church predilections and prejudices which had distinguished the house of Waverley since the Great Civil War.' (p.66) Edward spends eight months of the year under his uncle's tutelage while his father prosecutes his own plans and ambitions. The neglected child, with his quick intelligence, indulged by his uncle, more or less educates himself in his uncle's library. Consequently, his 'idle reading' renders him unfit for 'serious and sober study'; (p.78) together with his natural 'temper' it results in 'that *wavering* and unsettled habit of mind'. (p.98)

The child is drawn into identification with a romanticised *history*, a heady mélange of legend and romantic values:

The deeds of Wilibert of Waverley in the holy land, his long absence and perilous adventures, his supposed death, and his return on the evening when the betrothed of his heart had wedded the hero who had protected her from insult and oppression during his absence [...] to these and similar tales he would hearken till his heart glowed and his eyes glistened. (pp.79-80)

In the context of self-aggrandising fantasy, control and the cognitive are undervalued:

[...] he was losing for ever the opportunity of acquiring habits of firm and assiduous application, of gaining the art of controlling, directing, and concentrating the powers of the mind for earnest investigation. (p.74-75)

These habits are to cost Edward dear in his naive failure to analyse and evaluate his situation and obligations to Colonel Gardener, indeed, to the twenty men from his uncle's estate who are enlisted to form Captain Waverley's 'troop'. That dawning will mark a crucial awareness:

Yes [...] I have indeed acted towards you with thoughtless cruelty [...] and when I had subjected you to all the rigour of military discipline, I shunned to bear my own share of the burden [...] O, indolence and indecision of mind! (p.328)

Edward's is a flawed but attractive character. The child is failed by both father and uncle: the former, through neglect and ready political pragmatism; the latter, through self-indulgence in romantic Jacobitism. Both authority figures, in their self-absorption - but from different perspectives - reinforce the child's disposition for fantasy. Primed in this way, Edward arrives at Tully-veolan. It is at once a place - through which the frontier can be drawn between Lowlands and Highlands; an ideological frontier - roughly, between Whiggery and Jacobitism; and a point of departure - between adolescence and adulthood.

By choosing an English *hero* - Scott uses the term so often as to undermine it with irony - the author is able to present the far side of the frontier with a vividness appropriate to initiation. A cattle raid marks the intrusion of the competing paradigm:

'[...] robbers from the neighbouring Highlands. We used to be quite free from them while we paid black-mail to Fergus Mac-Ivor Vich Ian Vohr.' (p.144)

The characteristic conflict between settled and heroic values is engaged. Indeed, Edward's first contact is with the Gael as warrior:

[...] a stout, dark, young man, of low stature, the ample folds of whose plaid added to the appearance of strength which his person exhibited. The short kilt, or petticoat, showed his sinewy and clean-made limbs; the goat-skin purse, flanked by the usual defences, a dark and steel-wrought pistol, hung before him [...] a broadsword dangled by his side, a target hung upon his shoulder, and a long Spanish fowling-piece occupied one of his hands. (p.151)

It was the fate of writing such as this to establish a national stereotype, that is, to invite unthinking identification, the power of whose entrapment is still manifest in popular assumptions, at least amongst the young, that the '45 was a conflict between the *Scots* and

the *English* and that Culloden was a *national* catastrophe. On the other hand, Scott's careful analysis of Edward Waverley suggests that he intended no such thing.

Scott is at pains to emphasise the effect of the setting on Edward who, once across the frontier, gives himself up to 'the full romance of his situation.' (p.156) The crossing of the frontier itself is clearly established as a crossing into the sublime:

It was towards evening as they entered one of the tremendous passes which afford communication between the high and low country; the path which was extremely steep and rugged, wended up a chasm between two tremendous rocks, following the passage which a foaming stream, that brawled far below, appeared to have worn for itself in the course of ages. A few slanting beams of the sun, which was now setting, reached the water in its darksome bed, and showed it partially, chaffed by a hundred rocks and broken by a hundred falls. (p.154)

The figures in this charged landscape are perceived by Edward in terms of legend:

Here he sate on the banks of an unknown lake, under the guidance of a wild native, whose language was unknown to him, on a visit to the den of some renowned outlaw, a second Robin Hood, perhaps [...] What a variety of incidents for the exercise of a romantic imagination.' (pp.156-157)

Georg Lukács argues that in his choice of the 'middling [...] hero' Scott expressed 'a renunciation of Romanticism'⁸ There may, indeed, have been good commercial reasons why Scott was driven to invent a type that could be easily differentiated from the Byronic hero. On the other hand, the taste for the picturesque is a precursor to Romanticism and the celebration of the heroic values located in such landscape suggest that Scott exploited what was fashionable as an anachronistic spice for his deeper concerns in the illumination of his historical themes.

A *reversal* of values - settled to heroic - is clearly established:

"But to be the daughter of a cattle-stealer - a common thief!"

"Common thief! - No such thing: Donald Bean Lane never *lifted* less than a drove in his life."

"Do you call him an uncommon thief, then?"

"No - he that steals a cow from a poor widow, or a stirk from a cotter, is a thief; he that lifts a drove from the Sassenach laird, is a gentleman drover [...]"

"But what can this end in, were he taken in such an appropriation?"

⁸ Georg Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, trans. by Hannah and Stanley Mitchell, paperback edn. 1989 (London: Merlin, 1962), p.33

“To be sure he would *die for the law* [...] that is, with the law, or by the law; be strapped up on the kind gallows of Crieff.”⁹

The heroic paradigm is associated with the skills of *savage* peoples - for example, following a path in the dark is achieved, 'by instinct, without the hesitation of a moment.' (p.156) Edward sees a Highlander, 'crawling on all fours with the dexterity of an Indian'. (p.284) Indeed, the invasion of the Lowlands, 'conveyed [...] as much surprise as if an invasion of African Negroes, or Esquimaux Indians, had issued forth from the northern mountains of their own native country.' (p.323)

The law is associated with settled peoples; beyond the frontier order depends upon patriarchal authority which is represented in the Chief. Such authority clearly shapes the behaviour and destinies of women. For reasons of political expediency Fergus would have his sister, Flora, marry Edward.

Generally, the plot anticipates that of the typical Western. In both, the struggle to accommodate and transfigure heroic values is the central concern. Nietzsche has sharply focussed the issues:

There are certain strong and dangerous drives, such as enterprisingness, foolhardiness, revengefulness, craft, rapacity, ambition, which hitherto had not only to be honoured from the point of view of their social utility [...] but also mightily developed and cultivated [...] these drives are [...] now that the diversionary outlets for them are lacking [...] gradually branded as immoral and given over to calumny. The antithetical drives and inclinations now come into moral honour; step by step the herd instinct draws its conclusions.¹⁰

More specifically, the issues are focussed by Scott, particularly, in the shifting relationships between Waverley, Flora and Rose.

Both Fergus and Flora are, in some important aspects, outsiders. Their father married while in exile, in France, so that their education allows them to view Highland society as a closed paradigm. In common with Edmund in *King Lear*, this gives Fergus the stance to assert *manipulative* power, deliberately exploiting his feudal authority for his own political ends and personal ambition. On the other hand he is, indubitably, a clan chief. Flora's

⁹ *Waverley*, pp.165-166.

¹⁰ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, op. cit., p.123.

detachment is manifest differently, in idealism which, of course, empowers her ideology, gives it moral authority:

Her love of her clan, an attachment which was almost hereditary in her bosom was, like her loyalty, a more pure passion than that of her brother. He was too thorough a politician, regarded his patriarchal influence too much as the means of accomplishing his own aggrandizement, that we should term him the model of a Highland Chieftain. Flora felt the same anxiety for cherishing and extending their patriarchal sway, but it was with the generous desire of vindicating from poverty, or at least from want and foreign oppression, those whom her brother was by birth, according to the notions of the time and country, entitled to govern. (p.185)

It is precisely the tensions within the characters as they are manifest in their contribution to events that Lukács identifies as Scott's distinctive contribution to the historical novel:

Scott's greatness lies in his capacity to give living human embodiment to historical-social types. The typically human terms in which great historical trends become tangible had never before been so superbly, straightforwardly and pregnantly portrayed.¹¹

There is a certain circularity in these remarks in that the 'evidence' for the types is largely derived from Scott himself.

Tensions within the characters are also reflected in ideological issues within battle itself. In a skirmish before the battle of Preston - Prestonpans - there is an interesting juxtaposition of values:

Waverley rather gained than lost in the opinion of the Highlanders, by his anxiety about the wounded man. They would not have understood the general philanthropy, which rendered it almost impossible for Waverley to have passed any person in such distress; but, as apprehending that the sufferer was one of his *following*, they unanimously allowed that Waverley's conduct was of a kind and considerate chieftain, who merited the attachment of his people. (p.327)

There is no *dawning* for the Highlanders here, rather, the insight comes from Waverley who has an alternative perspective not available to them.

The conduct and outcome of the battle itself reflect paradigmatic issues on the larger scale. The government troops are deployed according to a model evolved in the experience of fighting in Flanders, where, as Colonel Talbot bitingly remarks, 'sixty or a hundred thousand men' were 'in the field on each side'. (p.415) The rebellion is a local difficulty: the

¹¹ Lukács, p.35

strength of the Jacobites - four thousand, with two thousand, perhaps, adequately armed - reveals their enterprise to be, in the long run, utter folly. Johnny Cope has 'a complete army [...] flanked by cavalry and artillery'. (p.336)

Against the lines of the regular Government troops the rebels are drawn up in lines. Closer analysis reveals, though, that the Jacobite 'line' is composed of distinct clans:

[...] each a sort of separate phalanx, narrow in front, and in depth ten twelve, or fifteen files according to the strength of the following. The best-armed and best-born, for the words were synonymous, were placed in front of each of these irregular sub-divisions. (pp.335-336)

The highest born and best armed are disposed at the head of the clan. The traditional Highland Charge precisely reflects their *social* paradigm: in effect, they charge in wedges. On the other hand, the extended line of General Cope's army seems to reflect a continental model. The battle is resolved not through insight but merely through one side being better adapted to the immediate circumstances - and that is a sort of accident. The extended Government line is 'pierced and broken in many places.' (p.337) But what the Government troops learn here to their cost will be employed with murderous efficiency at Culloden. Each infantryman will tackle the clansman immediately to his right rather than head on, thereby compromising the defensive efficacy of the highland target - the tactic involves an imaginative leap.

On the larger scale, paradigmatic issues are clearly implicit in Tolstoy's analysis of French strategy after the capture of Moscow. How is a catastrophic retreat following upon a great victory to be explained?

Let us imagine two men who have come out to fight a duel with rapiers according to all the rules of the art of fencing [...] suddenly one of the combatants, feeling himself wounded [...] throws down his rapier, and seizing the first cudgel that comes to hand begins to brandish it. Then let us imagine that the combatant who so sensibly employed the best and simplest means to attain his end, was at the same time influenced by traditions of chivalry, and, desiring to conceal the facts of the case, insisted that he had gained his victory with the rapier according to all the rules of his art. One can imagine what confusion and obscurity would result from such an account of the duel.

The fencer who demanded a contest according to the rules of fencing was the French army; his opponent who threw away the rapier and snatched up the cudgel

was the Russian people; those who try to explain the matter according to the rules of fencing are the historians who have described the event.¹²

The imaginative issues are clear. The French are trapped in an inappropriate paradigm and destroyed as a consequence.

The romantic interest in *Waverley* is instructive. Flora's vision of Edward, as spelt out to Rose Bradwardine, is devastatingly frank:

"For mere fighting [...] I believe all men are pretty much alike [...]. They have [...] a certain instinct for strife, as we see in other male animals [...]. But high and perilous enterprise is not Waverley's forte [...]. I will tell you where he will be at home, my dear, and in his place, - in the quiet circle of domestic happiness, lettered indolence, and elegant enjoyments, of Waverley-Honour. And he will refit the library in the most exquisite Gothic taste [...] he will draw plans and landscapes, and write verses, and rear temples, and dig grottoes [...] And he will repeat verses to his beautiful wife." (pp. 364-365)

The caricature is a function of her own passionate idealism. There is, of course, an element of truth in her portrait, but it clearly reveals her own failure of integration - her inability to accommodate instinct, both sexual and aggressive.

In the event, *Waverley* breaks the mould of the caricature as a consequence of undergoing his rites of passage:

[...] it was in many a winter walk by the shores of Ulswater, that he acquired a more complete mastery of a spirit tamed by adversity, than his former experience had given him; and that he felt himself entitled to say firmly, though perhaps with a sigh, that the romance of his life was ended, and that its real history had now commenced. He was soon called upon to justify his pretensions by reason and philosophy. (p.406)

His father dies. Fergus Mac-Ivor is executed at Carlisle. *Waverley* marries Rose Bradwardine. We see adumbrated here something of the function of the modes of imagination in the process of individuation: Edward's relations to the world are first characterised by fantasy - in his case this constitutes regression, failure to accommodate to reality. The attraction to Fergus constitutes a move towards integration, but the identification is with an individual who proves to be self-destructive. Similarly, the attraction to Flora is compensatory, but her fanatical ideological commitment is also profoundly destructive. Edward's eventual accommodation to reality is indicated in his

¹² Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*, trans. Louise and Aylmer Maude, repr. 1965 (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), bk.XIII, p.287.

attachment to Rose. What seems rather arbitrary in the experience of the fiction is, perhaps, vindicated psychologically. Generally, Scott has integrated the psychological issues with the historical circumstances. On the other hand, we suspect that Waverley's passage from fantasy, through imagination to moments of realisation, may, in the end, be compromised by a comfortable identification with his role as country gentleman.

The significance of Scott's historical novels for Lukács is that in depicting characters on the periphery of events they can be seen to be 'subject' to events.¹³ They react to profound change without understanding the nature of that change. In other words, as in the paradigm case of Joseph K., *fictional reconstruction provides the impossible perspective that allows for understanding.*

The issues in the context of the specifically *historical* novel resolve into a paradox: how can the past be rendered into impossible insight and yet remain faithful to the experience of the past? The knowing, surely, must *change the nature of the experience.*

Lukács approaches these issues from a different angle but his quotation from Goethe's observations on Manzoni's *Adelchi* is apposite:

"We pronounce in his defence what may seem paradoxical: that all poetry in fact moves in the element of anachronism. Whatever in the past we evoke, in order to recite it after our own fashion to our contemporaries, we must grant a higher culture to the ancient happening than it in fact had [...]. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, all the great tragedians and all that has remained of true poetry lives and breathes only in anachronism. To all conditions one lends the modern spirit, for only in this way can we see and, indeed, bear to see them." (p.61)

Hegel's concept of 'necessary anachronism', Lukács sees, provides a theoretical explication of the issue:

"The inner substance of what is represented remains the same, but the developed culture in representing and unfolding the substantial necessitates a change in the expression and form of the latter." (p.61)

Lukács observes:

Scott's "necessary anachronism" consists, therefore, simply in allowing his characters to express feelings and thought about real, historical relationships in a much clearer way than the actual men and women of the time could have done. But

¹³ Lukács, p.35.

the content of these feelings and thoughts, their relation to their real object is always historically and socially correct. (p.63)

The paradox has been well observed but not yet resolved.

In his discussion of Hegel's historicism, Frederick Beiser suggests that the difficulties and obscurities in Hegel's introduction to his *Lectures on World History* may be explicable in terms of his introduction to *Phenomenology*:

Hegel's [...] phenomenological method [...] demands that the philosopher bracket his own principles and presuppositions and permit consciousness to examine itself according to its own standards. The philosopher will then find that, through its self-examination, ordinary consciousness will be compelled to admit the truth of subject-object identity. Ordinary consciousness will discover through its own experience that the object is not given to it but essential to its own self-consciousness.¹⁴

It follows that

If this account of Hegel's method is correct, then the subject matter of his philosophy of history should be not historical events *simpliciter*, which can be described by some reflective historian or external observer, but the agent's *consciousness* of these events. In other words, the subject matter of history should be the *self-consciousness of a nation* or, more precisely, *the dialectic* by which it arrives at its self consciousness. (p.285)

It is just such self-consciousness that is implicit in *Waverley* brought about by Scott's attempt to 'render' the history of 'sixty years since' - the attempt to forge a national identity. It is an irony of history that his imaginative rendering should come to manifest itself in national stereotypes - this is testimony to the power of *identification*.

The phenomenological method was, according to Beiser, already current in Hegel's day:

[...] Herder had castigated those historians who judged the past in the light of their own contemporary standards of right and wrong. He demanded that the historian should examine each age according to its own standards and values. The fundamental precept of the historian became "empathy" (*Einfühlung*) with the past, a sympathetic reconstruction of its guiding ideals. Herder preached to the new generation of historians: "go into the age, into the region, into the whole of history, feel yourself into everything - only now are you on the path of understanding." In following a phenomenological approach, then, Hegel was simply following Herder's advice. (p.286)

What is supposed here is the possibility of imaginative engagement with history - interestingly, the concept of *empathy* suggests a response arising out of identification. We

¹⁴ Frederick C. Beiser, 'Hegel's Historicism', in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. by F.C. Beiser, repr. 1995 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.284.

see then that history depends for its expression on the imagination and that the underlying conceptual issues are no different in principle from the rendering of experience in other genres of imaginative fiction. In art, successful expression - by its very nature - must outstrip consciousness, and its means of doing so is double prescription. It is the selection and framing of events that renders them expressive, lifts them from what would otherwise be a fog of redundancy. Double prescription is the key to the paradox of authenticity and representation: the past and, indeed, experience in general are transfigured by imagination. Those who imagine are thereby brought to consciousness.

There are hints in Hegel's notion of history that the phenomenological approach has some family resemblance to imagining - in which case, the logic of imagination may prove to be dialectical.

An interest for the Marxist Lukács in Scott's enterprise is that it reflects a new paradigm of history emerging from the objective social circumstances of the time. The contrast with the assumptions in, say, Shakespeare's history plays is clear, where there is a strong sense that episodes of history are taken to be exemplary in the illumination of *contemporary* ideological issues. We see from this that the concept of history itself is subject to paradigmatic change.

Chapter Five

Token Symbolism and Vitiating

Failure to acknowledge distinctions between identification, imagination and the discursive, and the shifting relations between them, results in muddles. This chapter discusses some of the implications of such muddles in the consideration of symbolism. A fuller discussion of the literary symbol is left to later chapters. In his analysis of dreams Freud's strategy involves distinguishing between the manifest dream and its latent content. Priority is thereby given to the discursive. This strategy inevitably reduces the content of dreams to signs and referents whereas there are hints in Freud's own examples that the logic of dreams is analogical. Discursive explication then effects that vitiating characteristic of the fate of other expressions of the imagination. In some of his short stories James Joyce reflects these issues in distinguishing between the experience of children and adult interpretation of it.

That the rites of passage associated with individuation can be represented in symbolism, is a fundamental assumption in Bruno Bettelheim's *The Uses of Enchantment*, a psychoanalytic exposition of fairy stories. Bettelheim argues that such stories allow children to deal with unconscious problems and fears and that these are given expression through symbolism:

There is general agreement that myths and fairy tales speak to us in the language of symbols representing unconscious content. Their appeal is simultaneously to our conscious and unconscious mind [...] and to our need for ego-ideals as well.¹

That such tales have a moral function is implicit in the claim that they shape 'ego-ideals'. There are, perhaps, a number of difficulties in these assumptions regarding the simultaneity of the appeal of fairy stories. Clearly, at one level, assimilation is through *identification*:

It is not the fact that virtue wins out at the end which promotes morality, but that the hero is most attractive to the child, who identifies with the hero in all his struggles. [...] The child makes such identifications all on his own, and the inner and outer struggles of the hero imprint morality on him.
[...] Furthermore, a child's choice is based, not so much on right versus wrong, as on who arouses his sympathy and who his antipathy. (p.9)

Identification, however, entails blindness that can be resolved only in the subsequent shift to imagining. Derived from the enhanced vision, which is the product of imagining, insight may be subsequently consolidated into moral prescriptions but this supposes at the least, a weighing up and subsequent choice. There is an involuntary element in identification so that

¹ Bruno Bettelheim, *The Uses of Enchantment*, reprinted 1991 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), p.36.

the notion that *morality* may be imprinted seems hardly tenable. On the other hand, *imprinting* neatly captures the transactions of value involved in identification.

In distinguishing between fantasy and imagination Roger Scruton observes:

[...] we should distinguish the kind of disciplined story-telling which illuminates reality and enables us in a novel way to come to terms with it, from the undisciplined flight from reality into worlds of sentimentality and make-believe [...]. The nature of the fantasy object is *dictated* by the passion that seeks it. (Pornography, therefore, is a prime instance of fantasy.) By contrast, the truly imaginative object produces and controls our response to it, and thereby educates and renews our passions, so as to redirect them towards the actual world.²

This differentiation is hardly subtle enough in that it fails to catch the significance of the instability of the modes of assimilation and how the one can slide into the other. Even make-believe supposes the vestigial awareness that underpins identification and, indeed, we easily and habitually transform, 'disciplined story telling' through the mode in which we assimilate fictions. On the other hand, identification can empower, and it is precisely the latent understanding experienced within the mode that may subsequently be rendered in the double prescription at the heart of imagining. That the object 'controls us' is an assumption that acknowledges only *one* source of prescription in imagining. It suggests passivity on the part of the assimilating imagination whereas the transaction involves a quite specific act of intention, an initial framing prescription that releases the expressive potential of the artefact - or landscape, for that matter. One can only agree with Scruton, though, that fantasy *vis à vis* imagination is a 'distinct exercise of the mind' (p.215) but the modes are more subtle and dynamic in their relations than he acknowledges.

Bettelheim's assumptions cut across modes of assimilation which are exclusive but fundamentally at issue in his remarks is the nature of symbolism. It may be that the representational logic of symbolism is characterised by the underlying mode of assimilation of which it is an expressive component - in other words, the nature of the symbol changes according to how we relate to its context. Symbolism in the mode of identification may, indeed, function at the 'unconscious' level in so far as that mode supposes only a limited

² Roger Scruton, 'Imagination', in *A Companion to Aesthetics*, ed. by David Cooper, paperback edn. 1995 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp.215-216.

differentiation between subject and object - unconscious contents are, according to Jung, manifest in projection:

So long as they are unconscious our unconscious contents are always projected, and the projection fixes upon everything "ours," inanimate objects as well as animals and people.³

On the other hand, symbolism in the discursive mode supposes a clear differentiation between sign and referent - with the inevitable loss of the fascination that accompanies symbolism in the context of identification. In the discursive mode symbolism could be designated as 'token' - irrespective of its immediate interest. The nature of symbolism in the mode of imagining will be discussed in a later chapter.

It seems that Bettelheim's claims involve a confusion and conflation of categories. How can 'morality' be 'imprinted' in the mode of identification? Is a 'language' of symbolism conceivable outside the context of the discursive?

So far, taking the cue from Plato, Chaucer and Kafka, fantasy has been considered to be reductive, an obstruction to reason and, thence, to truth – both the Franklin and Joseph K. are seen to be deluded. On the other hand, the very empowering capacity of fantasy implicit in self-aggrandisement can serve an individuating function, for example, as Bettelheim argues, in sustaining self-worth in children in the face of otherwise debilitating vulnerabilities. In a similar way, in certain circumstances, the stimulation of sexual fantasy in adults can be therapeutically empowering. As we have argued, identification is a precondition for catharsis and it energises and motivates students' assimilation of texts.

It is the context of fantasy and how it is resolved, rather than the nature of fantasy itself, that makes it productive or reductive. Shaped, ultimately, through transition to the cognitive in the transactions of imagination, it leads to discovery; subverted by the locked set of neurosis it debilitates:

Because some people withdraw from the world and spend most of their days in the realm of their imaginings, it has been mistakenly suggested that an over-rich fantasy life interferes with our coping successfully with reality. But the opposite is true: those who live completely in their fantasies are beset by compulsive ruminations which rotate eternally around some narrow, stereotypical topics. Far from having a

³ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion*, op. cit., p.256.

rich fantasy life, such people are locked in, and they cannot break out of one anxious or wish-fulfilling daydream. But free-floating fantasy, which contains in imaginary form a wide variety of issues also encountered in reality, provides the ego with a abundance of material to work with. This rich and variegated fantasy life is provided to the child with fairy stories, which can help prevent his imagination from getting stuck within the narrow confines of a few anxious or wish-fulfilling daydreams circling around a few narrow preoccupations.⁴

This distinction is clearly reflected in Joyce's story, 'An Encounter', where the young narrator is seen to be drawn into the world of the fictions that he reads:

The adventures related in the literature of the Wild West were remote from my nature but, at least, they opened doors of escape. I liked better some American detective stories which were traversed from time to time by unkempt fierce and beautiful girls.⁵

The identification is strong enough to empower the child to move to act in terms of the values of the fantasy:

But when the restraining influence of the school was at a distance I began to hunger again for wild sensations, for the escape which those chronicles of disorder alone seemed to offer me. The mimic warfare of the evening became at last as wearisome to me as the routine of school in the morning because I wanted real adventures to happen to myself. (pp.19-20)

It is as if the power of the immediate fantasy diminishes as it is transformed in the urgent need to realise it.

In the contemporary debate regarding the exposure of children to sexually explicit or disturbing material, the logic of identification makes it clear that such fictions exert powerful prescriptions, which, of their nature are without significant cognitive control and cannot, while these prescriptions are engaged, be brought within the possibilities of moral choice. Morality *cannot* emerge directly from identification.

In 'An Encounter' the child's realisation of fantasy is expressed in the need to free himself from 'the weariness of school life' through finding 'real adventures'. (p.20) A day of truancy is resolved in a disturbing encounter with 'a queer old josser'. (p.26) The fantasies of the 'old josser' are clearly obsessive:

⁴ Bettelheim, pp.118-119.

⁵ James Joyce, *Dubliners* (London: Triad Paladin, 1988), pp.18-19.

There was nothing he liked, he said, so much as looking at a nice young girl, at her nice white hands and her beautiful soft hair. He gave me the impression that he was repeating something he had learned by heart or that, magnetized by some words of his own speech, his mind was slowly circling round and round in the same orbit.
(p.26)

His strategy is to invite the boy's identification - whose vulnerability is already revealed in the fantasies stimulated by his reading - so that gradually he can bring the boy to acquiesce in his real intention:

He began to speak on the subject of chastizing boys. His mind, as if magnetized again by his speech, seemed to circle slowly round and round its new centre. He said that when boys were that kind they ought to be whipped and well whipped.
(p.27)

The dangers for the boy are never brought to his awareness. He experiences unease, agitation and makes his escape. The brilliance of the story lies in Joyce's completely satisfying account of the youngster's experience in a context of innocence while, at the same time, presenting cues to the reader that allow for, but do not guarantee, a shift into abstractive awareness. That the shift is not guaranteed is a function both of the success of Joyce's rendering of the child's experience, and of the naive identification characteristic of the initial responses of many students.

Revealed here is a crucial distinction between the naivety of the child and the insight of the reader. It is an either/or that in his discussion of fairy stories Bettelheim would seem to wish away:

When speaking here of an intellectual understanding of the meaning of a fairy tale, it should be emphasized that it will not do to approach the telling of fairy tales with didactic intentions. When in various contexts throughout the book it is mentioned that a fairy tale helps the child to understand himself [...] this is always meant metaphorically.⁶

What is it to 'understand' metaphorically? In any event he warns that a shift to the abstractive, which might be a temptation for a parent reading a story, can be 'destructively overwhelming'; it compromises the potential of the story to enchant thereby destroying its individuating efficacy:

⁶ Bettelheim, p.153

Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:-
We murder to dissect.⁷

Once incorporated into the tale itself, abstractive cognition - manifest in the knowing manipulation of 'correct' values - would shift the genre so that it would become a cautionary tale or moralistic fable. The imagery of fable invites identification, characteristically through the humanising of animals, but the pressure of abstractive cognition pushes such imagery into token symbolism: animals represent human values or dispositions - the fox is cunning, the crow vain and so on. But such polarisation is already implicit *in the assumption that fairy stories themselves are symbolic*. In other words the exegetical mode that purports to reveal the psychological subtext of fairy stories reduces the stories to the very mode where their efficacy is said to be compromised.

The point is illustrated in Bettelheim's discussion of 'The Goose Girl':

[...] this story impresses any child because on a preconscious level the child comprehends that the tale deals with oedipal problems which are very much his own. (p.139)

In the context of a child's identification 'oedipal problems' cannot *conceivably* be 'comprehended' - they may, of course, be manifest in projection. Bettelheim's assumptions involve an inherent paradox: such projections can be brought to consciousness only by shifting into an exegesis that would destroy the imaginative efficacy of the story.

The *locus classicus* of the assumption that such unconscious content is expressible in the language of symbols is to be found in the writings of Freud. In his lecture 'Symbolism in Dreams' Freud distinguishes between the 'manifest dream' - what we experience as dream - and the latent 'dream thought':

A constant relation of this kind between a dream element and its translation is described by us as a 'symbolic' one, and the dream element itself as a 'symbol' of the unconscious dream-thought.⁸

⁷ William Wordsworth, 'The Tables Turned', in *William Wordsworth: The Prelude, Selected Poems and Sonnets*, ed. by Carlos Baker, repr. 1966 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1948), p.79.

⁸ Sigmund Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, trs. by James Strachey, ed. by Strachey and Angela Richards (London: Penguin, 1991), pp.183-184..

Symbolism is an archaic, a 'primal' language, an 'ancient but extinct mode of expression.'

(p.201) :

In the case of the dream-work it is clearly a matter of transforming the latent thoughts which are expressed in words into sensory images, mostly of a visual sort. Now our thoughts originally arose from sensory images of that kind: their first material and their preliminary stages were sense impressions, or, more properly, mnemonic images of such impressions. Only later were words attached to them and the words in turn linked up into thoughts. The dream-work thus submits thoughts to *regressive* treatment. (p.215)

The regression is from 'thoughts', to imagery, sensation. The very conceptualisation reveals Freud to be working within a powerfully prescriptive philosophical paradigm, reflected, for instance, in the first sentence of Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*:

All perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I shall call *impressions* and *ideas* [...]. Those perceptions which enter with most force and violence, we may name *impressions*; and, under this name, I comprehend all our sensations, passions, and emotions [...]. By *ideas*, I mean the faint images of these in thinking and reasoning.⁹

There is, perhaps, an internal relation between the Enlightenment paradigm and the mode of symbolic interpretation associated with the 'scientific' analysis of dreams: the epistemological issues resolve into an essentially allegorical or cryptological mode of interpretation.

Freud acknowledges the difficulty in defining a symbol:

The essence of this symbolic relation is that it is a comparison [...]. We must admit [...] that the concept of a symbol cannot at present be sharply delimited: it shades off into such notions as those of a replacement or representation, and even approaches that of an allusion.¹⁰

Freud is uncharacteristically vague here. It is just such vagueness that, in another context, he would zealously explore. In the next lecture he is more committed:

The third achievement of the dream-work is psychologically the most interesting. It consists in transforming thoughts into visual images. [...] they comprise the essence of the formation of dreams. (p.209)

It is instructive to look at what have become the stereotypical Freudian symbols:

⁹ David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Understanding*, in *David Hume on Human Nature and the Understanding*, ed. by Anthony Flew (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1962), p.176.

¹⁰ *Introductory Lectures*, p.185.

The male genitals [...] are represented in dreams in a number of ways that must be called symbolic, where the common element in the comparison is mostly very obvious [...] the male organ, finds symbolic substitutes in the first instance in things that resemble it in shape [...] such as *sticks, umbrellas, posts, trees* and so on.
(pp.187-188)

There are equivalent symbols for the female genitalia (though it appears that the translator may have created a problem of syntax):

Among animals, *snails* and *mussels* at least are undeniably female symbols.
(pp.189-190)

It is striking that the context of Freud's explication - involving the discursive elaboration of a psychological theory - must *inevitably* designate 'sticks' and 'snails' as symbols; furthermore, because of their association with the discursive they must be manifest as *token* symbols. Even in couching these concepts in *universals* - 'the male genitals' and 'sticks' - the representational mode is irrevocably fixed in sign and referent. There is a conspiracy between the discursive intention and the mode of representation - which can only be symbolic in the circumstances.

Imagine such discussion in the unlikely context of Hopkins's diary. Inscape would emerge from the careful observation of internal relations, visual and tactile *analogues* - its disclosure would come through *metaphor*. Only in ideologically committed passages would aspects of the natural world be reduced to token symbols.

In his earlier lecture, 'Difficulties and First Approaches' Freud recounts a dream 'reported by an intelligent observer':

"I dreamt [...] that one spring morning I was going for a walk and was strolling through the green fields till I came to a neighbouring village, where I saw the villagers in their best clothes, with hymn-books under their arms, flocking to the church. Of course! It was Sunday, and early morning service would soon be beginning. I decided I would attend it; but first, as I was rather hot from walking, I went into the churchyard [...] to cool down. While I was reading some of the tombstones, I heard the bell-ringer climbing up the church tower and at the top of it I now saw the little village bell which would presently give the signal for the beginning of devotions. For quite a while it hung there motionless, then it began to swing, and suddenly its peal began to ring out clear and piercing - so clear and piercing that it put an end to my sleep. But what was ringing was the alarm-clock.
(p.121)

The aural cue - the alarm ringing - is not represented *symbolically* but through an aural *analogue* - a metaphor. The dreamer is intrigued by what seems to him a problem about time - 'for quite a while it hung there' - in that the rationalising narrative seems to predate the aural stimulus. The problem disappears though if the narrative is understood as a structuring Gestalt triggered by a single cue. It is rather like a metaphysical conceit with all its elements simultaneously present but rationalised through time. It strikingly illustrates the nature of *identification*: pinned by a *single* cue the rationalising Gestalt is unchallenged by the need to mediate with other cues; the dreamer is *literally* blind to the visual cues that would, in a waking state, need to be encompassed. There is, nevertheless, an unequivocal structure to the 'story'.

The world of Joseph K. reflects a similar modal logic. Joseph cannot read the 'parable' delivered by the priest in the cathedral; neither can Chaucer's Aurelius 'read' the instructive content of the Magician's sequence of illusions. Failure to *see* is a characteristic source of humour in Chaucer but it becomes altogether blacker in Kafka. Though Joseph's world is littered with cues - and, indeed with good advice - he responds only to those cues which sustain his self-delusion. The sense of nightmare in Kafka is generated in a context of intense, self-replicating and proliferating projection. He tries desperately to hunt down the additional cues that would allow him to identify his predicament - but this would involve a fundamental shift in perspective and he fails to do so. The claustrophobia of nightmare grows intense.

Again and again Freud commits himself to the central importance of visual imagery in the manifest dream and the notion that such imagery is a 'translation' of the underlying thought, or latent dream. The resultant 'stratification' depends upon the assumption that the expressive mode is symbolism:

Without assuming the projective busyness of the mind as hardened into symbols, Freud was unable to complete his therapeutic understanding.

[...] Symbolism indicates that language is a prison, and traces all modes of perception back to stereotyped desires. [...] The task of the Freudian science

remains a kind of literary criticism, the discovery of equivalences of symbols and actions through perceptual analogies. Symbols are the natural forms of imagination.¹¹

Another key interpretative method is to arrive at the latent dream through the process of free association. Freud gives an example in discussing a typical parapraxis:

The forgetting of proper names is actually an excellent model of what happens in dream-analysis; the difference is only that events that are shared between two people in dream-analysis are combined in a single person in the parapraxis. [...] I noticed one day that I could not recall the name of a small country on the Riviera, of which Monte Carlo is the chief town.

[...] I gave up reflection and allowed substitute names to occur to me [...]. They came rapidly: Monte Carlo itself, then Piedmont, Albania, Montevideo, Colico. Of this series I was struck first by Albania, which was at once replaced by Montenegro, no doubt because of the contrast between white and black. I then saw that four of these substitute names contained the syllable 'mon', then suddenly I had the forgotten word and exclaimed aloud: 'Monaco!' So the substitute names had in fact arisen from the forgotten one: the first four came from its first syllable while the last reproduced its syllabic structure and its whole last syllable.¹²

If this is indeed typical of the free association that leads to the latent thought, what is striking is that it is reached through a series of *aural analogues*: *Monte Carlo*, *Piedmont*, *Montevideo* and *Montenegro*; the syllabic structure of *Mon/a/co* is anticipated in *Co/li/co*. Freud is aware of this but does not realise its implications: the logic of dreams is, perhaps, *analogical* rather than *symbolic*.

If the manifest dream is understood to be couched in symbolism, Freud is committed to an intrinsically reductive mode of rationalisation. There is a circularity here between the mode of the discourse, as he envisages it, and the nature of the intelligibility of the latent dream: this constitutes a logical determinism, a locked set.

Intriguingly, in another passage, Freud presents another paradigm without realising its implications:

What in other ways gives an impression of arbitrariness - in, for instance, the interpretation of symbols - is done away with by the fact that as a rule the interconnection between the dream-thoughts, or the connection between the dream and the dreamer's life, or the whole psychical situation in which the dream occurs, selects a single one from among the possible determinations presented and dismisses the rest as unserviceable.

¹¹ Philip Rieff, *Freud: The Mind of the Moralizer* (London: Methuen, 1965), pp.144-145.

¹² *Introductory Lectures*, pp.140-141.

[...] Let us recall that we have said that the dream-work makes a translation of the dream thoughts into a primitive mode of expression similar to picture writing. All such primitive systems of expression, however, are characterised by indefiniteness and ambiguity [...] without justifying us in casting doubts on their serviceability [...]. The Chinese language is full of instances of indefiniteness which might fill us with alarm [...]. It is impossible to tell of any of the monosyllabic words whether it is a noun or verb or an adjective [...]. Thus the language consists [...] solely of the raw material, just as our thought-language is resolved by the dream work into its raw material, and any expression of relations is omitted. In Chinese the decision in all cases of indefiniteness is left to the hearer's understanding and this is guided by the context. (pp.267-269)

In Freud's comments is adumbrated the phenomenon of double prescription - the framing context or intention - whereby words are brought to expressiveness. Presupposed here is the logic of *inscape* and in so far as dreams have an *analogical* structure they share that logic: the structure is *already* expressive and thereby cannot be dependent upon or determined by a rationalising subtext. Freud would reduce dreams to an expression of Coleridge's *fancy*, whereas the logic of metaphor and *inscape* identifies them as products of the *imagination*.

The efficacy of the fairy tale depends on identification controlled through the prescriptions of characterisation and imagery. These constituent elements have, presumably, been refined by a sort of natural selection, the fundamental control being children's responses. In this way the inner experiences of children have been hypostatized in stories. Whereas the 'inscape' of Hopkins or 'motifs' of Cézanne point to some illumination of the 'world', fairy stories must inevitably reflect inner dispositions: but the fundamental natures of that world and that subjectivity are inaccessible - the *discourse itself* exemplifies the limits of what is sayable. Here, in such rendering, is reflected what might be called the social utility of imagining.

The imaginative power of, say, 'Hansel and Gretel', is initially bound up in its capacity to engage identification. A pervasive theme is the problem of hunger. The story begins at a time of *famine* - it is difficult now, in Western Europe, to imagine an agrarian economy where poverty was endemic. It is interesting and poignant that the temptation for the children is represented in confectionery. The luxury is set at a double remove - from both their hunger and poverty. Subsequently, a witch is burnt in an *oven*.

The imaginative difficulty that some contemporary students have with the first scene of *Macbeth* is instructive here. The encounter with the Weird Sisters is merely quaint, if not absurd, until they realise that Shakespeare's patron, James I, took a personal interest in the interrogation of witnesses at the trial of the Witches of North Berwick, that he wrote a book on *Daemonology*¹³ and that in Scotland between 1560 and 1707, 'considerably more than 3,000 people, and perhaps as many as 4,500, perished horribly because their contemporaries thought they were witches.'¹⁴ To regard the fairy story as symbolic is to deny the power of its context and thereby to deny the role of that context in engaging identification.

Hunger is what motivates the stepmother to destroy the children; they are placated in the forest with fire and *bread*; the benevolent intervention of the white bird and the duck follows the birds eating Hansel's trail of crumbs; lost in the forest, the children are reduced to eating berries; the constitution of the witch's house is a fantastical resolution of their basic predicament; the witch is resolved to fatten the children in order to eat them; in the end, their wealth ensures that they will never be hungry again. Hunger and its associations pervades the story - so much so that the stepmother's solution to the problem of starvation is an attempt - albeit, a wicked one - to resolve a *genuine* dilemma.

There are more subtle cues for identification. The father begins by referring to *our* children; this, troublingly becomes *my* children; his wife becomes *the woman*, then their *stepmother*. This escalation happens within, roughly, the first twenty lines of the story in the context of the children *overhearing* the woman's scheme to abandon them. For children to overhear themselves being discussed by adults can be devastating. The frank assessment, even if fundamentally loving, can hardly be understood as referring to themselves. The objectification is anticipated in the word choice and confirmed in the implicitly dysfunctional nature of the family: their physical predicament - the deprivation implicit in hunger - is paralleled in their psychological predicament - deprivation of love.

¹³ King James I, *Daemonologie, in Forme of a Dialogue, Divided in three Bookes* (Edinburgh: Printed by Robert Waldegrave, Printer to the King's Majestie, An. 1597).

¹⁴ T.C. Smout, *A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830* (London: Fontana, 1989), pp.184-185.

Typically of the brothers Grimm, the style is ruthlessly economical. This supposes that identification is the primary relational mode - hence the *imaginative* difficulties for readers of very different experience, the deterioration through time into the quaint. Imagery, on the few occasions when it does occur is, thereby, conspicuous. The white pebbles that Hansel uses to lay his trail are 'like silver coins';¹⁵ as they guide the children home they, 'glittered like bits of silver' (p.155). The imagery underlines their visual function - they stand out. Characterisation is in terms of types. Speech and actions frequently resolve into patterns - the stepmother's injunction, 'Get up, you lazy bones' (p.152) is precisely echoed by the witch. Hansel's cunning is balanced by Gretel's. Generally, the story has been thoroughly worked, thoroughly rendered.

Bettelheim argues,

After they have become familiar with "Hansel and Gretel," most children comprehend, at least unconsciously, that what happens in the parental home and at the witch's house are but separate aspects of what in reality is one total experience. Initially, the witch is a perfectly gratifying mother figure [...]. Only on the following morning comes the rude awakening from such dreams of infantile bliss [...].

This is how the child feels when devastated by the ambivalent feelings, frustrations, and anxieties of the oedipal stage of development, as well as his previous disappointment and rage at failures on his mother's part to gratify his needs and desires as fully as he expected [...].

Thus, the parental home "hard by a great forest" and the fateful house in the depths of the woods are on an unconscious level but the two aspects of the parental home: the gratifying one and the frustrating one.

The child who ponders on his own the details of "Hansel and Gretel" finds meaning in how it begins. That the parental home is located at the very edge of the forest where everything happens suggests that what is to follow was imminent from the start.¹⁶

On the other hand, where else would a story concerning a woodcutter and his family be located other than at 'the edge of a wood'? The reader is pushed from the gratification of enthralling identification to the ingenious unfolding of a locked set:

The house stands for oral greediness and how attractive it is to give in to it [...]. The witch, who is a personification of the destructive aspects of orality, is as bent on eating up the children as they are on demolishing her gingerbread house. (pp.161-162)

¹⁵ Amy Ehrlich, *The Walker Book of Fairy Tales* (London: Walker Books, 1986), p.151.

¹⁶ Bettelheim, p.163.

The story is immediately polarised, the psychoanalytic subtext reducing the imagery to the merely illustrative.

Something of these issues can be seen in 'Araby', another of Joyce's stories concerning childhood. In the sequence of *Dubliners* it immediately follows upon 'An Encounter'. The pre-adolescent sexual fantasy of the narrator, typically, is reductive of the girl - she has no name, she is 'Mangan's sister.' The ghost of a mythic subtext - the quest - provides more than an *appropriate* context for the fantasy - the myth and the mode of imagination share a reciprocal logic. As is characteristic of Joyce's stories of childhood, the fantasy empowers:

Her image accompanied me even in places the most hostile to romance. On Saturday evenings when my aunt went marketing I had to go to carry some of the parcels. We walked through the flaring street [...] amid the curses of labourers, the shrill litanies of shop-boys [...]. These noises converged in a single sensation of life for me: I imagined that I bore my chalice safely through a throng of foes.¹⁷

The erotically charged imagery hovers at the brink of sexual awareness without ever coming to explicit consciousness:

She was waiting for us, her figure defined by the light from the half-opened door [...] and I stood by the railings looking at her. Her dress swung as she moved her body and the soft rope of her hair tossed from side to side. (p.30)

It is as if the polarities of *self* and *other* are held in suspension. Such suspension is entirely characteristic of the imaginative mode of fairy stories - it could be said that the mode is *intransitive* in that the self is not posited as an object in the context of compelling identification. Yet in Joyce's story it is as if the polarities are *implicit* in the descriptive imagery with its persistent chiaroscuro:

The light from the lamp opposite our door caught the white curve of her neck, lit up her hair that rested there and, falling, lit up the hand upon the railing. It fell over the side of her dress and caught the white border of a petticoat, just visible as she stood at ease. (p.32)

These painterly cues potentially differentiate the experience of the child - the girl as *icon* - from that of the reader. Joyce has engineered a privileged perspective. It is not until near the end of the story that knowing sexuality is clearly differentiated as a point of *comparison* for the reader.

¹⁷ *Dubliners*, pp.30-31.

In the end, the child's empowering fantasy is not strong enough to sustain his vision in the general darkness of the adult world; the Chapel Perilous resolves into the market place:

Nearly all the stalls were closed and the greater part of the hall was in darkness. I recognized a silence like that which pervades a church after a service. I walked into the centre of the bazaar timidly. (p.35)

Failing in his quest, the child comes to articulate his failure in concepts associated with the world of the dead priest - piety and stultifying conventionality:

Gazing up into the darkness I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger. (p.36)

The child comes, not to self-knowledge, but to a false self, mediated through an alienating ideology. The story serves as a parable. In assimilating fairy stories the child's imagination operates within intransitive identification. In this context ideological intrusion is enormously destructive. In his estrangement the child becomes a clone of the dominant ideology. The competing, hegemonic power of the chilling adult paradigm is assimilated. Such issues were at the heart of R.D. Laing's objections to classical psychoanalysis:

The most serious objection to the technical vocabulary currently used to describe psychiatric patients is that it consists of words which split man up verbally in a way which is analogous to the existential splits we have to describe here.

[...] The words of the current technical vocabulary either refer to man in isolation from the other and the world, that is, as an entity not *essentially* 'in relation to' the other and in a world, or they refer to falsely substantialized aspects of this isolated entity. Such words are: mind and body, psyche and soma [...] we take a single man in isolation and conceptualize his various aspects into 'the ego', 'the superego', and 'the id'. The other becomes either an internal or external object or a fusion of both.¹⁸

An exploration of the modes of imagination provides the logic which explains how such reduction *inevitably* comes about through the conceptual prescriptions of Freud's symbolic method and the ideology consolidated through them.

¹⁸ R.D. Laing, *The Divided Self* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), p.19.

Chapter Six

Identity and the Manufacture of Meaning

Just as the nature of an artefact changes according to the mode in which it is apprehended so the nature of the self changes - the imagination has implications for personal identity. Viewed discursively the self appears as an object, or an object that cannot be found, or a collection of selves. On the other hand, in the context of imagining, the world and the self, and the other and the self are engaged in a reciprocal extension. In the context of the nihilism contingent upon the apparent contraction of the Romantic imagination into subjectivity, Virginia Woolf, nevertheless, seems to find a role for imagining in the possibility that we manufacture our own meaning and thereby further our individuation.

It is as if by individuation we commonly meant the achievement of an integrated self, an achieved identity. This suggests that the self is an essence. Does this essence, however, amount to anything more than a stasis of empowering paradigmatic relics, the type of the weary caricature by which I know myself? Such is the self envisaged by Larkin:

And what cohered in it across
The years, the unique random blend
Of families and fashions, there

At last begin to loosen.¹

The contingency, the relativism implicit in such a conception is essentially nihilistic.

In *The Birthday Party*, as we noted earlier, Stanley is reconstructed from the often contradictory paradigmatic flotsam and jetsam that constitute the world, primarily, of Goldberg. From a contemporary perspective, Stanley's new 'self' is like a disturbed archaeological site set in concrete. The clear implication of the satire is that such an identity is a monstrous aberration.

It may be that the modes of thinking which so prescribe and vitiate such a self are the very modes which vitiate imaginative experience generally. On the other hand, it is as if individuation were not so much the arriving at an essence as that which is affirmed *in the mediation between world and self in the process of imagining*. That is to say, such a self is a function of an elusive, dynamic *process* which only becomes 'visible' in terms of

¹ Philip Larkin, 'Ambulances', in *Collected Poems*, paperback edn. 1990 (London: Faber and Faber, 1988), pp.132-133.

objectifying, reductive modes. This may be what is behind the age-old notion, particularly associated with the mystical tradition, that to find yourself it is necessary to lose yourself: the finding involves crossing a threshold between modes. In the social context, imagination is manifest in the transactions of the *moral* life - a *practical* mode of imagination - and the moral life is as subject to the vitiation of reductive modes as other imaginative transactions.

It is, then, as if the self were manifest in a number of modalities. For the sceptical Hume the concept of self is a 'mistake' and a 'fiction'.²

[...] when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception. When my perceptions are removed for any time, as by sound sleep, so long am I insensible of *myself*, and may truly be said not to exist.

[...] I may venture to affirm of [...] mankind, that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual flux or movement. (p.259)

The self is not an entity but a function of memory and habit. The notion of the 'bundle' is more or less confirmed in the imagery of Larkin and the characters of Pinter. Such a discussion involves a paradox: in denying the self it posits it as an object *which cannot be found*. Whether or *not* the self is an *entity* is a discussion trapped within the assumptions of a shared paradigm conceived within a single modality.

By contrast, the imaginative mode of fairy stories and the depiction of children's experience in *Dubliners* suggests that discursive argument posits a self - or *absent* object - which seems to have little relation to the experience of self as it is manifest in identification. There the self is manifest in wishes and desires, undifferentiated except in the experience of pain or frustration: I am at one with my world except when it *resists* appropriation through fantasy. In such failure lies the germ of an incipient self-conscious identity. Desire mediated through awareness of the claims of others engenders the possibility of adjudication and pushes the self into the public domain. In this way, imagining becomes the very condition of morality.

² David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, op. cit., p.261.

In life, as in our responses to art, we move between modes of relation - identification, fantasy, imagining - each with its associated and contingent 'self'. The self that we experience in the self-consciousness of shame, for example, is radically different from the self in joy.

Hegel's discussion of 'Lordship and Bondage' is instructive here. That the exploration of the modes of imagination should lead to a consideration of the self and its modes of being, mirrors, to some extent, Hegel's shift, from how we apprehend and represent the world, to issues of identity and self-consciousness: 'everything turns on grasping and expressing the True, not only as *Substance*, but equally as Subject.'³ In this scheme truth becomes a function of self-consciousness:

Only this self-*restoring* sameness, or this reflection in otherness within itself [...] is the True. It is the process of its own becoming. (p.10)

Such a 'process' can only be realised in the context of negotiations with another self-consciousness.

But the first stages of such a transaction are encompassed by the urgent need for self-realisation. Self-consciousness seeks to transform or appropriate the *other* and thereby consolidate itself but in doing so destroys the very relation that is the condition of realisation - namely, the self-consciousness of the other. Self-consciousness is dependent upon a *reciprocal* transaction. On the other hand, appropriation reduces the other to the status of a 'thing'. The dominant self-consciousness now takes *enjoyment* in using the 'object', an enjoyment enhanced by the other's self-consciousness of his situation: in other words, the participants are polarised into lord and bondsman. The lord, however, has forfeited the recognition that his self-consciousness demands by effecting such a reduction: the necessary reciprocity is fatally compromised. On the one hand, the bondsman is driven to pay close attention to the wishes and motives of the lord, and this involves a passage from the confinement of his own desires in order to fulfil the wishes of the other; on the

³ G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. by A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.10.

other hand, the world of the bondsman is opaque to the lord. Paradoxically, only the bondsman achieves the self-consciousness that the lord set out to achieve.⁴

Reflected here are the transactions of imagination and their role in individuation. The discursive posits the self as an object or absent object. On the other hand, identification contains within it the possibility of the evolution of self-consciousness: identification effects a reduction of the other and the associated self is coextensive with its own desires. Pushed into consciousness, such desire resolves into the wilful manipulation of the other. In imagining, the self is introduced into the public domain and comes to know itself in its differentiation from, and assessment of, others - implicit in this is the adjudication that is associated with the moral life. From unlikely origins within the blindness of identification the self evolves as a function of subsequent imagining.

At issue here is the reciprocal relation between imagining and identity: indeed, the one is locked into the other. In the historical novels of Scott, arguably, a new paradigm of history emerges involving a coming to consciousness through the rendering of the past. This process is precisely mirrored in Proust's *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu*. In any fiction with the capacity to engage identification there lies the potential for imaginative engagement with all its implications for self-consciousness. What is distinctive in Proust is that he brings this potentiality to awareness in the practise and, thereby, *recognition* of his vocation.

Whether in the context of artefacts, or in our quotidian dealings with one another, the imagination, as I have argued, discloses value in the very act of imagining. Value, then, is *disclosed simultaneously with the self*. The relativism of the static self is deterministic, contingent: value is manifest in habituated responses, codes, conventions and ideology - this is the self that becomes the object of analysis for deconstruction. On the other hand, the relativity manifest in the relations of the individuating self reflects a mutual accommodation - world and self, other and self, are changed *reciprocally*. In the very next instant, though, such transactions can be objectified by a shift into the discursive, the dynamic *process* resolving to empowered self. The discursive posits the self as a construct; identification is

⁴ See *Phenomenology of Spirit*, pp.111-119.

the characteristic relational mode of the undifferentiated self; imagination, facilitates the individuating self.

Competitive discourses that would claim exclusive insight into the nature of the self from, say, the perspectives of deconstruction and phenomenology, are simply at cross purposes. In the course of an hour we move through radically exclusive experiences of self as seamlessly as we move from identification to imagination.

It is the *possibility* of liberation through commitment to the imagination that seems to emerge in the final part of T.S. Eliot's 'The Waste Land'. In the context of individuation, the intellect *inevitably* fails us, for it posits the essential self - a prison:

We think of the key, each in his prison
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison.⁵

On the other hand, commitment to the moral imagination is implicit in the Sanskrit prescriptions: 'give', 'sympathise', 'control'.

Generally, in *The Birthday Party*, identity is maintained and sustained through fantasy - in Ibsen's terms, Meg and Stanley are constituted round *saving lies* in a sort of symbiotic equilibrium. Stanley and Goldberg, particularly, are struggling to complete *pictures* of themselves in the medium of fantasy. There is a spontaneous, fundamental - indeed, perhaps *the* fundamental - function of the imagination at work here, clearly bound in to the search for identity - Stanley the piano player, whose father *nearly* came to hear him; Goldberg, whose obsession is to supersede an identity that perpetually proclaims itself in the attempted denial.

The urgency of the imagination to complete pictures was clearly manifest in the dream that Freud recounted regarding the response to the alarm clock. A similar process is at work in Meg's garbled version of the concert fantasy. Every sentence that she utters contains a cue picked up from Stanley and 'rationalised' in her own terms. The motive of her fantasy is to project to Goldberg a sort of appropriative, motherly pride regarding Stanley.

⁵ T.S. Eliot, *Selected Poems*, op. cit., p.67.

Generally, it seems to be the case that the more fragile the lie the more aggressively it is projected. Like Pozzo's in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Goldberg's identity is constituted round a polarity of brutality and sentimentality. The common impulse that is thus bifurcated is the need for control, to transform reality into his own terms. The dysfunctional, disintegrative effects of the vitiated imagination - fantasy - are clearly displayed.

The effect of the systematic ambiguity in the play regarding origins and motives is to *universalise* the predicaments it displays. There is, therefore, a clarity of focus, an uncompromising lucidity in its analyses.

Only the enigmatic Petey achieves insight. He provides a dramatic focus for the dismay and anxiety that the audience urgently needs to express. The play's circularity relentlessly confounds such a release. Meg will, no doubt, happily circumscribe Stanley's departure in another accommodating fantasy. She has learned nothing.

We become caricatures of ourselves in so far as we succumb to the dysfunctional allure of fantasy. Commitment to the moral life - in effect, to imagining in the context of mutual self-consciousness - is just as surely a commitment to completing pictures, but pictures - inscapes - with bridging, cognitive links to the world and others. The bridging underwrites *mutual* growth.

That individuation is not a once for all achieved identity is reflected in the depiction of Edward Waverley. He is pushed into *imagining*, arriving at a mediation between world and self, thereby achieving insight into how he has been manipulated by both persons and the force of circumstance. This imaginative transaction is *implicit* in the text and is not brought to focus by Scott though he is very clear about the circumscribing ideological issues. How Edward's imaginative life will be sustained, is not addressed by Scott. That he has arrived at himself but once in his lifetime and will subsequently subside into the static identity of a country gentleman seems his inevitable fate. The flirtation with heroic values is resolved in the settled life.

Edward's is the solid identity of the fulfilled desire. Like Chaucer's Franklin such fulfilment is identified with felicity. Outwith the dialectic of self-consciousness the subject becomes object within an *apparently* limitless consolidating paradigm. Waverley will

become the real child of a marriage that will constitute a magic circle whose domain is coextensive with his distinctive social enclave.

Heroic identity - typified in the Homeric heroes - is only sustainable through identification within an unselfconscious - that is, a *limitless* - paradigm. It is an exclusively *retrospective* phenomenon. In fact, training for battle involves the systematic objectification of self and enemy - the aim is to eliminate the personal. John Keegan observes of the aim of officer training:

That aim [...] is to reduce the conduct of war to a set of rules and a system of procedures - and thereby to make orderly and rational what is essentially chaotic and instinctive.⁶

Such an education serves to block imaginative transactions - with their implications for mutual recognition - so that it is associated with deliberately reductive concepts:

For by teaching the young officer to organize his intake of sensations, to reduce the events of combat to as few and as easily recognizable a set of elements as possible, to categorize under manageable headings the noise, blast, passage of missiles and confusion of human movement which will assail him on the battlefield, so that they can be described - to his men, to his superiors, to himself - as 'incoming fire', 'outgoing fire', 'airstrike', 'company-strength attack', one is helping him to avert the onset of fear or, worse, of panic and to perceive a face of battle which, if not familiar, and certainly not friendly, need not, in the event, prove wholly petrifying.' (p.20)

Keegan describes the results of an American study during the Second World War which challenged the assumption that the outcome of battle is determined by the skill of commanders:

[...] ordinary soldiers do not think of themselves, in life-and-death situations, as subordinate members of whatever formal military organization. [...] but as equals within a very tiny group - perhaps no more than six or seven men [...]. But it will not be because of his or anyone else's leadership that the group members will begin to fight and continue to fight. It will be, on the one hand, for personal survival, which individuals will recognize to be bound up with group survival, and, on the other, for fear of incurring by cowardly conduct the group's contempt. (p.51)

Fundamentally everything depends upon the individual soldier's 'motivation to combat'. (p.52)

⁶ John Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, repr. 1987 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), p.18.

Herein lies the role of the mythic with its leavening of heroic values. It is the function of such art to draw the reader into identification - such identification constitutes its whole scope and success. In Shakespeare's *Henry V* the process of evolution from reality to myth is clearly displayed. The truth is articulated by the common soldier, Williams:

[...] when all those legs, and arms, and heads, chopped off in a battle, shall join together at the latter day, and cry all - We died at such a place; some, swearing; some, crying for a surgeon; some, upon their wives left poor behind them [...] I am afeared there are few die well that die in a battle.⁷

The myth in the making is represented in the heroic rhetoric of the King:

He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian [...].
Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember, with advantages,
What feats he did that day. (IV.3.41)

The Anglo Saxon fragment, *The Battle of Maldon*, recording an encounter in 991, serves as a paradigm case for the heroic 'battle piece' where the issues are clearly drawn in so far as a military fiasco is transfigured into a moral victory. The heroes become icons for posterity.

Such heroic fiction shares with fantasy the empowering of the self through denial. The heroic involves the ultimate objectification of the other in death and, thereby, the most securely 'objective' self is posited. The joy in the fulfilled wish accompanies the momentarily complete appropriation of reality by the subject and, at that moment, the subject is never more fully himself. Pushed into consciousness such knowing becomes satanic. This is clearly illustrated in Dr Jekyll's account of Hyde's pleasure in the murder of Sir Danvers Carew:

Instantly the spirit of hell awoke in me and raged. With a transport of glee, I mauled the unresisting body, tasting delight from every blow [...]. I [...] fled from the scene of these excesses, at once glorying and trembling [...] my love of life screwed to the topmost peg.⁸

Jekyll's is the consciousness brought to Hyde's gratification. Without such consciousness, the objectified self, on cool reflection - removed from any possibility of the affirming

⁷ William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, ed. by J.H. Walter (Oxford: Heinemann, 1967), IV.1.128.

⁸ R.L. Stevenson, *The Complete Short Stories*, op. cit., p.158.

reciprocity of revealed value in mutual self-consciousness - finds value only in itself as an object for others:

I do not believe
earthly estate is everlasting [...]
Wherefore, for earl whosoever, it is afterward,
the praise of livers-on, that, lasting, is best:
won in the world before wayfaring,
forged, framed here, in the face of enmity,
in the Devil's spite: deeds, achievements.
That after-speakers should respect the name.⁹

The seductive power of such a naive mode of self-validation is reflected in the enthralling power of the epic and, in our own more modest times, in the popularity of the classic western.

By contrast, the self posited in imagining is intrinsically dynamic - it creates, and operates within, spaces made variable in the open transaction with others, for whom, in such unsustainable moments of encounter, we experience reverence. We move from a Newtonian universe to a mutually interactive space.

Issues regarding static and dynamic identity are explored by Henry James in *The Portrait of a Lady*. Isabel Archer is depicted as in search of an identity but the combination of her romantic sensibility - that sets a supreme value on her freedom - and her naive impulse to construct herself in terms of how she would wish to appear for others, proves to be a contradiction that leads to a false choice. She is attracted by Madame Merle who seems to project precisely what she lacks - the achieved identity:

She had become aware more than before of the advantage of being like that - of having made one's self a firm surface, a sort of corselet of silver.¹⁰

Ironically, but rightly, she has rejected in Lord Warburton and Caspar Goodwood precisely the promise of the achieved identity of which she is in pursuit. They offer little or nothing to the imagination. She sees in the aestheticism of Madame Merle and Osmond an arcane

⁹ Anon., 'The Seafarer', in *The Earliest English Poems*, trans. by Michael Alexander, 2nd edn. 1977 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1966), p.76.

¹⁰ Henry James, *The Portrait of a Lady*, ed. by Geoffrey Moore, 1986 (London: Penguin, 1963), p.452.

knowledge, a mode of power that in her vulnerability she finds compelling. She is, however, aware of a fault in Madame Merle:

She was [...] too perfectly the social animal [...]. Isabel found it difficult to think of her in any detachment or privacy, she existed only in her relations, direct or indirect, with her fellow mortals. One might wonder what commerce she could possibly hold with her own spirit. (p.244)

Nevertheless, Isabel becomes vulnerable to the attentions of Gilbert Osmond who, like Pinter's Goldberg, is committed to reconstruction, in this case of Isabel as an artefact for his collection. He provides precisely what she sees herself as lacking. He is her lord and she is an accomplice in his role for her:

Isabel waited, with a certain unuttered contentedness, to have her movements directed; she liked Mr Osmond's talk, his company. (p.310)

She compensates in fantasy for what she cannot find:

This would have been rather a dry account of Mr Osmond's career if Isabel had fully believed it; but her imagination supplied the human element which she was sure had not been wanting. (p.316)

The 'human element' had been precisely available in Ralph Touchett but, cruelly, although he is associated with the 'exclusively personal', (p.388) as an invalid, he will not allow himself to pursue his love for her.

Isabel's passage to herself will come to depend upon her moral imagination. This is anticipated in her moving insight into Madame Merle's situation:

'Ah, poor, poor woman!' cried Isabel, who herewith burst into tears. (p.590)

Isabel eschews the possibility of freedom from a cruel marriage to return to Gilbert Osmond and fulfil her promise to Pansy, whom she has discovered to be the illegitimate daughter of Madame Merle and Osmond.

In the context of her romantic impulse - a mode of fantasy that presupposes an absence of imaginative relation - Isabel embarks upon the self-conscious construction of an ego that draws her into identification with the power - in Hegel's terms - of her lord. This characteristic polarisation - of fantasy and a false self sustained by power - is ultimately

resolved through imaginative transactions that have the reciprocal felicity of establishing an authentic self. The bondsman comes to know herself.

In Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* the process of imagining is represented, amongst other ways, but very distinctively, in the role of the artist, Lily Briscoe, and in the individuation of James Ramsay. It is with the experience of James, aged six, that the novel begins.

As in the stories concerning childhood in *Dubliners*, Woolf has to tackle the difficulty of rendering the child's experience at the same time as offering interpretation. The opening paragraphs invite strong identification with James' Oedipal fantasies:

Had there been an axe handy, a poker, or any weapon that would have gashed a hole in his father's breast and killed him, there and then, James would have seized it. Such were the extremes of emotion that Mr Ramsay excited in his children's breasts by his mere presence; standing, as now, lean as a knife, narrow as the blade of one.¹¹

The knife, the blade, later the scimitar, the tower will be exploited as typical Freudian symbols - and in this case they have *become* symbols through their association with Freudian ideology. The prescriptions that posit these as symbols originate in the ideology so that their expressive potential as metaphor is compromised. The Hogarth Press, in which Virginia Woolf and her husband were involved, was the first to publish the work of Freud translated into English.

The issue of going *to the lighthouse* is used to differentiate clearly between the father's characteristic relational mode - reason - and the mother's - identification. In her case, identification evolves through imagination to insight. The fantasy that he will go to the lighthouse is clearly empowering for the little boy. His characteristic imaginative mode is implicit in the transactions engaged by his mother in reading him a fairy story - 'The Fisherman and his Wife.' (p.49) Cognitive intrusion is effected through the father - a philosopher, Mr Ramsay - who would make of life itself a grim, cautionary tale, driven as he is by his sense of failure: such intense projection of the rational and the didactic prescribe that his relation with the child will be dysfunctional. In competition with the child's empowering fantasy is heroic *failure* - reflected, for example, in Ramsay's obsessive

¹¹ Virginia Woolf, *To The Lighthouse* (London: Triad Grafton, 1977), p.10.

renderings of 'The Charge of the Light Brigade'. The poem, too, strives to empower through its *reversal* of values. As in, say, *The Battle of Maldon*, actual defeat is transformed into moral victory.

Ramsay's work seems to have its origins in the Idealist tradition of Berkeley and Bradley:

Whenever she 'thought of his work' she always saw clearly before her a large kitchen table. It was Andrew's doing. She asked him what his father's books were about. 'Subject and object and the nature of reality,' Andrew had said. And when she said Heavens, she had no notion what that meant. 'Think of the kitchen table then,' he told her, 'when you're not there'. (p.29)

The philosophical ideology is symptomatic. It is the dissociation in the subject/object split that necessitates resort to the reversal of values in *fantasy* for no value can be spontaneously found in the context of such an epistemological disposition - except in a sort of aestheticism. What is intolerable - his failure - he seeks to assuage through fantasy, for Ramsay has no immediately available imaginative resources through which to mediate with reality: they are blocked by his ideological commitment. On the other hand, he pushes the child, and everyone else, towards the reality that he cannot face, thereby, enjoying the exercise of power. Shakespeare gives the enjoyment of power in the failed rationalist a demonic twist in depicting Iago.

The transactions of imagination, on the other hand, are beautifully represented in the experience of William Bankes and Lily Briscoe:

So off they strolled [...] to that break in the thick hedge, guarded by red-hot pokers like brasiers of burning coal, between which the blue waters of the bay looked bluer than ever.

They came there regularly every evening drawn by some need. It was as if the water floated off and set sailing thoughts which had grown stagnant on dry land, and gave to their bodies even some sort of physical relief. First, the pulse of colour flooded the bay with blue, and the heart expanded with it and the body swam, only the next instant to be checked and chilled by the prickly blackness on the ruffled waves.

They both smiled, standing there. They both felt a common hilarity, excited by the moving waves. (pp.26-27)

The experience involves crossing a threshold - the break in the hedge. Their fantasies are 'set sailing' to be structured through contact with the seascape: crucial to this mediation is the transcending of dissociation represented here in the tactful imagery of the '*pulse* of

colour' - in the bay - and the *'heart'* that 'expanded with it.' In this way object and subject are synthesised through the extended metaphor - Berkeley's dissociation is resolved. The picture is concluded by the emergence of a frame and self-consciousness:

[...] after this swift movement, both of them looked at the dunes far away, and instead of merriment felt come over them some sadness - because the thing was completed partly, and partly because distant views seem to outlast by a million years [...] the gazer. (p.27)

In this Keatsian moment they are shifted into time and subjectivity. Idealism and imagination are not in absolute confrontation - though at any given moment it is a case of either/or.

Although capable of such transactions with landscape, William is uninitiated into the painterly concerns of Lily. Woolf uses him as a sympathetic, intelligent observer in order to clarify Lily's more sophisticated vision - the mode, though, in which this vision is represented is frequently discursive:

It was Mrs Ramsay reading to James, she said. She knew his objection - that no one could tell it for a human shape. But she had made no attempt at likeness [...] in that corner, it was bright, here, in this, she felt the need of darkness. Simple, obvious, commonplace as it was, Mr Bankes was interested. (p.60)

William's own limits are gently satirised. He expects images, rich with association, with which he can comfortably identify. His satisfaction is sanctioned by market value:

He took it scientifically in complete good faith. The truth was that all his prejudices were on the other side, he explained. The largest picture in his drawing room, which painters had praised, and valued at a higher price than he had given for it, was of the cherry trees in blossom on the banks of the Kennet. He spent his honeymoon on the banks of the Kennet, he said. (p.60)

Lily is moved to clarify her vision:

The question being one of the relations of masses, of lights and shadows, which, to be honest, he had never considered before, he would like to have it explained [...]. She looked. She could not show him what she wished to make of it, could not see it even herself, without a brush in her hand. She took up once more her old painting position with the dim eyes and the absent-minded manner, subduing all her impressions as a woman to something much more general; becoming once more under the power of that vision which she had seen clearly once and must now grope for among hedges and houses and mothers and children - her picture. (pp.60-61)

Generally, the writing is deeply considered, cerebral. The dominance of the cognitive is reflected in the elaborate subtext of symbolism that frequently underpins events. It follows, and is characteristic, that Woolf's grip of the material is often uncomfortably tight. There is a sense of paradox in that her intention and her method are conceptually at odds.

A gulf of ten years separates the beginning and the end of the novel. Sitting in a boat which he is steering to the lighthouse, James, as a young man, is brought to review his relationship with his father. He struggles towards insight:

He had always kept this old symbol of taking a knife and striking his father to the heart. Only now, as he grew older, and sat staring at his father in an impotent rage, it was not him, that old man reading, whom he wanted to kill, but it was the thing that descended on him. (p.198)

Now James is able to differentiate between his father and his father's 'despotism'. James's individuation is bound up in imaginative apprehension that resolves itself into the cognitive:

Yes, thought James [...] there was a waste of snow and rock very lonely and austere; and there he had come to feel, quite often lately, when his father said something which surprised the others, were two pairs of footprints only; his own and his father's. They alone knew each other. (p.199)

In this moment of imagining James sees his father in himself. The recounting of this experience is entirely persuasive as it stands but Woolf insists upon underlining the issues in Freudian symbolism:

[...] he sought an image to cool and detach and round off his feeling in a concrete shape. Suppose then that as a child sitting in a perambulator, or on someone's knee, he had seen a wagon crush ignorantly and innocently, someone's foot? Suppose he had seen the foot first, in the grass, smooth, and whole; then the wheel; and the same foot, purple, crushed. But the wheel was innocent [...]. But whose foot was he thinking of, and in what garden did all this happen? (pp.199-200)

In the identification with Oedipus - the wounded foot - James absolves his father in the recognition of a deterministic prescription. The child had been in the thrall of the myth. The expressive charge of the imagery is compromised by recognition of the ideology. Children sometimes outline their figures in black crayon - if the figures are adequately realised the outline is redundant; if it is necessary, the figures are not sufficiently imagined.

The idea that young readers are affected subliminally by such devices seems to me to be unpersuasive. As with all such token symbolism in the novel, they either see it or they don't.

A danger if they *do* is that they are caught in a rather frenetic urge to rationalise what they lack the tact to limit. In other words, they experience it as an easy path to understanding so that they are tempted from engaging the subtleties of imagining.

There is, then, a tension, between a dominant theme of the novel - reason and imagination - and the devices of symbolism which tend to push the imagination into the abstractive cognitive; but the thematic issue is effectively resolved in the depiction of the imaginative life of Lily Briscoe.

Lily had abandoned her original painting ten years before but now she is moved to begin again. There is a striking association with Proust's *Time Regained* in so far as the imagining is simultaneously the understanding of the past, the evolving of an artefact and the generation of meaning that empowers a self.

It may be that Woolf conceived Lily's struggle for expression in terms of Cézanne:

[...] the problem of space remained [...]. It glared at her. The whole mass of the picture was poised upon that weight. Beautiful and bright it should be on the surface, feathery and evanescent, one colour melting into another like the colours on a butterfly's wing; but beneath the fabric must be clamped together with bolts of iron [...]. And she began to lay on a red, a grey, and she began to model her way into the hollow there. (p.185)

These, clearly, were also the painterly preoccupations of Cézanne. Indeed, the final stroke of Lily's painting is a central line:

[...] with a sudden intensity, as if she saw it clear for a second, she drew a line there, in the centre. It was done; it was finished. Yes, she thought, laying down her brush in extreme fatigue, I have had my vision. (p.224)

Such a line is a distinctive characteristic of a number of Cézanne's later works including: *La Montagne Sainte-Victoire*, *The Great Pine* and *The Big Trees*.¹²

The central stroke - the achievement of the balanced picture, the accommodation represented in the stone tower of the lighthouse and the light, male and female, reason and imagination - constitute the resolution of the pictorial quest and time regained.

It is important for Woolf's purposes that Lily should not be represented as an artist of genius. Though her struggles involve a sort of heroic integrity, Lily fully realises that her

¹² Venturi 452, 669 and 760.

painting is probably destined to be rolled up and shoved in an attic. It is the act of imagining that is all important.

There is, though, another mode of symbolism represented in the novel. Mrs Ramsay's 'composition' is achieved at the dinner table. She is drawn from her depression - as others are drawn from their different moods and dispositions - just at the moment when the event seems about to disintegrate: 'something was lacking.' Her *coup de théâtre* is to light the candles:

Now eight candles were stood down the table, and after the first stoop the flames stood upright and drew with them into visibility the long table entire, and in the middle a yellow and purple dish of fruit. (p.105)

An important effect of the light is to compose the picture round a central motif:

[...] Rose's arrangement of the grapes and pears, of the horny pink-lined shell, of the bananas, made her think of a trophy fetched from the bottom of the sea, of Neptune's banquet, of the bunch that hangs with vine leaves over the shoulder of Bacchus (in some picture), among the leopard skins and the torches lolloping red and gold ... Thus brought up suddenly into the light it seemed possessed of great size and depth, was like a world in which one could take one's staff and climb up hills, she thought, and go down into valleys, and to her pleasure [...] she saw that Augustus too feasted his eyes on the same plate of fruit. (p.105)

The inclusion of the gods indicates the numinous nature of the experience.

Such invocation is represented, for example, in *Paradise Lost* where Milton presents his exquisite, sensuous depiction of the garden, 'blissful Paradise/Of God':

Another side, umbrageous Grotts and Caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling Vine
Lays forth her purple Grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant [...].
The Birds their choir apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while Universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance
Led on th' Eternal Spring.¹³

It could be argued that the appearance of Pan is *merely* symbolic. But both Bacchus - Woolf - and Pan are associated with *ekstasis*; they signify that thresholds have been crossed into heightened states of awareness.

¹³ John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. by Christopher Ricks (London: Penguin, 1989), IV. 257.

The characteristic problem of such writing is that, whereas it can *point* to, it cannot *underwrite* the passage to the numinous. Of course, the mediation associated with *imagination* cannot, of its nature, be guaranteed; but it is made available through *sensation*. On the other hand, the passage to the numinous so energises the imagining that the writer is moved to indicate the special nature of the experience by using signposts of token symbolism or allegory. The price to be paid for such a resort is that given cultural change, the signposts lose their efficacy. It is for this reason that, to the inexperienced eye, some of the landscapes of Poussin seem remote when mediated through the iconography of pastoral and classical convention; but with a glimpse of the *charge* of the icons their coolness resolves into passionately realised vision.

Cézanne was making his way towards just such expressions of the numinous but without resort to mythology and in purely painterly terms, for example, in *La Montagne Sainte-Victoire* (Venturi 1529):

I am working doggedly, for I see the promised land before me [...]. Shall I be like the great Hebrew leader or shall I be able to enter? [...] I have made some progress. Why so late and with such difficulty? Is art really a priesthood that demands the pure in heart who must belong to it entirely?¹⁴

It is characteristic of the numinous to flood the symbol and its context with value - indeed, perhaps the numinous *is* the experience of *unconditional* value whether of persons or objects. Subsequently, the empowered self, characteristically, invokes the sanction of the Divine for its contextual ideology. This is strikingly illustrated in, say, the Pentateuch.

Mrs Ramsay's deepest sense of herself comes from such moments:

There it was, all round them. It partook [...] of eternity; as she had already felt about something different once before that afternoon; there is a coherence in things, a stability; something, she meant, is immune from change, and it shines out [...] in the face of the flowing, the fleeting, the spectral, like a ruby.¹⁵

But her vision decays. Her daughter, Rose, reaches out to take a pear 'and spoils the whole thing.' Subsequently,

¹⁴ Richard Verdi, *Cézanne and Poussin*, op. cit., p.193.

¹⁵ *To the Lighthouse*, p.113.

With her foot on the threshold she waited a moment longer in a scene which was vanishing even as she looked, and then, as she moved and took Minta's arm and left the room, it changed, it shaped itself differently; it had become, she knew, giving one last look at it over her shoulder, already the past. (p.120)

Earlier, Lily and William Bankes had crossed a 'threshold' *into* the landscape; now Mrs Ramsay passes *from* the numinous into quotidian time.

In the second section of the book the narrator seems to effect a nihilistic demolition of the significance of such moments:

At that season those who had gone down to pace the beach and ask of the sea and sky what message they reported or what vision they affirmed had to consider among the usual tokens of divine bounty - the sunset on the sea, the pallor of dawn, the moon rising [...] something out of harmony with this jocundity, this serenity.

[...] Did Nature supplement what man advanced? Did she complete what he began? With equal complacence she saw his misery, condoned his meanness, and acquiesced in his torture. That dream, then, of sharing, completing, finding in solitude on the beach an answer, was but a reflection in a mirror, and the mirror itself was but the glassiness which forms in quiescence when the nobler powers sleep beneath? Impatient, despairing yet loth to go [...] to pace the beach was impossible; contemplation was unendurable; the mirror was broken. (p.146)

Here the Romantic tradition of Coleridge and Wordsworth seems to be finally washed up. In this moment of despair, all is subjectivity. On the other hand, it is precisely vision that is won in the painting of Lily Briscoe. Loss of transcendence is replaced by the possibility of individuation through imagination. Indeed, it may be that it is precisely the *loss* that makes such individuation possible. Woolf can no longer subscribe to any empowered ideological stance - everything is invested in imagining itself. Behind the novel is the vertigo of a terrible freedom.

In the very culture whose self-consciousness leads to nihilism there emerges a countering self-consciousness that identifies us as makers of our own meaning - indeed, the one is the very condition for the emergence of the other.

Chapter Seven

Nature and Imagination

Did the Romantic Imagination mark a retreat into subjectivity or did it, indeed, effect a synthesis of matter and spirit? Is it possible to distinguish the Romantic concept from the workings of imagination itself? What seems to distinguish Wordsworth's writing is the clarity of his observations of nature and its topographical accuracy. On the other hand, he is emphatic that certain imaginative transactions involve not only a shaping power in the observing eye but power disclosed in nature itself. His poetry would seem, then, to reflect an awareness of double prescription but his rationalisations of the phenomenon resort to metaphysics. Paradoxically, Wordsworth is at the height of his powers in lamenting the passing away of his imaginative capacity - his account of such experience is, characteristically, retrospective. Romantic symbolism seems to presuppose double prescription but within the context of a strong sense of the purposive. It follows that when the imaginative capacity is lost, so too is access to the numinous. What may be the natural history of every imagination becomes taken up in a myth of inevitable decline.

Virginia Woolf's despairing questions suggest that the Romantic concept of imagination may have represented Nature as a mirror so that it would reflect our emotional needs, thence sacrificing the 'nobler powers' - exemplified, presumably, in that heroic reason characteristic of the uncompromising Mr Ramsay. In other words, from this perspective the Romantic imagination must be subsumed under identification. Nature has been imbued with our religious longings, has been supposed to reflect, sustain and, indeed, generate our moral values and, thereby, be a fertile resource in the search for meaning and individuation - such a concept has the characteristics of a subtle, highly wrought empowering fantasy.

On the other hand, clearly, in *The Prelude* it was a priority for Wordsworth to represent the possibility of imaginative *synthesis*, to convey that in some way matter and spirit are interfused and that, in certain exalted states of consciousness, this is a matter of experience. Indeed, as a youngster, long before such experience and its rationalisation are recounted in, say, 'Tintern Abbey' or *The Prelude*, Wordsworth recalls:

I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all I saw as something not apart from but inherent in my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recollect myself from the abyss of idealism.¹

¹ Mary Warnock, *Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), p.103. (From the 'Fenwick Notes', 1843, originally dictated to Isabella Fenwick.)

This, at first sight, suggests an identification so complete as to subvert the ego. Such material is, perhaps, the source of popular claims that, 'Wordsworth's view of nature was revolutionary [...] he conceived of nature as herself endowed with life and powers beyond the human scale.'²

In challenging the view that the Romantics were, indeed, revolutionary, James Engell observes that as early as 1704, in his *New Essays Concerning Human Understanding*, Leibniz envisages, 'an organic view of nature and argues for the presence of a force in nature and in the mind, *la puissance active*, or *vis activa* that can be seen as a full-fledged concept of imagination.' He suggests that,

By the later years of the eighteenth century, a penetrating, articulate philosophy of the imagination existed [...]. Romanticism grew round the imagination in the manner that a storm masses round a vortex.³

As an idea, the Romantic Imagination seems to have *preceded* its expression in art.

It is interesting that Maurice Bowra argues that the Romantic imagination was, broadly, developed in *reaction* to 'mechanistic explanation' - as exemplified in Locke and Newton - for

[...] the great machine of the world implies a mechanic. But this was not at all what the Romantics demanded from religion. For them it was a question less of reason than of feeling, less of argument than of experience, and they complained that these mechanistic explanations were the denial of their innermost convictions.⁴

On the other hand, James Engell's well documented argument suggests that the search for imaginative synthesis - the imagination - was itself an Enlightenment project.

Arguably, *The Prelude* elaborates a concept of imagination which, in its broad particulars, was already extant. In any event, it is clear that the concept is not *systematically* explored; neither, indeed, is the poem reliable as biography, nor in its chronology: rather, its power lies in exemplification.

² *The Illustrated Wordsworth's Guide to the Lakes*, ed. by Peter Bicknell, 1992 (Devizes: Selecta Books, 1984), p.7.

³ James Engell, *The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), p.25

⁴ Sir Maurice Bowra, *The Romantic Imagination*, repr. 1964 (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), pp.2-3.

Wordsworth's antecedents are strong too, in terms of the fashion for visiting the Lake District and enjoying its scenery. Diverted by political unrest in Europe, those who would have made the Grand Tour settled upon the more remote regions of Britain to indulge sensibilities shaped by the work of Claude Lorrain, Salvator Rosa, and Poussin's brother-in-law, Gaspard Poussin. By 1778 the 'first and most popular guide' to the lakes had been written by Father Thomas West.⁵ By 1783 Peter Crosthwaite had issued a series of maps on the major lakes, 'on which he indicated West's *stations* in an attempt to assist the *Lakers* in their search for the Picturesque.' (p.5) and by 1793 tours were a matter of fashion rather than adventure. The Rev. James Plumptre wrote his satirical play *The Lakers* in 1797 thereby drawing to attention the self-conscious posturing that is indicative of the decadence of a fashion.

In their pursuit of the *picturesque* - defined by its inventor, William Gilpin, as 'that which would look well in a picture'⁶ - it became fashionable for tourists to carry a Claude Glass. Gilpin's *On Picturesque Travel* was published in 1792; however, there is an early Gainsborough pencil study of a man using such a glass, *circa* 1750-55. (*Guide*, p.13) He sits with his back to the view, presumably arranging the scene according to the tenets of a Lorrain landscape. (Fig.1 overleaf) In the manuscript of Gell's *A Tour In The Lakes* many of the sketches and water colours have oval frames - were they conceived in the Claude Glass or, at least, do they reflect a convention established by it?

In Gell's notebook there is a water colour of Buttermere in an oval frame. (p.31) It includes a boat with oars poised in mid stroke. It strikingly anticipates Turner's painting of Buttermere done in the following year.⁷ Turner even has a boat with oars in a similar position. Gell's landscape is mediated through the conventions of the picturesque; Turner's is charged with Romantic sublimity. (Fig.2, page 132)

⁵ William Gell, *A Tour in the Lakes Made in 1797*, ed. by Willim Rollinson (Newcastle: Frank Graham, 1968), p.5. (The original manuscript is in the Public Library, Barrow-in-Furness)

⁶ *Guide to the Lakes*, p.12.

⁷ J.M.W. Turner, *Buttermere Lake with part of Cromack, 1798*, from *Nature and Industrialization*, ed. by Alasdair Clayre, repr. 1985 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).



Figure 1. Thomas Gainsborough, *'Pencil Study'*

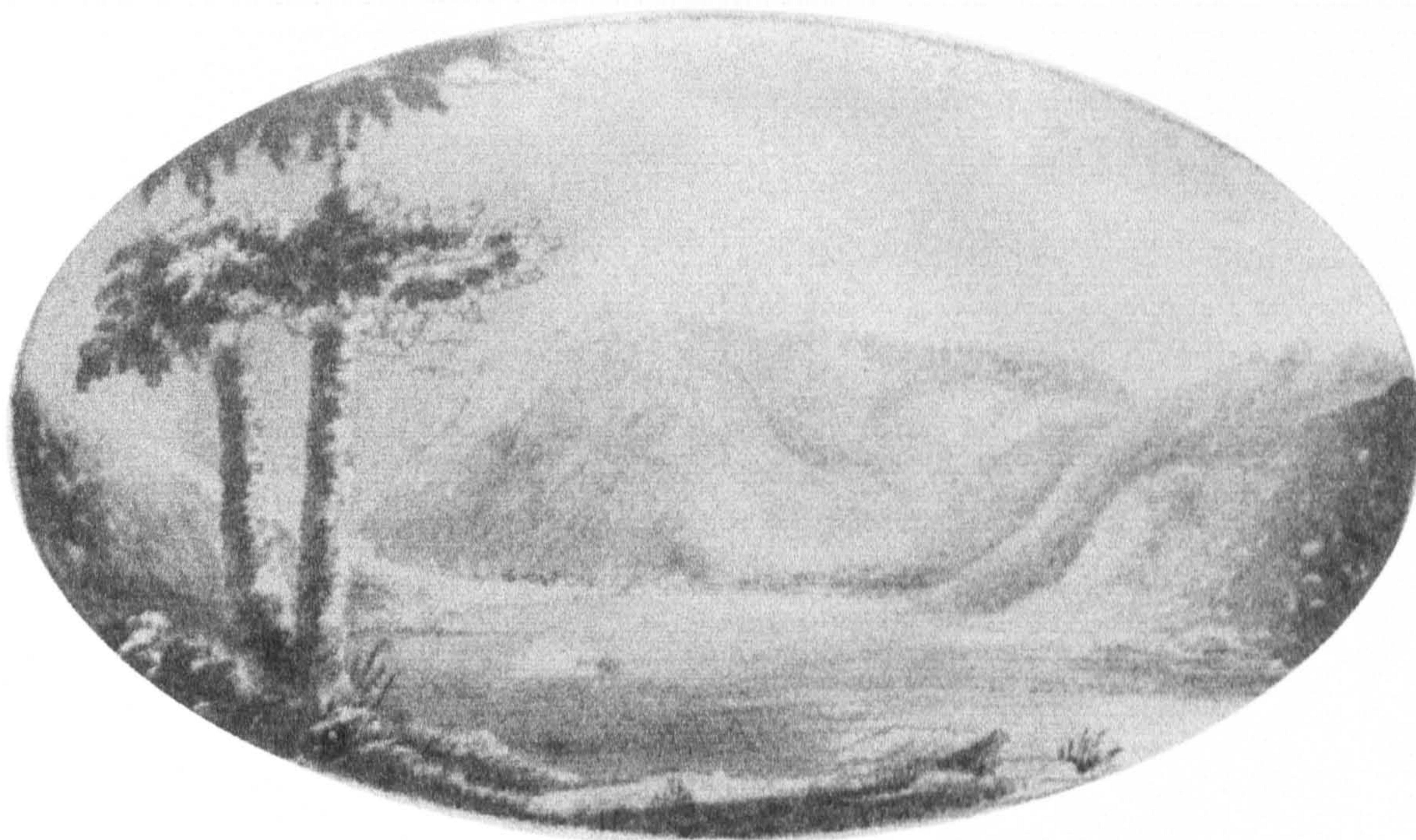


Figure 2a. William Gell, *'Buttermere and Fleetwith Pike'*

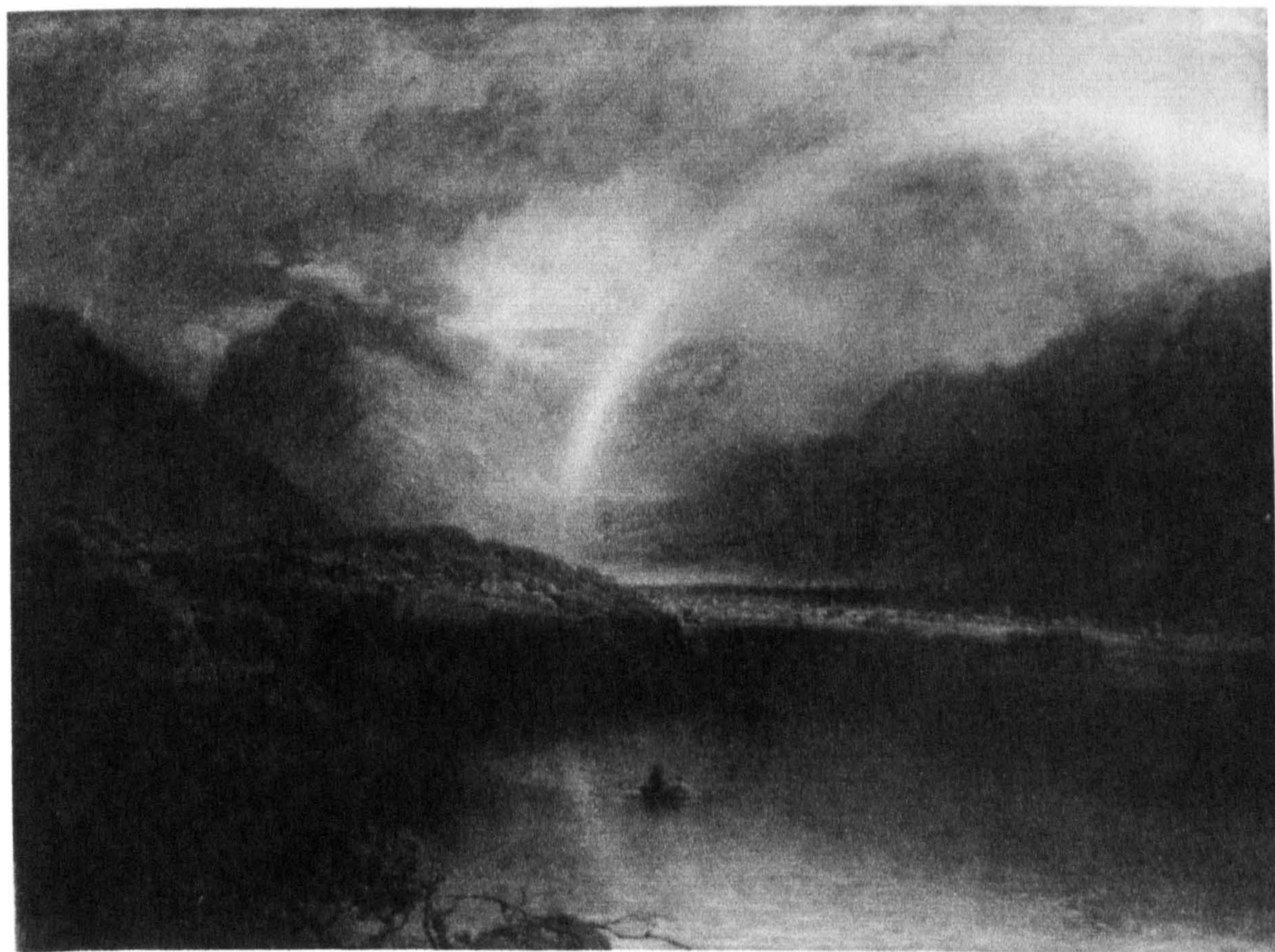


Figure 2b. J.M.W. Turner, *'Buttermere Lake with Part of Cromack'*

There is a delightful irony in enjoying the view by sitting with one's back to the landscape which renders the fashion faintly absurd - on the other hand, consider the contemporary popularity of the camera, where countless people with more or less skill *compose* - or at least, *select* - their own pictures. A similar imaginative impulse is reflected in television programmes and magazines concerned with garden design. The three phenomena strikingly illustrate that, however frail, there is a wide-spread, intuitive grasp of double prescription - the landscape itself is *found* to be expressive, or can be *made* expressive, within a carefully judged frame. Indeed, there is evidence to suppose that the transformation of nature to landscape had been in progress for centuries before the landscape painters got to work:

[...] the idea of parks as landscape [...] was not an invention of the eighteenth century [...]. The prototypes are the parks that surrounded Henry I's palace of Woodstock (Oxfordshire) and Henry III's palace of Clarendon (Wiltshire). Medieval parks, though usually distant from the owner's house, had their aspects of pleasure and romance. Did not the monks of Butley (Suffolk) in 1528 take the Queen of France for a 'picnic under the oaks with fun and games (*joco et ludo*)' in Staverton Park? From the later Middle Ages onwards it became common to re-site a mansion next to a park or *vice versa*.⁸

Wordsworth affected superiority to the conventions of the Picturesque:

[...] disliking here, and there
Liking, by rules of mimic art transferred
To things above all art.⁹

In the context of writing about the tyranny of the eye, he says of Mary Hutchison:

[...] I knew a maid,
Who, young as I was then, conversed with things
In higher style; from appetites like these
She, gentle visitant, as well she might,
Was wholly free, far less did critic rules
Or barren intermeddling subtleties
Perplex her mind. (XI.199.)

⁸ Oliver Rackman, *The History of the Countryside*, repr.1995 (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1986), pp.128-129.

⁹ William Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, from *William Wordsworth: The Prelude: A Parallel Text*, ed. by J.C. Maxwell, repr. 1986 (London: Penguin, 1971), XI.153. (Unless otherwise stated references are to the 1805 text)

There is, though, a possibility that the famous episode in *The Prelude* concerning the stolen boat (l.372-427) - where a lofty crag seems to rise in pursuit of the guilty boy - may have originated in Wordsworth's stealing the boat precisely in order to see a sight already familiar to connoisseurs of the picturesque. Grevel Lindop raises this intriguing possibility. He argues that it is a phenomenon associated with Stybarrow Crag and certainly, 'by 1824, the spectacle was a well rehearsed part of a local boatman's repertoire'.¹⁰ (*The Prelude* was not published until 1850, so that Wordsworth's account could hardly have established a fashion.) The spell of identification which Wordsworth conjures from the material of *The Prelude* is more literally the product of 'imagination' than is, perhaps, generally supposed.

On the other hand, what seems a significant distinction between Wordsworth and the Lakers was the range and intimacy of his knowledge of the Lake District and that is reflected in his taste in paintings and drawings:

He was well acquainted with the prints of Farington, Green and Westall, artists whose aim was to record the district with topographical accuracy; so their views show us the scene, not only as Wordsworth knew it, but presented in a way which was familiar to him.¹¹

Another aspect of the Picturesque which passes to Wordsworth is reflected in his fondness for the antique. He refers to 'Antiquity [...] as the co-partner and sister of Nature'. (*Guide*, p.118). This is manifest in a typical passage in *The Prelude*:

[...] a structure famed
Beyond its neighbourhood, the antique walls
Of that large abbey which within the Vale
Of Nightshade, to St Mary's honour built,
Stands yet a mouldering pile with fractured arch,
Belfry, and images, and living trees,
A holy scene! (II.108.)

Wordsworth's monumental, solitary figures - beggars, shepherds, druids, Old William - seem to complement such landscapes, become their focal figures. However, they can also be seen as transfigurations of an *already* decadent tradition. William Gell - his tour was in

¹⁰ Grevel Lindop, 'Finding the Stolen Boat', in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 4694 (1993), 14. See also Lindop's, *A Literary Guide to the Lake District* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1993), pp.317-318.

¹¹ *Guide to the Lakes*, p.27.

1797 - describes the activities of a Mr Pocklington, obviously striving to complete his 'picture':

A druid temple was the next thing to employ his genius and accordingly he collected a number of large stones, placed them in a circle, and had them fixed upright on the southern shore. Unfortunately for all the lovers of British antiquity a storm arose in the lake, and the waves washed down in one night the labours of some days. On the other side a venerable white-washed gothic building rears its august head, in all the pride of pasteboard antiquity [...]. The house is not very particular but a white embattled hermitage is situated on an eminence near it, where he has offered half a crown a day to anyone who will live in it, provided the wretch will submit to his conditions, which are these. The hermit is never to leave the place, or hold conversations with anyone for 7 years during which time he is neither to wash himself or cleanse himself in any way whatever, but is to let his hair and nails both on hands and feet, grow as long as nature permit them.¹²

What distinguishes Wordsworth can hardly be originality of thought or idea, nor the systematic development of these, nor is it the creation of a new sensibility: rather, it is the *intensity* with which he *imagined*.

In his discussion of the Romantic Imagination, Bowra identifies key aspects of the concept: 'imagination and insight are in fact inseparable and form for all practical purposes a single faculty.'¹³ This I would not wish to contest - it is reflected in double prescription. Furthermore, the imagination is distinctive because it does not deal, like science, in generalities but in 'individual presentations':

In them we see examples of what cannot be expressed directly in words and can be conveyed only by hint and suggestion. The powers which Wordsworth saw in nature [...] are so enormous that we begin to understand them only when they are manifested in single, concrete examples [...]. The essence of the Romantic imagination is that it fashions shapes which display these unseen forces at work, and there is no other way to display them, since they resist analysis and description and cannot be presented except in particular instances. (p.10)

The weakness of such a conception is its obscurantism, its resort to metaphysics. It may be possible to distinguish between the *idea* of the Romantic Imagination - the empowering myth - and imagination as it is *exemplified* in Wordsworth's art. Did Wordsworth effectively *render* the elements of his world and thereby engage that mediation between world and self that is constitutive of both illumination and individuation?

¹² William Gell, pp.15-16.

¹³ Bowra, p.7.

Predominantly, in *The Prelude* the mode in which he strives to effect this mediation is *discursive*. We are seduced into *identification* with the *voice*. Identification is re-charged from time to time with vividly realised experience - it is, after all, a kind of autobiography. But the characteristic mode and the strong retrospective sense also point to Wordsworth's secret theme - the attempt to rationalise the *loss* of the numinous. This, paradoxically, is disguised by his proclaimed theme of finding his vocation in the celebration and presentation of it.

The 'Two Part Prelude' and 'Tintern Abbey' record, remarkably, the numinous engaged not by direct experience but by the *memory* of it:

Though absent long,
These forms of beauty have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet [...].
Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime: that blessed mood
In which the burthen of the mystery [...]
Is lighted - that serene and blessed mood
In which the affections gently lead us on,
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body and become a living soul.¹⁴

The power of the poem is in its catching experience at the threshold of the cognitive but, whereas, in Hopkins - as in 'The Windhover' - the experience is frequently *realised*, in Wordsworth it is *reported*. The detailed description of the scene with which 'Tintern Abbey' begins primes the imagination - but its meaning and intensity are represented discursively. Not only will the significance of the scene be *recorded* in verse - it can be reconstituted *by proxy* in the projected experience of Dorothy. This is an emphatic confirmation of the logic and function of identification - the love of his sister is, effectively, used as a sanction for his own experience so that the emotional intensity is *indirect* rather than generated out of the experience itself.

¹⁴ William Wordsworth, 'Tintern Abbey', from *The Pedlar, Tintern Abbey, The Two-Part Prelude*, ed. by Jonathan Wordsworth (Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1985), 1.23.

'Tintern Abbey' was written in July 1798 and 'A Slumber Did my Spirit Seal' at the end of that year:

A slumber did my spirit seal;
I had no human fears:
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.¹⁵

A 'slumber' suggests a state from which one awakes. On the other hand, 'seal', seems shockingly arbitrary: lips are *sealed*, windows are *sealed up* - the voice and the eye are denied their characteristic role in facilitating *relation*. That the spirit had 'seemed' immortal now emerges as a delusion. In the abdication of spirit, self and world are contracted into that dualism that Romantic ideology heroically attempted to transcend:

No motion has she now, no force;
She neither hears nor sees;
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks, and stones, and trees. (p.136)

Although the poem makes no mention of Lucy, its inclusion by some editors within the group, *The Lucy Poems* - as, for example, by Carlos Baker¹⁶ - generates a teasing ambiguity of syntax. The emerging possibility is that 'she' refers to Lucy. Now Lucy - *light* - is dead. The spirit is associated with illumination - and that spirit is lost.

In April 1799, in a letter to Thomas Poole, Coleridge gives the poem the title 'Epitaph':

Some months ago Wordsworth transmitted me a most sublime epitaph. Whether it had any reality I cannot say. Most probably, in some gloomier moment he had fancied the moment in which his sister might die.¹⁷

The ambiguity of the poem is not resolved by this - rather, it is enhanced. In any event, the poem seems to indicate the possibility of a world conceived without the transfiguring power of spirit. This reflects a failure of the *imagination*, so that imagining the imagining - the characteristic *retrospective* mode - becomes the fundamental strategy in a rearguard action of the spirit and the substance of Wordsworth's vocation as a poet.

¹⁵ William Wordsworth, 'A Slumber Did my Spirit Seal' from *Wordsworth: Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. by John Butt (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p.136.

¹⁶ See Carlos Baker, ed., *William Wordsworth: The Prelude Selected Poems and Sonnets*, op.cit..

¹⁷ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'Letter', to Thomas Poole, April 1799, from *Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. by E.H. Coleridge (London: Heinemann, 1895), vol 1 p.284.

The *inevitability* of imaginative decline is prefigured in David Hartley's *Observations on Man* and is bound in to the Platonic myth in 'Intimations of Immortality' -

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting [...]
[...] trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home [...]
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy.¹⁸

What Wordsworth seemed to lose was his access to the numinous.

In his depiction of the chronology of the growth and decline of imagination he is perfectly clear that in his youth he used Nature to externalise his own emotions or, perhaps, to generate *pretexts* for emotion. In the absence of significant emotion aspiring young writers and painters often seek to generate what proves to be pseudo emotion - characteristically, a sort of pervasive and self-defining *Angst* that *stands for* experience. We experience this as sentimentality. This is a mode of imagination that serves to empower in the *absence* of power - a myth of the unformed self.

Wordsworth, in a beautifully tactful passage, identifies this stage of growth with the operation of Fancy:

But when that first poetic faculty
Of plain Imagination and severe
No longer a mute influence on the soul,
An element of the nature's inner self,
Began to have some promptings to put on
A visible shape, and to the works of art,
The notions and the images of books,
Did knowingly conform itself, by these
Enflamed, and proud of that her new delight,
There came among those shapes of human life
A wilfulness of fancy and conceit
Which gave them new importance to the mind:
And Nature and her objects beautified
These fictions, as in some sort, in their turn,
They burnished her [...]
 when the foxgloves, one by one,
Upwards through every stage of its tall stem,
Had shed its bells, and stood by the wayside
Dismantled, with a single one, perhaps

¹⁸ William Wordsworth, 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood', 1.58, from *Selected Poetry and Prose*, pp.181-182.

Left at the ladder's top, with which the plant
Appeared to stoop [...]

 behold!

If such a sight were seen, would Fancy bring
Some vagrant thither with her babe, and seat her
Upon the turf beneath the stately flower
Drooping in sympathy.¹⁹

Fancy is associated with the merely decorative, the sentimental, the picturesque.

By contrast, moments of vividly realised experiences of the numinous occur in the 'spots of time' episodes, the first of which appears after he has been writing about the power of 'custom' and the quotidian:

 In truth, this degradation - howso'er
 Induced, effect, in whatso'er degree,
 Of custom [...]
 Or [...] aggravated by the times,
 Which with their passionate sounds might often make
 The milder minstrelsies of rural scenes
 Inaudible - was transient; I had felt
 Too forcibly, too early in my life,
 Vistings of imaginative power
 For this to last. (IX.243)

The 'spots of time' are examples of just such *visitings* through which, 'our minds/Are nourished and invisibly repaired.' (XI.264) Unexpectedly, the experience first cited - 'A girl who bore a pitcher on her head' - is hardly celebratory:

 [...] I should need
 Colours and words that are unknown to man,
 To paint the visionary dreariness
 Which [...]
 Did at that time invest the naked pool,
 The beacon on the lonely eminence,
 The woman and her garments vexed and tossed
 By the strong wind. (XI.309)

We seem to be in the territory of what D.H. Lawrence called the experience of 'mystic reversion'²⁰ similar to what, perhaps, Mrs Moore experiences in the Marabar caves.²¹ It is through such memories that, for Wordsworth,

¹⁹ *Prelude*, VIII.511

²⁰ D.H. Lawrence, *Studies in Classic American Literature* (London: Heinemann, 1964), p.148.

²¹ See E.M. Forster, *A Passage to India*, op.cit., pp.158-161.

[...] the hiding places of my power
Seem open; I approach, and then they close;
I see by glimpses now; when age comes on,
May scarcely see at all, and I would give,
While yet we may, as far as words can give,
A substance and a life to what I feel:
I would enshrine the spirit of the past
For future restoration. (XI.336)

This is the pattern established in 'Tintern Abbey' and it leads directly to a re-dedication to his vocation. It is a thought that would be familiar to Proust.

In his discussion of the 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood', Lionel Trilling observes that the loss of the 'visionary gleam' did not result in Wordsworth losing his capacity to write - at least not immediately - for his greatest poems are concerned precisely with 'his near memories of the gleam'.²² The loss provides a new subject matter. The exploration of nature gives way to the consideration of *human* nature. It is a progression that Keats would come to see as the future of his art. Yet neither poet made a successful transition from the Romantic to the tragic vision.

The spontaneous memory seems a distinctively rich resource. What Proust finds is that past and present are linked by some *analogy*. That is to say, there is an internal relation between past and present.

[...] those rare occasions when the miracle of an analogy had made me escape from the present. And only this being had the power to perform that task which had always defeated the efforts of my memory and my intellect, the power to make me rediscover days that were long past, the Time that was Lost.²³

The pursuit of the analogy becomes the distinctive characteristic that distinguished Marcel's own writing from the discursive writing associated with deliberate recall - that paradigm case is represented in the 'unpublished Journal of the Goncourts'. (p.728) Marcel claims that he lacks the capacity to write in that manner: his own writing he comes to see will depend on spontaneous memory with its inherent internal relations, or 'essences'. (p.738) Here the *power* of the imagination is associated with the magical transcendence of *time*; in Wordsworth, characteristically, it is the landscape that is charged up in the dimension of

²² Lionel Trilling, *The Liberal Imagination* (London: Mercury Books, 1961), p.153.

²³ Marcel Proust, *Time Regained*, from *Remembrance of Things Past*, trans. by C.K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin, and by Andreas Mayor, repr. 1989 (London: Penguin, 1983), vol 3, p.904.

space. For Wordsworth there is spontaneity too - feelings of 'unremembered pleasure'. But the 'burden of the mystery' confirms that the world is no longer commensurate with his desire - the process of individuation contingent upon the acceptance of moral responsibility is engaged.

Though not an experience of mystic reversion, another *visiting* is associated with the death of his father. Ten days before, he had been out with his brothers:

[...] 'twas a day
Stormy, and rough, and wild, and on the grass
I sate half-sheltered by a naked wall;
Upon my right hand was a single sheep,
A whistling hawthorn on my left, and there,
With those companions at my side, I watched,
Straining my eyes intensely, as the mist
Gave intermitting prospect of the wood
And plain beneath.²⁴

As is typical with children the death is associated with guilt:

[...] I bowed low
To God, Who thus corrected my desires;
And, afterwards, the wind and sleety rain,
And all the business of the elements,
The single sheep, and the one blasted tree,
And the bleak music of that old stone wall,
The noise of wood and water, and the mist
Which on the line of each of those two roads
Advanced in such indisputable shapes;
All these were spectacles and sounds to which
I often would repair, and thence would drink,
As at a fountain. (XI.374)

In both cases Burke's criteria for sublimity seem to be deliberately met:

Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant with terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of the *sublime*.²⁵

Even some of the phrasing of 'Tintern Abbey' is prefigured in Burke:

The passion caused by the great and sublime in *nature*, when those causes operate most powerfully, is Astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror. (p.53)

²⁴ *The Prelude*, XI.356.

²⁵ Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry*, op. cit., p.36.

Wordsworth writes,

Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost *suspended*, we are laid asleep
In body and become a living soul ²⁶

It is interesting that the vocabulary of the sublime is already present in James Thomson's *Winter*, first published in 1726, three years before Burke was born:

Nature! great parent! whose directing hand
Rolls round the seasons of the changeful year,
How mighty! how majestick are thy works!
With what a pleasing *dread* they swell the soul,
That sees, *astonished!* and, *astonish'd sings!* ²⁷

As in the case of Brother Klaus, discussed by Jung, Wordsworth's 'primordial experience' is submitted to a 'dogmatic revision'.²⁸ Such experience both empowers and demands rationalisation within familiar categories – Wordsworth uses the concepts and ideology of the sublime. The need for structuring concepts is met in finding them in contemporary culture. That their efficacy is dependent upon *identification* with current ideology is eventually revealed through the passage of time.

In *The Two-Part Prelude* the 'Spots of Time' passages are complemented by an episode which celebrates the origins of our imaginative life in childhood, origins associated with the mother's love. On the other hand, in the 1805 *Prelude* the 'Infant Babe' passage follows discussion of,

[...] that false secondary power by which
In weakness, we create distinctions, then
Deem that our puny boundaries are things
Which we perceive, and not what we have made. (II.219)

We have been reminded that the poem is addressed, specifically, to Coleridge, 'my Friend'. (II.210) To him 'the unity of all has been revealed' (II.221). Perhaps Wordsworth had in mind, 'the one life within us and abroad' that Coleridge invoked in 'The Eolian

²⁶ 'Tintern Abbey'. 1.44 (My Italics)

²⁷ James Thomson, 'Winter: a Poem', from *The Poetry of Scotland*, ed. by Roderick Watson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), pp.258-259 (My italics).

²⁸ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion*, op. cit., p.321.

Harp'.²⁹ Against two of the great pillars of eighteenth century scientific methodology, classification and discursive reasoning, Wordsworth asserts a kind of learning and knowing that has its origins in the relationship between child and mother.

The child not only drinks in physical sustenance but, at the same time, his mother's love. Such feelings pass into the child, 'like an awakening breeze.' This is a characteristic Romantic image for creative inspiration. Thus empowered, the child effects what could reasonably be described as *imaginative apprehension*. His mind,

Is prompt and watchful, eager to combine
In one appearance, all the elements
And parts of the same object, else detached
And loth to coalesce. (II.247)

In the passage that follows Wordsworth further explores the origins of creativity:

Thus, day by day,
Subjected to the discipline of love,
His organs and recipient faculties
Are quickened, are more vigorous, his mind spreads,
Tenacious of the forms which it receives.
In one beloved Presence, nay and more,
In that most apprehensive habitude
And those sensations which have been derived
From this beloved Presence, there exists
A virtue which irradiates and exalts
All objects through all intercourse of sense.
No outcast he, bewildered and depressed:
Along his infant veins are interfused
The gravitation and the filial bond
Of nature that connect him with the world.
Emphatically such a being lives,
An inmate of this *active* universe;
[...] his mind,
Even as an agent of the one great Mind,
Creates, creator and receiver both,
Working but in alliance with the works
Which it beholds. (II.250)

Of the forms manifest in such apprehension the child's mind is 'tenacious'. The world is fascinating. A 'virtue', presumably derived from the love of the mother, 'irradiates and exalts' the objects. The language consistently emphasises the synthesis of subjective and

²⁹ Coleridge, 'The Aeolian Harp', from *Selected Poems of S.T. Coleridge*, op.cit., p.17.

objective factors. Objects within the world now come to constitute a 'gravitational and filial bond' and the child is 'creator and receiver both'.

What seems to be reflected here, in the exposition of the origins of creativity, are the transactions of double prescription that constitute the condition for imaginative synthesis. It lies at the heart of the intuition of the 'one life'.

There has been a characteristic misunderstanding that has arisen from approaching such experience in terms of dualistic categories - fact and value. It is interesting that Basil Willey accepts Wordsworth's own assessment of himself as attempting to 'animate the "real" world, the "universe of death"'.³⁰ However, Willey cannot escape from a dualistic epistemology that assumes the imagination merely projects 'modifying colours', that it effects an essentially subjective *supplement*:

The fact-world of modern scientific consciousness was the primary datum. In this 'inanimate cold world' 'objects, as objects, are essentially fixed and dead'. But just as a 'known and familiar landscape' may be transmuted by moonlight or 'accidents of light and shade,' so, owing to the bond between nature and the soul of man, this dead world may be brought to life by the modifying colours of the 'imagination.'³¹

In fact, such *transmutations* of landscape reflect the emergence of alternative *inscapes* - the formal properties of landscape are *defamiliarised* and *reconstituted* by changes of light. The process is analogous to the refiguration effected by metaphor. There are two characteristic sources of transfiguration: that initiated in nature - by, for example, changes of light - and that initiated through imagination. Talk of 'modifying *colours*' is misleading here and is an epistemic consequence of dualism and articulation in the discursive mode:

Fact and value were to be combined in the 'fine balance of truth in observing, with the imaginative faculty in modifying, the object observed.' But what sort of 'truth' may be claimed for the creation which world and mind 'with blended might accomplish'? [...] I suppose the answer would be, 'psychological' truth; that is to say, the poetry is faithfully expressive of certain states of consciousness' (p.91)

The resort to '*psychological* truth' simply evades the crucial point. Wordsworth is quite clear about the issues even if he cannot explain them conceptually:

³⁰ Basil Willey, 'Wordsworth and the Locke Tradition', from *English Romantic Poets: Modern Essays in Criticism*, ed. by M.H. Abrams, reprinted 1964 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p.86. (Quotation from *The Prelude*.)

³¹ Basil Willey, p.88 (Quotations from *Biographia Literaria*).

[...] an ennobling interchange
Of action from without and from within;
The excellence, pure function, and best power
Both of the object seen, and eye that sees.
(1850 *Prelude*, XII.375)

Here Wordsworth has changed the word order of the 1805 version - 'from within and from without' (XII.377) - in order to add emphasis by providing a parallel to the sequence 'object' and 'eye'.

What Wordsworth describes is, in effect, the process of double prescription. What begins in identification is subsequently resolved through an imaginative transaction that illuminates some aspect of the landscape. The disclosed inscape, a self-contained structure, is found to be expressive, charged up. Wordsworth stretches through time the elements of a spontaneous transaction. It is as if he contracts the 'natural history' of imagination into the child's experience in order to secure the services of the Platonic myth. Subsequently, he becomes the victim of the vitiation prefigured in Hartley's *Observations on Man*.

By its juxtaposition of episodes 'The Two-Part Prelude' suggests that the 'Spots of Time' are *explained* by imagination; whereas, in the 1805 version we are presented with the dualising threat of rationalism in order to emphasise the *importance* of imagination. Generally, Wordsworth - as we, in our own time - makes far too much fuss about what *threatens* imagination. Imagination is presupposed in intelligibility itself. Commonplace identification is its ground. It is the achievement of *balance* in the exercising of the modes of imagination that is important.

In one form or another, double prescription is represented again and again in Wordsworth. At one level, as Mary Warnock observes, it is reflected conceptually:

The words 'image', 'form', and even 'shape' and 'colour', as they appear in Wordsworth's poetry, all stand for the inner *and* the outer, the object *and* the idea of the object. [...] It becomes impossible [...] to separate the function of the eye from that of the mind in perception, nor can either be separated from the function of the reproductive imagination which forms and reforms images of what has been perceived for the mind to brood on.³²

³² Warnock, pp.115-116.

It is precisely Wordsworth's susceptibility to experiencing double prescription that is manifest in his sense of the *fusing* of inner and outer. His sensitivity to structure within the landscape is clearly exhibited in an intriguing passage in his *Guide to the Lakes* - he is reflecting on the effects of whitewashed cottages on the landscape:

How often do we see this exemplified upon a small scale by the native cottages, in cases where the glare of white-wash has been subdued by time and enriched by weather-stains! No harshness is then seen; but one of these cottages, thus coloured, will often form a central point to a landscape by which the whole shall be connected, and an influence of pleasure diffused over all the objects that compose the picture [...]. Mr. Gilpin [...] has also recorded the just remark of Mr. Locke, of N-, that white destroys the *gradations* of distance; and, therefore, an object of pure white can scarcely ever be managed with good effect in landscape-painting. Five or six white houses, scattered over a valley, by their obtrusiveness, dot the surface, and divide it into triangles or other mathematical figures haunting the eye, and disturbing that repose which might otherwise be perfect. (pp.120-126)

Here geometrical structures preempt the more subtle possibilities of inscape. Clearly, Wordsworth would have understood Cézanne's objectives and his careful, if not obsessive, selection of *motifs*. The prescriptive transactions of imagination are also presupposed in the sense of discovery, the extension of self, in the context of landscape:

[...] the presence of a lake is indispensable to exhibit in perfection the beauty of one of these days; and he must have experienced, while looking on the unruffled waters, that the imagination, by their aid, is carried into recesses of feeling otherwise impenetrable. The reason of this is, that the heavens are not only brought down into the bosom of the earth, but that the earth is mainly looked at, and thought of, through the medium of a purer element. (p.91)

That the feeling is *otherwise impenetrable* distinguishes the mediation effected by double prescription from the possibility of sentimental identification. The manifold possibilities of inscape in the combinations of light, reflection and water effect reciprocal subtleties in feeling - not to mention endless possibilities for reverie.

Two things characteristically bedevil the discussion of imagination: the tenacious, retrospective, conceptualisations of dualism involve persistent category mistakes and arguments shift apparently seamlessly from identification to double prescription:

[...] I felt that the array
Of outward circumstance, and visible form,
Is to the pleasure of the human mind

What passion makes it; that meanwhile the forms
Of nature have a passion in themselves,
That intermingles with those works of man
To which she summons him. (XII.286)

Wordsworth is certainly aware of the distinction: on the one hand, identification makes possible the appropriation of landscape so that it becomes 'what passion makes it'; on the other, in double prescription, the landscape itself is charged with meaning, its forms 'have a passion in themselves'.

What is rendered through double prescription is *inherently* creative. The process is facilitated for Wordsworth by his frequent resort to memories. This reconstruction in the *absence* of the phenomena - as reflected, for example, in 'Tintern Abbey' - is a means of allowing redundancy to *fall away* so that the inscape can more freely emerge. In its self-consciousness this creative strategy differs essentially from Proust's spontaneous memory. The elimination of background *noise* allows the phenomena to be clearly focussed:

[...] when we see in the mind's eye we can concentrate upon those images which are meaningful, which we are enabled indeed to form *because* of the significance of that which they represent. Thus the feeling engendered by the image may be more powerful in the absence than in the presence of the object, or at least we may have more time to understand it. It is for this reason that Wordsworth held that poetry arose out of *recollected* emotion.³³

This strategy means that, characteristically, Wordsworth's imaginative transactions are *reported* rather than *realised* in their immediacy - as they are in Proust. However, though Wordsworth's poetry may have its *origins* in 'recollected' emotions and this might, at first sight, seem to suggest that his work is merely nostalgic - sentimentality in the medium of time - in, say, 'Tintern Abbey' he is scrupulous in establishing the landscape and its nature *before* he begins to reconstruct its significance for him. It is as if the initial emotion - which may, indeed, incorporate an element of nostalgia - acts as the intention through which the landscape is subsequently vividly realised. The emotional autonomy of the poetry is a function of this *rendering*.

The symbolism of *To the Lighthouse* is under tight cognitive control. It follows that what is presented is only a token symbolism, cleverly developed but, ultimately, local in its

³³ Warnock, pp.116-117.

relevance and wanting in imaginative power. On the other hand, Coleridge's conception of a symbol involved seeing 'the image as universally significant'.³⁴ Of Coleridge's reflections on symbolism Mary Warnock observes:

The identity between seeing or observing in detail, feeling, and seeing-as-symbol comes out increasingly strongly [...]. The insights come from treating the objects of sense as symbolic; from treating them, that is, as referring to something beyond themselves. It is the function of the imagination to provide this kind of seeing.
(p.87)

Such 'symbolism', far from reducing imagery to the merely illustrative - where the gravitational force is exerted by the idea, the abstraction - is contingent upon the double prescription at the heart of imagining. In Hopkins the expressive inscape - a function of double prescription - *becomes* symbolic when the apprehending intention is deflected into contemplation of the inscape as something *created*. It is as if the numinous were our designation for such super-charged inscape. It is the *context* of the charged image that shapes the subsequent rationalisation through which the *trace* of the noumenon - decaying into the 'phenomenon' - is subsequently *placed* as religious or aesthetic experience. The sense that the inscape points beyond itself engages a purposive, teleological rationalisation: this is the case whether the symbol is a mere token - as something controlled and elaborated by the writer - or in the context of nature where the rationalisation is in terms of the religious.

Where the literary symbol is a token - for example, Woolf's use of the wounded foot - our response is pushed inevitably into the discursive. The token symbol becomes an aspect of *structure* rather than a matter of *experience*. In the imaginative mode a symbol has its origins in double prescription but we settle upon a sense of purpose inherent in the inscape so that beauty is at the same time revelation. The token symbol is exhausted merely by its reference - it can only be clever.

As we pass from the moment of imaginative apprehension the symbol becomes subject to that vitiation characteristic of any other imaginative transaction in its subjection to rationalisation. In 'The Pedlar' Wordsworth fights to sustain the noumenal - an

³⁴ Warnock, p.82.

overwhelming sense of purposiveness in nature - and balks at the conventional ascription of purpose to the Deity:

Sensation, soul, and form,
All melted into him; they swallowed up
His animal being. In them did he live,
And by them did he live - they were his life.
In such access of mind, in such high hour
Of visitation from the living God,
He did not feel the God, he felt his works.
Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.
Such hour by prayer or praise was unprofaned.³⁵

Of this passage Jonathan Wordsworth comments:

What follows is quite unexpected. God, who has seemed to have the full support of Christian tradition as he carries out his impressive polysyllabic 'visitation', is suddenly diminished in a line of monosyllables that take from him all grandeur and personal authority [...]. The definite article seems especially belittling - to be '*the* God' [...] is well on the way to being merely *a* god. (*The Two-Part Prelude*, p.4)

To turn this on its head, Wordsworth - and in this, resembling the more vehement and histrionic Shelley - is perfectly clear that to reach for the God of the tradition is a *profanation*. If the charge of the numinous is located in the immediacy of an imaginative transaction and the aspect of nature disclosed in this context can be designated as symbolic, then to 'place' such a symbol by locating it within an explanatory ideology may serve to empower, by association, the ideology, but the shift from the imagination to the discursive results in the vitiation of the symbol so that it can be accessed now only through identification with the ideology. The peculiar tensions contingent upon such shifts in modality are characteristic of those who participate in religious rituals - mere *attendance* cannot guarantee access to the symbolic and, indeed, access is *blocked* by identification and sentimentality.

These issues emerge powerfully in what is, arguably, the climax of *The Prelude* - the episode where Wordsworth climbs Snowdon. He has emerged above the clouds to experience an extraordinary vista illuminated at the instant of emergence by the moon. The imagination is drawn into a rapidly expanding perspective:

³⁵ William Wordsworth, 'The Pedlar', from *The Pedlar, Tintern Abbey, The Two-Part Prelude*, p.23, l.103.

For instantly a light upon the turf
 Fell like a flash, and lo! as I looked up,
 The Moon hung naked in a firmament
 Of azure without cloud, and at my feet
 Rested a silent sea of hoary mist.
 A hundred hills their dusky backs upheaved
 All over this still ocean; and beyond,
 Far, far beyond, the solid vapours stretched,
 In headlands, tongues, and promintory shapes,
 Into the main Atlantic. (1850 *Prelude*, XIV.38)

The exhilarated expansion of consciousness is typical of Emily Dickinson's visionary moments:

While I state - the Solemn Petals,
 Far as North - and East,
 Far as South and West - expanding -
 Culminate - in Rest - ³⁶

The Snowdon episode is effectively brought to a conclusion by the shift from the imaginative to the discursive:

The universal spectacle throughout
 Was shaped for admiration and delight,
 Grand in itself alone, but in that breach
 Through which the homeless voice of waters rose,
 That dark deep thoroughfare, had Nature lodged
 The soul, the imagination of the whole. (XIII.60)

The pressure to try to 'place' the experience and its unconditional value is irresistible. There follows an obscure attempt at rationalisation:

[...] it appeared to me
 The perfect image of a mighty mind,
 Of one that feeds upon infinity. (XIII.68)

Perhaps Wordsworth lacked faith that his readers could enter into the imaginative transaction and thence arrive at its significance for themselves - perhaps the lack of faith concerned the inadequacies of his own rendering of which the rationalisation is a symptom.

In any event, Emily Dickinson is often at her most powerful when she eschews the temptation to rationalise:

³⁶ Emily Dickinson, 'Bloom upon the Mountain Stated', from *Emily Dickinson: The Complete Poems*, ed. by Thomas H. Johnson, this edn. 1975 (London: Faber and Faber, 1970), p.331.

Four Trees - upon a solitary Acre -
Without Design
Or Order, or Apparent Action -
Maintain -

The Sun - upon a Morning meets them -
The Wind -
No nearer Neighbour - have they -
But God -

The Acre gives them - Place -
They - Him - Attention of Passer by -
Of Shadow, or of Squirrel, haply -
Or Boy -

What Deed is Theirs unto the General Nature -
What Plan
The severally - retard - or further -
Unknown -³⁷

Here, the apparent denial of 'design' is a move to clear away presuppositions so that the subtleties of an imaginative transaction redolent of *purpose* may emerge. This is wonderfully caught in the verb 'maintain': *manu tenere* - to hold in the hand. Here we have an action - presupposing an intention - but *without* an object or resolution. We experience this as a sense of mystery that would be instantly resolved given a *specific* purpose in a rationalising orthodoxy.

Precisely the opposite experience is apparently conveyed in Wallace Stevens 'Anecdote of the Jar':

I placed a jar in Tennessee,
And round it was, upon a hill.
It made the slovenly wilderness
Surround that hill.

The wilderness rose up to it,
And sprawled around, no longer wild.
The jar was round upon the ground
And tall and of a port in air.

It took dominion everywhere.
The jar was gray and bare.
It did nor give of bird or bush,

³⁷ 'Four Trees' from *The Complete Poems*, p.364.

like nothing else in Tennessee.³⁸

Here mystery is destroyed by the intrusion of a human artefact. Dickinson's trees that 'maintain' are brutally replaced by an artefact that asserts 'dominion'. The imposition of the jar can apparently be justified in a context where nature is seen as otherwise 'slovenly' or 'sprawled around'. On the other hand, there is an intrinsic irony in the terms that convey such a view of nature - in which case mystery is implied even as it is denied. Both poets adopt an oblique approach to a matter that could not survive resort to the discursive.

Dickinson's poem could stand as an ostensive definition of a symbol - the imagery *presupposes* purposiveness. Yet, whether or not it is *manifest* as symbol is a function not only of its intrinsic potential but of the relational mode in which it is apprehended. A similar potentiality is present in Yeats:

O chestnut tree, great-rooted blossomer,
Are you the leaf, the blossom, or the bole?
O body swayed to music, O brightening glance,
How can we know the dancer from the dance?³⁹

Generally, Dickinson's poetry exhibits how the religious sensibility manifest in the symbol-creating power of imagination inevitably runs counter to religious ideology. Her predicament was, on occasions, to inhabit the terrible loneliness that accompanies the rejection of orthodoxy and, at times, she gave way to the temptation of despair:

The abdication of Belief
Makes the Behavior small -
Better an ignis fatuus
Than no illumine at all -⁴⁰

That the behaviour is made 'small' in the absence of belief is precisely the predicament that leads Philip Larkin to churches,

In whose blent air all our compulsions meet,
Are recognised, and robed as destinies.⁴¹

³⁸ Wallace Stevens, 'Anecdote of the Jar', from *Selected Poems by Wallace Stevens*, repr. 1967 (London: Faber and Faber, 1953), p.36.

³⁹ W.B. Yeats, 'Among School Children', from *W.B. Yeats: Selected Poetry*, ed. by A. Norman Jeffares, this edn. 1974 (London: Pan, 1962), p.130.

⁴⁰ 'Those Dying Then', from *The Complete Poems*, p.646.

⁴¹ Philip Larkin, 'Church Going', from *Collected Poems*, op. cit., p.98.

The bleakness of Dickinson's 'behaviour' - action deprived of meaning, ignoble - finds its equivalent in Larkin's 'compulsions'. He cannot subscribe to an orthodoxy in which imagining could find resolution in purpose, an over-arching meaning, yet, nevertheless, is drawn to the sanctified ground where once such transactions had occurred.

Symbolism, in Coleridge's sense, presupposes double prescription. It follows that cognition, in this mode, is inseparable from feeling, from value and the prescriptions of imagination reciprocally shape both world and self in simultaneous synthesis. Such transactions are at the heart of Wordsworth's writing and he places them within the context of the purposive - he is, fundamentally, a religious writer. On the other hand, in seeking to rationalise such experience he frequently sought, almost in spite of himself, to tie the numinous to inherently reductive and historically relative descriptive modes. The moments of intensely rendered experience are found in a dramatic context of imminent loss.

It is as if in her moment of despair Woolf conflated imagination with Romantic ideology - which, of course, is what Wordsworth does. There is a tension between the *imagining* self and the *myth* of the self that is elaborated through *The Prelude*. That is merely to say, that his was a *universal* predicament, so that his great autobiographical poem is fascinating and powerful both in its realised intentions and in ways that he could *not* have intended. At the heart of the matter, Wordsworth's case actually resembles that of Lily Briscoe for whom meaning is an adjunct of imagining.

Coleridge's response to *The Prelude* is illuminating:

Theme hard as high
Of smiles spontaneous and mysterious fears
(The first-born they of Reason and twin-birth)
Of times obedient to external force
And currents self determined; of moments awful,
Now in thy inner life and now abroad,
When power streamed from thee and thy soul received
The light *reflected*, as a light *bestowed*.⁴²

The *Prelude* was completed in May, 1805. Coleridge had published his revised *Dejection: An Ode* in October 1802. On this evidence, his experience of imagining was already, sadly,

⁴² Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'To William Wordsworth' from *Selected Poems of S.T. Coleridge*, ed. by James Reeves, repr. 1990 (Oxford: Heinemann, 1959), p.114.

retrospective. He had pushed the imagination into subjectivity. He had lost his passage to the numinous.

Chapter Eight

Imagination and Beauty

Beauty, for Kant, seems to involve the disinterested engagement of the imagination in aesthetic structures. In finding them beautiful we conceive of such structures as purposive wholes but wholes without a specifically conceptual purpose. This bears a strong resemblance to Hopkins's notion that poetry in speech 'employed to carry the inscape for the inscape's sake'. But inscape depends upon a logic that supposes internal relations between structural analogues. In the drama there must be internal relations between that which is represented and forms of life. Is it that Kant's finality of form presupposes finality of ends - that art, generally, is inseparable from insight? What, in the end, distinguishes formal finality from finality of ends is a specific kind of intention. This aesthetic mode can be directly engaged by forms in nature - in which case purposiveness may be reconstrued as purpose. Through such transactions nature becomes symbolic, it points towards a creator - the concrete points to the abstract.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Perdita and Polixenes engage in a typical Renaissance debate concerning 'nature' and 'art':

PERDITA [...] the fairest flowers o' th' season
 Are our carnations and streak'd gillyvors,
 Which some call nature's bastards: of that kind
 Our rustic garden's barren; and I care not
 To get slips of them.

POLIXENES Wherefore, gentle maiden,
 Do you neglect them?

PERDITA For I have heard it said
 There is an art which, in their piedness, shares
 With great creating nature.

POLIXENES Say there be;
 Yet nature is made by no mean
 But nature makes that mean: so, over that art,
 Which you say adds to nature, is an art
 That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
 A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
 And make conceive a bark of baser kind
 By bud of nobler race. This is an art
 Which does mend nature - change it rather - but
 The art itself is nature.¹

What seems to concern Perdita is not whether the carnation is beautiful, rather she is disturbed by its artifice. It is as if the impulse to create such hybrids is indicative of human

¹ William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, ed. by J.H.P. Pafford, The Arden Shakespeare, repr. 1984 (London: Methuen, 1963), IV.4.81.

presumption. Polixenes's stance in this argument is undercut by subsequent events when he refuses to countenance the marriage of his son with this 'shepherdess', an eventuality that would involve, precisely, marrying a 'gentler scion to the wildest stock.' Polixenes wins the immediate argument - but his priorities as a 'prince' predominate in the end.

Kant uses the example of the beauty of flowers to illustrate his conception of a judgement of 'pure taste':

There are two kinds of beauty: free beauty [...] or beauty which is merely dependent. The first presupposes no concept of what the object should be; the second does presuppose such a concept and, with it, an answering perfection of the object [...].

Flowers are free beauties of nature. Hardly any one but a botanist knows the true nature of a flower, and even he, while recognising in the flower the reproductive organ of the plant, pays no attention to this natural end when using his taste to judge of its beauty. Hence no perfection of any kind - no internal finality, as something to which the arrangement of the manifold is related - underlies this judgement.²

Kant distinguishes between 'internal finality' - that is, the relation of the constituent parts of the flower to the fulfilment of its purpose, or end - and the *form* of finality where we are aware that organisation is displayed in the arrangement of the constituents, yet we remain in the contemplation of this organisation without resort to consideration of their end. A judgement of taste supposes a response to purposiveness without reference to a final purpose - the purposive wholes represented in music, arguably, are experienced without reference to an external purpose.

It would seem that Perdita's dismissal of hybrids reflects that her 'judgement' is compromised by a touch of puritanism. She cannot free herself from ideological issues sufficiently to lose herself in contemplation. It is Kant's contention that pure judgements of taste must be free of all 'interest'. Interest supposes the relation of the object to an end, that is, the ascription of *purpose*. The argument can, perhaps, be simplified in terms that we have previously used: the judgement that something is beautiful involves the contemplation of 'inscape for the inscape's sake'. (See Introduction.)

² Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. by James Creed Meredith, repr. 1992 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1952), p.72, §16.

Just as inscape involves the arrival at the *distinctive* identity of an object or state of affairs, so the judgement of taste is quite specific - it involves a response to *this* rose or *that* painting. Indeed it seems that Kant's notion of form and Hopkins's inscape have, at least, a strong family resemblance:

The relation of matter to form is reconceived as that of the generic to the specific when Kant remarks that the Aristotelian school "called the *genus* matter, but the *specific difference* the form" [...]. In reflective specification we regard nature as a genus that must be specified into different species of objects.³

Could it be, though, that the response to flowers is a special case? It might appear that ignorance regarding the purpose, the end, of this rose might masquerade as disinterest, for flowers reflect internal finality of a *number* of ends - the flower as sexual mechanism, which Kant mentions, and the ends anticipated in the breeding of complex hybrids, as in the tulip and the rose.⁴ Research into hybridisation presupposes that there are criteria associated with beauty in flowers and this supposition has a certain utilitarian confirmation in that a successful resolution in terms of ends is reflected in commercial success - this would be the case even in Kant's time: when he looked at a tulip or a rose Kant would be responding to a complex hybrid. Indeed, it is probable that there is an *iterated algorithm* demonstrating that the form of the rose - or carnation, Shakespeare's 'gillyvor' - obeys a mathematical rule. Yet, according to Kant,

Flowers, free patterns [...] have no signification, depend upon no definite concept, and yet please. (p.46, §4)

It may be that there is an inherent problem in using examples in such a discussion because almost inevitably we regard the *example* as illustrative. But an illustration can never underwrite the switch in intention involved in shifting from dependent to free beauty. Hopkins presents us with an inscape that delights by its accuracy in catching the play of shadows on a wall - it fascinates by its sheer appropriateness. On the other hand, that same image can be seen as a constituent of a complex pattern that engages the mind in such a way as to engender delight - the poem as construct. Beauty is dependent upon how *this* specific

³ Rudolf A. Makreel, *Imagination and Interpretation in Kant*, paperback edn. 1994 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p.59.

⁴ *Critique of Judgement*, p.41, §33.

object is apprehended at *this* particular moment. In other words, Kant's argument seems to reflect significant aspects of the imaginative issues discussed so far: judgements of taste are precluded by *identification* - because fantasy is inevitably 'interested' - and by ideological commitment - because beauty then becomes illustrative. Judgements of taste may be associated with the free play of the imagination but the rose is, perhaps, a special case in so far as it escapes that pervasive - and constituent - *tension* in art between illusion and reality that Kant would wish away in his insistence upon disinterest. A Cézanne landscape, after all, reflects the finding of a motif, a structural configuration in the real world.

That beauty is a function of a distinct mode of apprehension is implied in this distinction between free and dependent beauty:

In respect of an object with a definite internal end, a judgement of taste would only be pure where the person judging either has no concept of this end, or makes abstraction from it in his judgement. But in cases like this, although such a person should lay down a correct judgement of taste, since he would be estimating the object as a free beauty, he would still be found fault with by another who saw nothing in its beauty but a dependent quality (i.e. who looked to the end of the object) and would be accused by him of false taste, though both would, in their own way be judging correctly: the one according to what he had present to his senses, the other according to what was present in his thoughts. (p.74, §16)

Clearly, a flower can be the object of different intentional acts - beauty is available for Polixenes but, in certain circumstances, Perdita sees only artifice. Illustration cannot of itself resolve such a discussion because each stance supposes a discrete mode of relation, involvement - or indeed, entrapment - in which, condemns the discussion to be at cross purposes.

On the face of it, Kant's distinction supposes confident differentiation between *faculties* - cognition, feeling and desire - a typical eighteenth century categorisation. In Coleridge's terms, head and heart are clearly differentiated. This allows Kant to identify the beautiful exclusively with pleasure but it is pleasure of a distinctive kind. We might assume that there is some kind of causal relationship between the object, or artefact, and pleasure - but if this were the case then beauty must be 'interested'. On the other hand, for Kant, the pleasure comes from the play of the mind - it is the *play itself* which is the source of pleasure. The

pleasure is subjective because it is not dependent upon a specific concept - such play is possible because, 'no definite concept restricts' the cognitive powers 'to a particular rule of cognition.' (p.58, §9)

Nevertheless such play must be generated by something. The form of finality supposes purposiveness, and that operation of reason within, shall we say, the book or play, is dependent upon the ideas that come to constitute the world of that fiction: 'Beauty [...] may in general be termed the *expression* of aesthetic ideas'. (p.183, §51)

In his discussion of such ideas Salim Kemal observes:

We may further explain this aesthetic use of concepts to develop themes (or aesthetic ideas). In a play, for example, the entire causal history of any event is not necessary to understanding its meaning. A handkerchief appears in the play as an instrument the villain uses to incite the rage of a jealous and suspicious husband. The causal history of the cloth is not important [...]. Instead we take elements from reality or nature, and rearrange them to suit our purpose of making this meaning clear. The piece of cloth has connotations in the play, which it derives from its role in the events represented on the stage, that it does not have outside the plot [...]. Those singular connotations and individual meanings, Kant's claims suggest, seek validity not from being made part of a system of natural scientific explanation with its determinate placings of clearly defined concepts, but from a universalizable pleasurable response of our aesthetic judgement. The latter considers the events represented on the stage in terms of the order of the play rather than of the relation between the events and the systematic causal nexus.⁵

If Kemal's reading is correct it poses problems for Kant.

On the one hand, there is no barrier to our believing that an actual handkerchief could accrue such meaning in real life - in other words, the meaning of this handkerchief for, say, Tom, because it is associated with his wife's adultery, is also independent of the 'systematic causal nexus'. The network of meaning may be a necessary *constituent* of aesthetic response but it is certainly not *sufficient* to engage it.

Additionally, through *identification* with the situation depicted in the play an observer might be more persuaded of the 'reality' of Othello's situation than he would ever be on hearing an actual account of Tom's predicament. What the play depicts are, in fact, forms of life which are intelligible through internal relations between human experience and what is depicted. Through the characteristic devices of the drama the structure of such forms can

⁵ Salim Kemal, *Kant's Aesthetic Theory*, 2nd edn. 1997 (London: Macmillan, 1992), pp.45-46.

be put into inverted commas, as it were, made emphatic. We are thereby drawn into the contemplation of form, but form *as the expressive mode of content*, a rendering that is brought about by the engagement of the aesthetic mode. Without such internal relations we could never be persuaded to surrender to dramatic illusion, to suspend disbelief. Strictly, we do not succumb to illusion - we are caught by *recognition*. It is precisely *because* Tom's situation is intelligible that drama can be made of it. We move from identification - a tacit recognition - to the holistic comprehension of form that we reach through imagining, where the possibility of explicit cognition is presupposed in our willingness to surrender to beauty. In Wordsworth, Hopkins and Cézanne, the whole point of a crucial aspect of their endeavour is to render the beauty of the world.

Kant too acknowledges that pleasure in beauty is not confined to the fine arts but can be manifest in the contemplation of nature. His broad concern in *The Critique of Judgement* is to supplement and extend his critical work on Understanding and Reason. Understanding is the 'a priori' principle presupposed in *knowledge* of the world; the function of Reason is to legislate for the faculty of Desire and, Kant argues, Judgement is the principle related to the faculty of Feeling - manifest to us as pleasure or displeasure. The crucial role of Reflective Judgement - compared to the schematising Determinant Judgement - is to establish harmony between the world of nature - which is mechanistic, posited by understanding - and freedom. Thus Reflective Judgement has a distinctive role within the range of critical tasks that, generally, seek to explore the *fit* between our mental capacities and nature: 'For our judgement makes it imperative upon us to proceed on the principle of the conformity of nature to our faculty of cognition'.⁶

In Reflective Judgement we proceed *as if* nature is fitted to our purpose, and therein lies the possibility for judgements of taste in response to the natural world:

Self-subsisting natural beauty reveals to us a technic of nature which shows it in the light of a system ordered in accordance with laws the principle of which is not to be found within the range of our entire faculty of understanding. This principle is that of a finality relative to the employment of judgement in respect of phenomena which

⁶ *Critique of Judgement*, pp.28-29, Introduction vi.

have thus to be assigned, not merely to nature regarded as aimless mechanism, but also to nature regarded after the analogy of art. (p.92. §23.)

We can regard order in nature 'after the analogy' of formal finality in art. Nature reflects an organisation in response to which we can experience that pleasure associated with aesthetic judgement. It follows, presumably, that the structures in nature to which we respond aesthetically can be 'taken up', as it were, and reproduced in fine art. They are, though, rendered through analogy, through inscape - representational power is dependent upon an internal relation between object and representation. Such is our characteristic fascination with the 'match' between representation and world that it is difficult to avoid slipping into a response where beauty is *dependent*. Indeed, the pure aesthetic response would seem to be trivial were it not that it presupposed internal relations. Dependent beauty reflects a *discursive* intention.

Specifically, in the aesthetic mode the imagination finds *formal* finality. Kant's concept of form seems at times very close to the traditional conceptualisation of the *form* that is differentiated from *content* - there is an echo here of Kant's differentiation between faculties in so far as sensation cannot be allowed to play a fundamental role in aesthetic judgements. In the fine arts, 'the *design* is what is essential.' (p.67, §14)

All form of objects of sense [...] is either *figure* or *play*. In the latter case it is either play of figures (in space: mimic and dance), or mere play of sensations (in time). The *charm* of colours, or of the agreeable tones of instruments, may be added: but the *design* in the former and the *composition* in the latter constitute the proper object of the pure judgement of taste. (pp.67-68, §14)

It may be that the origins of this notion of form or *design* lie in the Renaissance and, ultimately, in Plato. In Vasari's *Lives of the Artists*, for example, *disegno*, design, draughtsmanship, is the soul of art. The creative artist has a copy of the divine *Idea* in his mind so that the representation of the natural form can be mediated through the *perfect* form - for Vasari, such mediation was displayed, above all, in the work of Michelangelo. The origin of the theory is to be found in the notion that the human form was created in God's image:

Design [...] is the [...] animating principle of all creative processes: and surely design existed in absolute perfection before the Creation when Almighty God, having made the vast expanse of the universe and adorned the heavens [...] directed His creative intellect further, to the clear air and the solid earth. And then, in the act of creating man, He fashioned the first forms of painting and sculpture in the sublime grace of created things. It is undeniable that from man, as from a perfect model, statues and pieces of sculpture and the challenge of pose and contour were first derived.⁷

For Kant, ideal beauty presupposes a *concept* so that it must be *interested* - is there not an uneasy sense that Mannerist art is refined propaganda?

As we have argued though, in the aesthetic mode, form *cannot* be divorced from content. Their separation is the inevitable consequence of a shift from the aesthetic into the discursive mode. We are confronted with the paradox that the very mode in which Kant accounts for the experience of beauty and the vocabulary to which he resorts renders that beauty inaccessible - the divorce of form and content is a conceptual symptom of an inapplicable discursive paradigm. Where head is divorced from heart aesthetic judgements can only be subjective.

I suggested earlier that in the drama, the emergence of the plot as a completed structure in a moment of illuminating understanding occurs in the context of *catharsis* and that this process was my first definition of imagination. In the terms we are now employing, aesthetic *apprehension* is followed by aesthetic *comprehension*. But such structure supposes illumination of the *meaning* of the play in a finality - the resolution of its constituents into a final end. It is precisely the *emerging* of the finality that we experience as imaginative power - this is a source of pleasure - and the whole *manifold* of experience within the presentation is presupposed in it. To differentiate between form and content - that is, ultimately, to differentiate in terms of faculties - in arriving at such a holistic comprehension is simply unintelligible. Motive, action and plot, human and aesthetic intention, each presupposes the other in the consistency of resolution that underpins the finality of the presentation.

⁷ Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists*, trans. by G. Bull, repr. 1997 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965), p.25.

In the example of the handkerchief, *Othello* is more 'real' than Tom's predicament precisely because of the many strands - emotional, auditory, imaginative and cognitive - that the artist can weave into the fabric of his illusion. In Hopkins's terms, Shakespeare's emphasis is a matter of 'overing and overing'. But Shakespeare depends upon the fundamental intelligibility of situations like Tom's.

It is as if finality of form were a potentiality within *anything* that has an intelligible structure - it is a possibility that lies within meaning itself. What distinguishes Tom's story from Shakespeare's is that the multiple strands of Shakespeare's account draw the experience into a *whole* - a *purposive* whole - that is differentiated from the quotidian, not only by its manifest intrinsic structure, but by the whole ritualistic framing implicit in the public presentation of a play in a theatre. Given these cues, and freedom from the urgency of responsive action, the mind can delight in the form itself - but form-as-content.

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream* Shakespeare *appears* to strip away the ritualistic frame when he has Bottom step out of it - he forgets his role in *Pyramus and Thisby* and addresses his audience directly. The effect of Bottom's gaffe is reinforced by the worldly-wise comments of his audience. But the joke is that despite this and despite the absurdity of the rhetoric, there is an intrinsic expressive power in the *situation* of the two lovers, Pyramus and Thisby. It is preposterous - but we are *moved* by their predicament. We recognise a form of life, a meaning is communicated which is at once moving and brilliant in the challenging minimalism of its presentation.⁸ *The form of life is all we need as a resource for the imagination.* That we recognise this in the context of a play within a play - its reflexiveness - draws attention to the *epistemology* of the drama, as it were, what the drama presupposes in hooking on to the world.

That the play is within a play cannot allow us to ignore the significance of the ultimate framing context - the ritual of the theatre itself - but that merely serves to incorporate the epistemic issues within the themes of the play, its exploration of the interplay between

⁸ William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, from *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, paperback edn. 1997 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988) see V.1.

illusion - dreams - and reality. In such an exploration we are committed to discursive exposition, but exposition that in the context of the aesthetic mode is transfigured into form.

A frame is ambiguous because it serves two functions. On the one hand it is a cue that indicates *how* we are to look but cannot of itself adjust the looking. On the other, the frame of a picture constitutes the defining form for double prescription - in the aesthetic mode the prescriptive limit *arranges* the constituent forms that are manifest in the holistic intuition. This is not to deny that, initially, the artist arranges the elements of the picture - but the arranging always presupposes an envisaging of the frame.

Imagine that you have developed an interest in astronomy. After frustrating ditherings involving the matching of a star map with what is above, you suddenly recognise a constellation that is new for you. 'It's *Orion* - there is his belt and sword!' The defining form - the Hunter - *arranges* the other stars into his appropriate accoutrements - his belt and sword. At the same time the constellation is 'lifted' from its background; it has emerged as an 'island' of autonomous intelligibility amidst an ocean of stars. In a painting the frame is a constituent part of the 'island'.

Kant discusses frames in a passage where he seems to distinguish content - with formal implications - from the form of the purposive whole:

Even what is called *ornamentation (parerga)*, i.e. what is only an adjunct, and not an intrinsic constituent in the complete representation of the object, in augmenting the delight of taste does so only by means of its form. Thus it is with the frames of pictures or the drapery on statues, or the colonnades of palaces. But if the ornamentation does not itself enter into the composition of the beautiful form - if it is introduced like a gold frame merely to win approval for the picture by means of its charm - it is then called finery and takes away from the genuine beauty.⁹

My argument is that the 'frame' is already constitutive of the composite nature of the form - it arranges its constituent elements. In Hopkins's terminology the physical frame of a painting both facilitates and 'over and overs' the holistic structure. In drawing attention to itself a frame would destroy this facilitating function, would constitute a competing structure for contemplation. A successful frame is both seen and not seen in the sense that

⁹ *Critique of Judgement*, p.68, §14.

to underline a word is to make a *meaning* emphatic - we are not distracted by the underlining itself.

The response to an unfamiliar artefact must inevitably be without a 'star map'. At first small areas of intelligibility are found - perhaps these first responses are cognitive. Now we experience an aesthetic response to an image or series of images. Here we are gripped by an emotion: empathy - identification - is engaged. We may leave the theatre with a mere patchwork of impressions conceived within different modes of relation - we may not have arrived at the 'constellation'. On the other hand, we may have an overwhelming sense of the 'rightness' of the totality, its integrity. Our accompanying response is awe that the human imagination could have conceived such a thing. We have experienced beauty.

For Kant, imaginative *apprehension* underpins the very possibility of understanding itself - the intelligibility of the discursive depends upon it - but it is imaginative *comprehension* that underwrites the holistic nature of the aesthetic:

Measurement of a space [...] is at the same time a description of it, and so an objective movement in the imagination and a progression. On the other hand the comprehension of the manifold in the unity, not of thought, but of intuition, and consequently the comprehension of the successively apprehended parts at one glance, is a retrogression that removes the time condition in the progression of the imagination, and renders coexistence intuitable. (p.107, §27)

Whereas the discursive unfolds through time, in aesthetic comprehension the arrival at the holistic intuition occurs in a moment. On the other hand, imaginative comprehension of, say, the drama emerges as a highly wrought inscape but its constituent parts if experienced in the imaginative mode are themselves inscapes. We may experience the beauty of the parts before the beauty of the whole.

Inscape depends for its representational power on structural analogues - as in metaphor - and such analogues presuppose internal relations between the images and those aspects of the world that are represented through them. As we have argued, the integrity which is a condition of formal finality in aesthetic comprehension *presupposes* objective finality in the states of affairs represented - in which case Kant's formal finality is internally related to the

manifold of experience. In discourse which is essentially metaphorical it is not that the presentation *cannot* represent states of affairs in the world; it is merely that in the context of the aesthetic mode the *priority* of representation is momentarily set aside by a distinctive intentional act. We escape the characteristic dominance of the discursive.

Differentiation into faculties is necessary for Kant's argument in order to distinguish aesthetic from quotidian experience; whereas what fundamentally differentiates aesthetic experience is that it is a discrete mode of experience, the function of a specific kind of intention that manifests itself in double prescription. Criticism is the discursive exposition of the constituents of the whole but it cannot underwrite the shift into the aesthetic mode. Kant is right about the nature of the discursive but wrong about the subjectivity of the aesthetic - such ascription of subjectivity presupposes discursive scrutiny of a synthesising apprehension whereby it is split into faculties. In a way, Kant's *Critiques* are written in the wrong order. It is the *discursive* that needs explanation in terms of its vitiation of the imaginative synthesis manifest in the aesthetic mode. This suggests that Kant's aesthetic experience occurred within a paradigm reflecting a dissociation of sensibility into head and heart.

Kant comes close to this position when he differentiates between analogy and association - in our terms, imagination and fancy:

The imagination (as a productive faculty of cognition) is a powerful agent for creating, as it were, a second nature out of the material supplied to it by actual nature. It affords us entertainment where experience proves too commonplace; and we even use it to remodel experience, always following, no doubt, laws that are based on analogy, but still also following principles which have a higher seat in reason [...]. By this means we get a sense of our freedom from the law of association (which attaches to the empirical employment of the imagination), with the result that the material can be borrowed by us from nature in accordance with that law, but be worked up by us into something else - namely, what surpasses nature. (p.176, §49)

The idea that the imagination 'surpasses nature' is reflected in Kant's assumption that,

An *aesthetic idea* cannot become a cognition, because it is an *intuition* (of the imagination) for which an adequate concept can never be found. (p.210, §57)

But surely the crucial assumption is that the imagination through *analogy* can *remodel* experience. In conceding this capacity Kant can no longer claim that an aesthetic idea *cannot* become a cognition - analogy *presupposes* an internal relation. There is a crucial sense, then, in which aesthetic ideas *do* surpass nature, *are* constitutive of freedom. It is precisely the arrival at a reconstituted finality in the disclosure of double prescription that we experience as beauty - though what makes this *possible* is a mode of relation which is disinterested. In the aesthetic mode imagination, manifest in analogy - metaphor - allows us to 'jump the tracks' so that it becomes possible to *refigure* some aspect of the world. As I have previously argued, this presupposes *redundancy* - and that is only another way of saying that cognition is *selective*. Only a disinterested relation is capable of releasing us from the thrall of habit, the soothing pragmatism of the network of quotidian cognition. The success of camouflage in nature - the disruption of form - presupposes the norm. To turn Kant on his head, there are circumstances where the *discursive* confines us to subjectivity.

Failure to develop the implications of the logic of the analogical - of metaphor - confines the role of imagery to the merely decorative. This may afford us, as Kant puts it, 'entertainment' - but little else. This supposes the dualistic division between sensation and cognition, head and heart, neatly reflecting the differentiation into faculties. It is out of this state of affairs that Coleridge sought a synthesis.

Kant himself hints that the differentiation into faculties may not have been altogether secure:

I may assert in the case of every representation that the synthesis of a pleasure with the representation (as a cognition) is at least *possible*.
(p.81, §18)

Regarding Burke's 'physiology' of the sublime Kant remarks:

As psychological observations these analyses of our mental phenomena are extremely fine, and supply a wealth of material for the favourite investigations of empirical anthropology. But, besides that, there is no

denying the fact that all representations within us, no matter whether they are objectively merely sensible or wholly intellectual, are still subjectively associable with gratification or pain, however imperceptible either of these may be. (p.131, §29)

It is precisely because of this that Kant's own texts can be experienced as *beautiful* and that mathematicians can intelligibly judge between proofs on the grounds of *elegance*. The aesthetic - the imagination - is a fundamental mode of apprehension and probably, when all is said and done, has a powerful role in *motivating* the search for intelligibility.

The discursive is confined to cognition; the imagination involves a synthesis of faculties. But where the imagination is approached through a discursive paradigm the cognitive faculty may be seen to prevail, in which case art becomes mere decoration. This is to reduce the imaginative to fancy with the inevitable corollary that art becomes didactic because, in effect, it remains essentially discursive - a sugared pill, propaganda.

It is interesting that Sidney defends poetry precisely on these grounds and that the didactic defence is employed by Hamlet in discussing the effects he wishes to achieve with *The Murder of Gonzago*:

[...] the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure.¹⁰

In practice, the careful instruction that Hamlet gives to the players is to ensure Claudius's *identification* with the situation and characters represented in the play - clearly, the didactic response can only be retrospective, contingent upon the imaginative response. If the play within the play were *essentially* didactic Claudius would not be induced to betray himself.

What characterises the aesthetic mode is precisely its transcendence of dualism. Employed in the domain of imagination the discursive is an *aberration* - it simply does not engage with the aesthetic or, for that matter, identity. Freud's discursive symbolism, by the nature of its logic, *can* only fabricate a false consciousness.

Yet this is not to deny the discursive has a role in the explication of texts - this follows from the cognitive aspect of the analogical structures presupposed in internal relations. Clarification and definition - for example, by resort to historical background - can

¹⁰ William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, op. cit., III.2.20

legitimately be made and re-introduced as intelligible elements of the finality of the representation. How is this possible without contradiction? Simply, that the fruitful relationship between the discursive and the aesthetic is not *linear* but *dialectical*.

For example, the first chapter of Rousseau's *Social Contract* begins with his dramatic assertion that 'Man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains'.¹¹ This is a judgement about the author's times, in which case it is reasonable to ask if his deliberately challenging observation were justified. On the other hand, apprehended in the aesthetic mode what becomes available is the intrinsic irony of his observation clinched in paradox. This is generated through the yoking together of *freedom* and *chains*. In the discursive mode it is a statement about an historical situation. In that mode it is contingent upon truth for its efficacy. In the aesthetic mode the thought is lifted to autonomy - it becomes momentarily disinterested - but is, thereby, 'charged up' for *insight*.¹²

It is this dialectical logic that underpins the possibility of teaching in arts subjects. In practice, sadly, the aesthetic mode often cannot be sustained under the reductive assault of information and ideological commitment.

Kant's assertion that the aesthetic demonstrates the imagination at play is intelligible in the consideration of remodelling. This may be what Kant means by genius - the 'faculty of *aesthetic ideas*'¹³ involving the '*free* employment of cognitive faculties'. (p.181, §49) He is obliged to associate it with, above all, poets, because the mechanistic, linear logic associated with scientific discovery precludes it:

[...] genius [...] is a talent for art - not one for science, in which clearly known rules must take the lead and determine the procedure.

[...] Genius [...] is the exemplary originality of the natural endowments of an individual in the *free* employment of his cognitive faculties. On this showing, the product of a genius [...] is an example, not for imitation (for that would mean the loss of the element of genius, and just the very soul of the work), but to be followed by another genius - one whom it arouses to a sense of his own originality in putting freedom from the constraint of rules

¹¹ Jean Jaques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans. by Maurice Cranston (London: Penguin, 1968), p.49.

¹² I am grateful to Hywell Thomas for this example. See 'Gerard Manley Hopkins and John Duns Scotus', in *Religious Studies*, 24 (1988), 337-364 (p.349).

¹³ *Critique of Judgement*, p.212, §57

so into force in his art, that for art itself a new rule is won. (pp.180-181, §49)

The logic of paradigm shifts - the emergence of an *alternative* holistic vision - suggests that Kant's ascription was too narrow and that genius, logically, is equally a potentiality of the *imaginative* scientific mind.

An important assumption of Kant's is in the positing of a common sense. He distinguishes this from common understanding 'which is also sometimes called common sense (*sensus communis*)'. (p.82, §20) Because they depend upon pleasure, which is subjective, Kant's argument for the universality of judgements of taste comes to depend upon establishing a consensus:

[...] the actual judgement of taste must satisfy two criteria - particular judgements must gain confirmation from the community and the confirmed judgement must depend on the subject's autonomous activity in grasping and ordering some material in a pleasurable judgement. In effect Kant's theory points to a mutual dependence between the subject and the community.¹⁴

Whereas there is no doubt that judgements of taste *do* conglomerate into consensus, such consensus comes to pre-empt subjective judgement through fashion and eventually consolidates into the canonical. Kant's second criterion for objectivity includes the subject's 'autonomous activity' but, as we have argued, because of the dialectical nature of the aesthetic, criteria can be *discussed*. In the end, though, the shift into the aesthetic mode cannot be underwritten. Kant's argument seems ingenious - but it is all important as it evolves into the *transcendental* deduction that rationalises the very heart of his enterprise:

[...] a person who describes something as beautiful insists that every one *ought* to give the object in question his approval and follow suit in describing it as beautiful.¹⁵

The subjective judgement of taste is rendered universal by the agreement of the collective:

The individual becomes an autonomous subject by setting aside the complete sovereignty of merely subjective responses and accepting the conditions necessary for an intersubjective validity that succeeds by gaining confirmation from the aesthetic community.¹⁶

¹⁴ Kemal, p.122.

¹⁵ *Critique of Judgement*, p.82, §19.

¹⁶ Kemal, p.124.

Aesthetic judgement involves the cognitive powers at play without resolution into a definite concept. Common sense, then, must reflect 'the way the cognitive powers are attuned for cognition generally.'¹⁷ In other words, without a common sense, knowledge and communication 'would not arise.' (p.83, §21) Aesthetic judgements involve us in the community because they involve common rational faculties - and feelings - and thereby give us the means to negotiate 'intersubjective judgements'.¹⁸ In this way aesthetic judgement involves us in culture.

A common sense is a condition for communication. In other words, the intelligibility of discourse presupposes a common capacity - but intelligibility in art presupposes internal relations. The drama is intelligible through its depiction of forms of life - it is forms of life that are inscaped by the dramatist. Such forms are simply unintelligible when conceived in terms of discrete faculties - feeling or cognition - and neither can they be transparent to the discursive. Peter Winch makes a telling distinction between the discursive and forms of life when he observes,

[...] though extinct ways of thinking may, in a sense, be recaptured by the historian, the way in which the historian thinks them will be coloured by the fact that he has had to employ historiographical methods to recapture them. The medieval knight did not have to use those methods in order to view his lady in terms of the notions of courtly love: he just thought of her in those terms.¹⁹

Kant, in associating aesthetic judgements with the social domain, has to concede how intelligibility within that domain proceeds so that, ultimately, finality of form and finality of ends are merely different perspectives on the same structure: the aesthetic is a mode of relation. In so far as the articulate imagination *remodels*, the domain of cognition must, of necessity, be extended. Art is not a matter of decoration nor of propaganda.

Though Kant in his pursuit of his deduction eschews the psychological and empirical, there may be intriguing evidence for a common sense nevertheless - to put it another way, how are unfamiliar forms of life accessible to us? The following example concerns a culture

¹⁷ *Critique of Judgement*, p.82, §19.

¹⁸ Kemal, p.127.

¹⁹ Peter Winch, *The Idea of a Social Science*, this edn. 1977 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p.132.

as distant from our own as it is perhaps possible to imagine - that of the Yanomami Indians who live in an area on the borders of Brazil and Venezuela. It describes a shaman engaged in a ritual:

He is seated under the high part of the roof, somewhat in front of the most forward supporting posts, at a place customarily devoted to the great events of social life [...]. The low part between the two rows of posts that support the sloping roof is the place of family life and domestic activities. Further back, beyond the upright logs set at the edge of the forest, is the dumping ground for household refuse and dog feces; that is where one goes to urinate. From the central plaza to the forest - looking from the inside toward the outside - one can make out a series of concentric rings within which specific activities are carried out. Each of these rings is in turn divided transversely, each segment being occupied by a particular lineage and subdivided among different groups of first cousins. But that is not all: The great shelter, the *shobono*, also reflects the Indian's conception of the universe. The central plaza is the celestial vault, and the low part of the roof is a replica of the low part of the sky - conceived as a convex structure - where it meets the disc of the earth. When a shaman goes on a trip between the different levels of the universe to recover a stolen soul, to "eat" a little child, or for any other reason, the dwelling is for him a convenient geometric representation where he can orient himself perfectly. This exact convergence of the social, religious, and cosmological orders makes a microcosm of the Yanomami dwelling.²⁰

What counts here, initially, is the intelligibility of the phenomenon to the enquiring imagination of the observer: the arriving at the finality of the Yanomami conception presupposes its intelligibility both *for us and for them* and at the same time underwrites its availability as a thing of beauty. From another perspective, it is a striking example of the *scientific* spirit, the quest to make sense of the world and ourselves.

In this context it is possible to illustrate what Kant means when he writes that 'the beautiful is the symbol of the morally good.'²¹ A condition of the possibility of morality is a common sense, that is, the world of the *other* must be intelligible.

All intuitions by which *a priori* concepts are given a foothold are, therefore, either *schemata* or *symbols*. Schemata contain direct, symbols indirect, presentations of the concept. Schemata effect this presentation demonstratively, symbols by the aid of analogy [...] in which analogy

²⁰ Jacques Lizot, *Tales of the Yanomami*, trans. by E. Simons, Canto edn. 1991 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p.88.

²¹ *Critique of Judgement*, p.223, §59.

judgement performs a double function: first in applying the concept to the object of a sensible intuition, and then, secondly, in applying the mere rule of its reflection upon that intuition to quite another object, of which the former is a symbol. In this way a monarchical state is represented as a living body when it is governed by constitutional laws, but as a mere machine (like a hand-mill) when it is governed by an individual absolute will; but in both cases the representation is merely symbolic. (pp.222-223, §59)

Given that what underpins the analogical is an internal relation, Kant is describing the logic of *metaphor* rather than of symbolism in the generally accepted sense - there is, for example, no internal relation between Scotland and the Saltire. What counts is the *rule* that underpins the internal relation. The imagination that arrives at the meaning of the structure of the *shobono* for the Yanomami - tracing the rule as it proceeds - reproduces the very journey of the moral imagination in arriving at insight into our common humanity. Our kinship is bound in to the possibility of mediation through symbolic systems. If the language of the Yanomami is *translatable* then we must share forms of life and the *sensus communis* is confirmed.

If the common sense offers the possibility of understanding across cultural and geographical divides it also underpins the possibility of History. Vasari was certainly alert to the importance of establishing the historical context through the understanding of which something of the presuppositions, aims and values implicit in an artefact could be reached. But out of this unearthing of differences there often emerges, paradoxically, with a shock of familiarity, a sense of a common life. Given the limitations of the discursive, as noted by Winch, what it was to *be* an Elizabethan presupposes *imaginative* access to that culture. The imagination in entering into the world of the book describes a parallel path to its entry into the circumstances of persons. The one is a rehearsal for the other; both extend the *community*.

Through Kant's conception of the common sense can be seen the *misconception* at the heart of both absolutism and relativism. These are positions posited by the *discursive*. The *other* is accessible through the imagination - in our moral and cultural transactions - and it follows that cultures themselves must similarly be accessible. Relativism presupposes a conceptual awareness of the ideological ground of absolutism but fails to see that

presupposed in *whatever* cluster of values is asserted is the common ground of *what it is to value*. From that common ground, just as in the development of Kant's cultural community through shared judgements, it is possible to develop shared experience.

Friendships which are 'historic' present difficulties. In these circumstances friends in their infrequent encounters may come to be trapped into merely revisiting past experiences. Continuing friendship depends upon new, common experience - shared *meaning*.

We, distinctively, are makers of meaning and in that creativity lies the possibility of a kind of freedom from history in terms of the possibility of its refiguration through a common vision. On the other hand, absolutism and relativism are the only positions available to the *thinking* self in the discursive mode. It is in the exercising of the imagination, in the mutual accommodation of self and world associated with the individuating self - supposing interaction with the other, the social domain - that the common sense becomes a liberating resource. In discussing Kant's notion of 'enlarged thought' Makkreel writes:

[...] the imagination has an important role to play in enlarging our thought. Enlargement does not call for us to transpose ourselves into the actual standpoint of someone else. The understanding of the other is dependent on a prior enlargement of one's own thought based on imagining possibilities that are not merely variations of the self. This is not to be confused with the Romantic idea of empathy. Instead of projecting ourselves into the other, we are to project a possible intermediary position held neither by the self nor by the other. This provides a perspective, based on the *sensus communis*, that makes possible a better understanding of both the self and the other.²²

Here we see an important role for imagination in the mediation effected through culture. Such transactions are clearly differentiated from identification – mere empathy.

This position is clearly distinct from that of Shelley:

A poet, as he is the author to others of the highest wisdom, pleasure, virtue and glory, so he ought personally to be the happiest, the best, the wisest, and the most illustrious of men. That he is the wisest, the happiest, and the best, inasmuch as he is a poet, is equally incontrovertible; the greatest poets have been men of the most spotless virtue, of the most consummate prudence, and, if we look into the interior of their lives, the most fortunate of men.²³

²² Makkreel, p.160.

²³ Percy Bysshe Shelley, 'The Defence of Poetry', from *Nature and Industrialization*, op. cit., pp.215-216.

Shelley fails to discriminate between the distinct intentional acts that separate the imagination in the context of the moral and the aesthetic: the former meets its end in responsive action; the latter in illuminating contemplation. The one is a rehearsal of the other but the aesthetic incorporates no sanction for action.

There are, though, circumstances where the imagination *fails* to arrive at finality, characteristically, in the contemplation of nature:

[...] we observe that whereas natural beauty (such as is self-subsisting) conveys a finality in its form making the object appear, as it were, predated to our power of judgement, so that it thus forms of itself an object of our delight, that which, without our indulging in any refinements of thought, but, simply in our apprehension of it, excites the feeling of the sublime, may appear, indeed, in point of form to contravene the ends of our power of judgement, to be ill-adapted to our faculty of presentation, and to be, as it were, an outrage on the imagination.²⁴

Clearly, the sublime is a phenomenon *within* the aesthetic mode - it is not comparable to a mere failure of *comprehension*. In other words, the *imagination* has failed to find a *limit* and experiences the *unlimited* - it experiences a *not yet realised resolution of form* within a double prescription. The intuition of imminent resolution is characteristic. The failure to resolve the form *must*, at the same time, be a failure to establish internal relations in a context where the imagination is urgently disposed to find them. In Kant's terms, the imagination seeks to find subjective formal finality. It follows that whereas, by clear implication, for Wordsworth the sublime is an avenue to the *numinous*, such failure of the imagination locates the sublime in *subjectivity* - this may help to explain what Keats might have meant when, in a letter he referred to, 'the Wordsworthian or egotistical sublime'.²⁵

Kant distinguishes between the mathematical sublime, which 'calls forth that emotion which no mathematical estimation of magnitudes by numbers can evoke'²⁶ - that is to say, a defeat of the imagination in the context of the faculty of *cognition* - and the dynamical sublime, the effect of such a defeat on the faculty of *desire*. (p.94, §24) In the experience of the dynamical sublime our imaginative failure is experienced as *awe* in the face of the

²⁴ *Critique of Judgement*, p.91, §23.

²⁵ John Keats, 'Letter' to Richard Woodhouse, 1818, from *A Selection from John Keats*, op. cit., p.238.

²⁶ *Critique of Judgement*, p.99, §26.

overwhelming power of nature. Whereas the experience of beauty is the finding of stasis in '*restful contemplation*' - the completion of subjective finality - in the experience of the dynamical sublime the 'mind feels itself *set in motion*'. (p.107, §27) This is confirmed in the *kinetic* imagery associated with Hopkins and Dickinson in their arriving at sublimity.

How is the conviction that the sublime is associated with access to the numinous to be squared with the assertion that the sublime is a failure of imagination in the context of the subjective?

The beautiful prepares us to love something, even nature, apart from any interest; the sublime to esteem something highly even in opposition to our (sensible) interest.

The sublime may be describe in this way: It is an object (of nature) the *representation of which determines the mind to regard the elevation of nature beyond our reach as equivalent to a presentation of ideas.*
(p.119, §29)

That is to say, we are directed to understand nature *as if* it were a *creation* - a Creator is not, thereby, presupposed. Kant has provided the rationalisation for a position that the Romantics would instantly recognise:

The charms in natural beauty [...] blended [...] with beauty of form [...] embody as it were a language in which nature speaks to us and which has the semblance of a higher meaning. (p.161, §42)

However, it is precisely in its subjectivity that the sublime reveals to us an infinity within ourselves. There is a parallel with the moral law, in the exercise of which lies freedom and the positing of my own value in so far as I am my own law-maker.

The regress of the imagination involved in the sublime produces [...] a subliminal sense of one's own resources and individuating power [...].

Just as the purposiveness of beauty is related to the form that delimits an object, so the purposiveness of the sublime implies what we may call the form of the subject.²⁷

It is as if the purposiveness of the subject were a microcosm of the purposiveness that informs nature. We create our own value:

There remains then nothing but the worth which we ourselves assign to our life by what we not alone do, but do with a view to an end so independent of

²⁷ Makkreel, pp.84-85.

nature that the very existence of nature itself can only be an end subject to the condition so imposed.²⁸

It is through culture that we ultimately define ourselves.

On the other hand, the modes through which we relate to that culture are critical: regarded as a set of prescriptions or precepts or assimilated through identification culture constitutes a pervasive determinism; assimilated through the imagination a process of reciprocal discovery - self and world - is possible.

The relationship between the beautiful and the sublime can, perhaps, be reconstrued in the consideration of the relation between the analogical and the symbolic. Beauty is bound up with a specific kind of intention engaged by purposive wholes. The whole is analogically constituted. The analogical, of its nature, *depicts* the finality that is projected through internal relation. Such finality is a necessary but not sufficient condition for beauty - it awaits its fulfilment through the aesthetic mode. Symbolism, on the other hand, is associated with the *purposiveness* of the whole. Language is a symbolic system precisely because of the purposiveness of its concepts -

For a *large* class of cases - though not for all - in which we employ the word "meaning" it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language.²⁹

Symbolism reflects a distinctive intention that not only engages with the purposiveness of the depiction but is also sensitive to the *power* of the purposiveness. In the context of art, explicit symbolism draws attention to the expressive purpose of the *artist*. This must be a distraction from the contemplation of the finality of the construct. In the context of nature, on the other hand, and in the depiction of nature, awareness of such purposiveness, given a certain ideological presupposition, reaches for rationalisation in terms of a *creator*.

In his discussion of natural selection Richard Dawkins is helpful in focusing these issues:

Natural selection [...] has no purpose in view. Yet the living results of natural selection overwhelmingly impress us with the appearance of design.³⁰

²⁸ *Critique of Judgement, Part II: Critique of Teleological Judgement*, p.98n., §23 [84].

²⁹ *Philosophical Investigations*, p.20e, 43.

³⁰ Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker* (London: Penguin, 1988), p.21.

We see creatures as purposive wholes and so caught up are we in the sheer appropriateness of their structures that we transpose purposiveness into purpose, thereby reflecting 'the power of the illusion of design.' According to Dawkins, William Paley's *Natural Theology* - published in 1802, in the context of the Romantic movement - precisely reflects this illusion. Again, in the contemplation of the structures of living forms, finality of form is internally related to finality of ends.

It is as if Wordsworth found a passage to the numinous through the purposive power that emerges in his readings of nature, readings which are analogically rendered in his poetry. In effect, the numinous is a particular conceptual rationalisation of the charge of double prescription arising *from the very nature of beauty itself* - beauty is a mode of response to purposive wholes. The sublime, then, supposes the experience of an intense purposiveness - a symbolic apprehension - in the expectation of the immanent resolution of a whole that remains without a limit. Where nature is understood to be emblematic we can assume that purposiveness has shifted into a rationalising sense of purpose and this rationalisation has consolidated into an ideological stance.

In the context of the artefact we may be moved to draw attention to the brilliance of the execution - we reverence the mind that conceived this Shakespeare play or that Mozart opera. However, in the context of *nature*, the *landscape itself* will be found to be charged with *unresolved purposiveness*. It is such intuitions of purposiveness that seem to be the ground of the sacred - antecedent to which must be apprehension *in the aesthetic mode*. Aesthetic apprehension is *presupposed* in the sublime where the *attempt* to arrive at comprehension - or, indeed, the arrival itself - incorporates an intention directed at purposiveness. Such intuition arises from a *completed* finality or in the *anticipation* of such finality - it is a matter of experience that there can be a sense of imminent completion before the full aesthetic comprehension itself. The strongest sense of the sacred arises in this process of completion, in the very act of imagining, hence, the characteristic kinetic imagery.

In Coleridge's 'Frost at Midnight' many of these issues concerning symbolism emerge:

The Frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind.³¹

The metaphor 'ministry' supposes the rendering of a service in a religious context. The action of the frost is purposive but, as yet, without a specific purpose. Its action is 'secret' because what it effects is brought about by no readily identifiable agency. Frost is associated with beauty because it inscapes, draws the eye to structures inherent in the natural world.

On the larger scale, six inches of snow will transfigure a mountain landscape. In our response to the same prospect without snow we seem to select cues which emphasise the vertical plane of the mountain - rock faces and steep slopes draw the eye. The snow at once defamiliarises and inscapes in such a way as to emphasise the gentler slopes and flatter surfaces because that is where the snow gathers. The effect is to shift the slope towards the horizontal plane - the mountain looks altogether more accessible.

Defamiliarisation is the condition that allows for the emergence of new structures. The visitation of frost effects an aesthetic transformation which, precisely because it is beautiful, is associated with purposiveness. The association of 'ministry' and inscape draws attention to such purposiveness. The whole transaction is now available to fulfil a symbolic function - the frost becomes representative, points beyond itself, as purpose evolves out of purposiveness. A dualistic polarisation now emerges. The source of the aesthetic experience has now become ripe for ideological appropriation:

[...] so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sound intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself. (p.70)

In fact it is in the context of the aesthetic - in purposiveness *not yet* resolved into purpose - that the symbolic effect is at its most powerful. Everything at the far side of the aesthetic involves a vitiation.

Strictly speaking, in Coleridge's poem the aesthetic is *presupposed* in the initial image. We are drawn into Coleridge's perspective from indoors while we *imagine* what is

³¹ S.T. Coleridge, 'Frost at Midnight', from *Selected Poems*, op.cit., p.68.

happening outside - our attention is thereby drawn to the *process*. The poem explores what it is to be a symbol rather than initiates us into the aesthetic apprehension itself.

By the time of its reiteration towards the end of the poem the 'secret ministry' of the frost has become *representative*. The poem reflects the decay from the immediacy of imaginative apprehension to the discursive. The imagination is, *of its very nature*, associated with loss - the characteristic lyric theme of *mutability* is internally related to the evolving imaginative process itself.

We noted earlier that catharsis was originally a preparatory purgation in anticipation of ekstasis. It is as if the process were secularised by Aristotle - that is to say, that aesthetic comprehension is identified with response to a specifically human construct. He set the drama free from religious ritual. On the other hand, it may be that in a context of incipient secularisation that the eighteenth century fascination with the sublime was an attempt to give expression to religious needs within an essentially dualistic epistemology.

Implicit in the general argument has been the reversal of the accepted hierarchies of reason and imagination. That the sacred is an adjunct of the aesthetic is, perhaps, for some, a more contentious reversal but it is, of course, perfectly neutral with regard to the mystery of the intelligibility of what Kant would call the 'substrate of nature'.³²

Summary

Whether or not a representation is experienced as beautiful or, say, informative, depends upon the mode in which it is apprehended. In our actual experience cognition and emotion are bound together. In art, the analogical nature of representations, because of the logic of internal relations, establishes that finality within the representation *presupposes* objective finality. Beauty is associated with the imagination's engaging, through a specific mode of contemplation, with purposive wholes. Only when imagination is conflated with fancy - supposing dualistic categories, head and heart - is Kant's notion of free beauty intelligible. In these circumstances beauty is a response to the decorative - beauty without a concept.

³² *Critique of Teleological Judgement*, p.77, §19, (80).

Aesthetic judgements are discussible because of the possibility of a dialectical movement across *modes*. This transaction allows for the discursive to contribute to the explication of purposive wholes but it cannot underwrite the aesthetic response. That something is a symbol, presupposes expressiveness in a context of purpose where the purpose becomes an object of intention. Aesthetic responses to nature, in a certain ideological context, and given a certain intensity, resolve into experience of the sacred.

There is a common sense presupposed in the possibility of intelligibility itself. In arriving at this intelligibility, the imagination, whether in the aesthetic or moral mode, comes to a recognition of our common humanity and, thereby, to an awareness of the unconditional value of persons. In these circumstances, to deny unconditionality is self-contradictory. Conditionality is a product of discursive scrutiny.

Chapter Nine

Monochromatic and Imaginative Readings

In listening or reading we are engaged in a range of modes of relation. The mediation effected through metaphor in the process of imagining supposes both a semantic context and a projective reference whose power of depiction is manifest in an holistic structure. On the other hand, the explicative power of the discursive is confined to a cumulative series of signs and referents. Critical discourse tacitly assumes that its characteristic discursive relation is the paradigm case of understanding. However, its structures of interpretation must be beside the point, establish a sort of critical idealism - in the sense of an exalting exaggeration - unless their role as elements in the dialectic of imagining is understood. This chapter explores some of the epistemological issues inherent in the different modes of relation.

In *Howard's End*, E.M. Forster presents a spectrum of responses in describing how his characters respond to music:

It will be generally admitted that Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is the most sublime noise that has ever penetrated into the ear of man. All sorts and conditions are satisfied by it. Whether you are like Mrs Munt, and tap surreptitiously when the tunes come [...] or like Helen, who can see heroes and shipwrecks in the music's flood; or like Margaret, who can only see the music; or like Tibby, who is profoundly versed in counterpoint, and who holds the full score open on his knee; or like their cousin, Fräulein Mosebach, who remembers all the time that Beethoven is 'echt Deutsch'; or like Fräulein Mosebach's young man, who can remember nothing but Fräulein Mosebach: in any case, the passion of your life becomes more vivid, and you are bound to admit that such a noise is cheap at two shillings.¹

These responses are exaggerated in some cases for the purpose of satire but taken together they could stand for a rough and ready exposition of the experience of a *single* listener in the course of a concert. Helen's response is indicative of appropriation through fantasy, nevertheless, at some level, mediation through the music is presupposed, if manifest, predominantly, in affective terms. Tibby is trapped in the discursive - mediation is presupposed here too but at the level of the cognitive though there must be some motivating value. The most interesting case is that of Meg who can only 'see' the music. Why should Forster employ synaesthesia to reach for an account of her experience?

It is as if Forster were distinguishing between the kind of transaction that Meg makes compared to those of the others who 'see' in the music what they bring to it - the music as

¹ E.M. Forster, *Howard's End*, repr. 1979 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1941), pp.44-45.

mirror. Much then depends upon the 'only', which suggests that she 'sees' the music in and for itself. But what does that involve? It is as if Forster assumed that if Meg were described as simply 'hearing' the music we would drift over the transaction assuming we knew what it meant - that is, we would assimilate through identification. That would, ironically, engage the same relation in the reader as is satirised in most of the other characters in their responses to Beethoven. Does metaphor, then, in some way, give us privileged access?

So far we have understood metaphor to be a structural analogue which effects a mediation with the world and with the capacity to render experience from redundancy. Paul Ricoeur locates its imaginative power both at the referential and semantic levels:

The creative moment of metaphor is concentrated on this grasping of resemblance, in the perception of analogies. [...] We now see a similarity that nobody had ever noticed before. The difficulty [...] is to understand that we see similarity by construing it, that the visionary grasping of resemblance is, at the same time, a verbal invention. The iconic element has therefore to be included in the predicative process itself.

[...] a novel metaphor does not merely actualize a potential connotation, it creates it. It is a semantic innovation, an emergent meaning.²

In effect, he endorses here the prescriptive power of language. Additionally, in our terms, it is as if there is redundancy *within language itself*: 'when we speak, only a part of the semantic field of a word is used.' (p.73) It is through exploiting the redundancy in language that redundancy in the world rendered:

It is the very experience of making that yields that of discovering. And discovering is to confront the opacity of the world. The world is included - excluded as the horizon of each intentional aiming.³

It is through 'intentional aiming' that double prescription is engaged, and through such prescriptions that redundancy is inscaped - structured - and thereby charged with meaning. The phenomenon of double prescription was first described in terms of visual experience. It can be seen that the framing intention that limits and thereby structures visual experience is replicated in the process of *selection* and simultaneous *foredrawing* implicit in metaphor.

² Paul Ricoeur, 'Word, Polysemy, Metaphor: Creativity in Language', from *A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination*, ed. by Mario J. Valdés (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), pp.78-79.

³ Ricoeur, 'A Review of Nelson Goodman's *Ways of Worldmaking*', from *A Ricoeur Reader*, p.212.

But whether such innovation supposes the priority, as it were, of the semantic or the world proves to be an issue that involves closer examination of the nature of symbolic mediation - it is, after all, the intention of, say, Wordsworth or Hopkins or Cézanne to render the *world*.

In so far as a text or conversation is intelligible at all, symbolic mediation has occurred. Mediation involves a simultaneous dual transaction. The consideration of a single noun - 'sparrow' - distorts the issues in that the noun *appears* to depend for its meaning exclusively on a *single* transaction, its reference, suggesting, fundamentally, the priority of ostensive definition. On the other hand, its meaning - its use in the language - presupposes that the sign takes its place - *becomes* a symbol - as a constituent in a complex matrix of concepts - 'bird', 'flight', for example. The sign *becomes* a symbol in the context of a language game.

[...] words function as meaningful entities only within the framework of the sentence.

Of course, words are based on lexical entities which are undoubtedly semiotic things. But a lexical entity is not yet a word. It is only the possibility of a word.⁴

Even a single noun is intelligible only at the nexus of a dual transaction - a reference and a semantic context.

Put in another way, 'sparrow' remains *generic* - a sign, not *yet* a symbol - until made *specific* through predication: it follows, *that the reference presupposes a semantic context*. Making something specific presupposes an already complex, intelligible structure. Hywel Thomas observes:

[...] logicians (post-Frege) have accepted that it is only in the context of a proposition (i.e. the representation of a situation or state of affairs) that a name succeeds in acquiring a reference; that is, that an arbitrary sound becomes, or can be construed as a name.⁵

Our early education predisposes us to assume that somehow dictionaries are repositories of meaning but in learning a foreign language we discover that they are never quite enough - meaning is a function of how the word is *used*. The predications that constitute Hopkins's inscape *render* specific characteristics of the world that have remained redundant, previously undisclosed, or have been obscured by familiarity. In this is revealed the link

⁴ 'Word, Polysemy, Metaphor', p.69.

⁵ Hywel Thomas, 'Gerard Manley Hopkins and John Duns Scotus', op. cit., p.343.

between inscape and individuation: Hopkins, in exploring the resources of language through metaphor, simultaneously effects a definition or redefinition of some aspect of the world. Individuation and inscape are *logically* related.

In the analogical context, the referential power of language is not a function of single, ostensive definitions but depends on *internal relations* between semantic configurations and states of affairs in the world - that is what symbolic *mediation* means. Reference is a product of successful mediation. Only a *symbol* - presupposing a semantic context - can function as a component in a series of internal relations.

Earlier, in discussing issues concerning the Romantic imagination, I suggested that for something to function as a symbol involves a sense of purposiveness engaged by an holistic apprehension of a complex structure. It seems that a linguistic symbol becomes so only in fulfilling a *purposive* role in a *semantic* context.

If reference supposes successful mediation the issue resolves into the consideration of the *fit* between analogue and world - mediation becomes a function of the *projective* efficacy of symbolic structures. As we have already noted, (Chapter 4) Wittgenstein refers to 'the law of projection' in his discussion of the relation of the 'symphony' to 'the language of musical notation.'⁶ Ricoeur comments:

It is a fact that no articulate theory of imagination is available which does justice to the basic distinction between image as fiction and image as copy. Stubborn prejudices tend to identify the notion of image with that of replica of a given reality.⁷

The image as replica supposes the priority of what might be called *literal* reference:

[...] if you treat fiction as a complex image you may refer your elementary images one by one to corresponding entities in the world. But you have only displaced the difficulty. It's the new combination which has no reference in a previous original to which the image would be a copy. (p.120)

It is the consideration of the projective reference of the symbolic structure presupposed in internal relations that resolves Ricoeur's problem. The assertion of the priority of image as replica - with its insistence on piecemeal, literal reference - is, effectively, a reversal of logical priorities: specific reference *presupposes* projective reference. Mere replication

⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, op. cit., p.39.

⁷ 'The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality', from *A Ricoeur Reader*, p.118

denies the prescriptive power of the mediating structure. The potentiality for creativity lies in the complexity of the structure that seeks to effect mediation; that complexity allows for the shifting of emphasis and focus that renders hidden redundancy. *Internal* relations underpin projective reference; creativity within the analogical structure depends upon the development of *constituent* relations. But there is a simultaneous, *dual* transaction which finally denies priority either to language or to the world - the analogue is *constitutive* of experience and that disclosure with its double prescription is the paradigm case of imaginative transactions. At that moment, to *see* and to *discover* and to *value* are one and the same. Herein lies the conceptual basis for imaginative *synthesis*, the reconciliation of head and heart.

Seeing things 'as if' supposes an internal relation. The image then shares with that which is represented, an aspect of its constituent form. Projective reference marries an aspect of the necessarily complex form of the image with an aspect of the complex form of the phenomenon. But just as in the process of our imagining the image discloses itself as intelligible - we unpack the metaphor - the projective reference must, in effect, bind the aspects of some state of affairs in the world into a *limited* whole. The disclosed intelligibility is *read into it* - this *limitation* thereby constituting and establishing the initial prescription of a double prescription. It is in this experience of complexity holistically realised through the image - the dynamic process of imagining - that there is generated the possibility of symbolism. Indeed, it is difficult to *avoid* some sense of the purposive in an aspect of the world so revealed - it is inherent in the fundamental intelligibility of the image.

Hopkins's inscapes - symbolic analogues - are extended into the matrix of *constituent* relations that are the fabric of the poem. The novel and the drama are as securely inscaped through symbolic mediation as a Hopkins poem or a Cézanne landscape:

In his *Poetics* Aristotle paved the way for a generalizing of metaphor conceived as heuristic fiction by linking metaphor as a rhetorical trait to the main operation of poetry which is the building of a *mythos*, of a fable. The invention of the fable in tragedy is the creative act of poetry *par excellence*.⁸

⁸ 'Word, Polysemy, Metaphor', p.84.

Ricoeur argues that a metaphor 'is a work in miniature'⁹ Characteristically, what is inscaped in the novel and drama are *forms of life* - this is presupposed in their very intelligibility.

It follows that learning about the text - making discoveries about it - through exploration of constituent relations *presupposes* extension of the intelligibility of the ground of reference through internal relations, *but the extension of meaning implicit in the presupposition remains a mere potentiality and waits upon the act of imagining for its realisation*. This is a departure from Ricoeur's argument which fails effectively to differentiate between the discursive and aesthetic modes.

Put in Kantian terms - and to *reverse* Kant's argument - in so far as a representation is *analogically* constituted, objective and subjective finality coincide in the aesthetic mode but *not* in the discursive. This is because in the discursive mode, double prescription cannot take place: the world cannot, therefore, be manifest as inscape - in holistic structures. It cannot, in these circumstances, be individuated. In the discursive mode structure is experienced as extended through time; it is conceived in *components* with *discrete* reference. In the aesthetic mode, *dual reference is irreducible*.

As Ricoeur says, 'mimesis is not a copying of reality, but a redescription in light of a heuristic fiction'.¹⁰ Poetry is not associated with making discoveries about the nature of the world, it 'gives no information in terms of empirical knowledge [...]. What is changed by poetic language is our way of dwelling in the world.' (p.85). On the other hand, it may be that science itself does something very similar. Was not the 'discovery' of DNA associated with finding a model, an holistic structure, that explained the interrelation of previously unsynthesised data? At a fundamental level, paradigm shifts change the nature of what we take to be the world. It could be argued that these alter the scientific community's way of 'dwelling in the world'. It is not the nature of their imagining that distinguishes the poet from the scientist but their distinctive intentions in the contexts of different kinds of assent. Newton himself is perfectly clear that what is revealed by the empirical method is inherent *purposiveness* and from that insight he takes the further step into the ascription of *purpose*:

⁹ 'Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics', from *A Ricoeur Reader*, p.305.

¹⁰ 'Word, Polysemy, Metaphor', p.84.

As in mathematics, so in natural philosophy, the investigation of difficult things by the method of analysis, ought ever to precede the method of composition. This analysis consists in making experiments and observations, and in drawing general conclusions from them by induction [...]. And if natural philosophy in all its parts, by pursuing this method, shall at length be perfected, the bounds of moral philosophy will also be enlarged. For so far as we can know by natural philosophy what is the First Cause, what power He has over us, and what benefits we receive from Him, so far our duty towards Him, as well as that towards one another, will appear to us by the light of Nature.¹¹

The nature of Romantic symbolism is adumbrated in this.

From the author's perspective (the pursuit of reality) the exposition of insight gleaned in his world in the process of analogical development - that is, through symbolic mediation - drives the subtlety of the constituent matrix. From the reader's perspective, obscurity is *inevitably* generated according to the degree of novelty of the insight. To confront this is, in effect, to enter into a process of defamiliarisation, which is a precondition for the conceptual shifts that allow for the establishment of novel projective reference - new *insight*. Ricoeur associates such defamiliarisation with,

[...] the central paradox of the theory of fiction, namely, that only the image which does not already have its referent in reality is able to display a world.

[...] fiction reveals its ability to transform or transfigure reality only when it is inserted into something as a labour, in short, when it is a work [...]. When the image is made, it is also able to remake a world. It is at this stage that the break with philosophic tradition is most difficult to perform and preserve. The constant tendency of classical philosophy to reduce fiction to illusion closes the way to an ontology of fiction. Kant himself has rendered this step most difficult both in insisting on the subjectivity of the judgement of taste and in placing fiction within the aesthetics of genius.¹²

In the aesthetic mode, it is dual reference - the lateral, semantic relation in combination with projective reference - and the consequent coinciding of objective and subjective finality that release art from subjectivity and establishes imagining as the paradigm case of intelligibility.

But here there is a problem: the actual shift and accompanying double prescription is not directly available through linear logic - the shift is, of its nature, *spontaneous*. The shift can

¹¹ Sir Isaac Newton, *Optics*, from *Great Books of the Western World*, ed. by R.M. Hutchins (London: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1952), p.543.

¹² 'The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality', p.129.

be worked *for* but the very working may serve merely to *consolidate* the discursive mode. This explains why the creative imagination - as in the case of Wordsworth - can be *had* and *lost*. It also explains why a new configuration of reality may not be engaged. Ricoeur hints at such spontaneity when he refers to the '*visionary* grasping of resemblance'.¹³

In identification the reader is denied the full potential of dual reference because the cognitive is reduced to *recognition*, which merely slides over obscurity - every reader must have experienced being hit by an image or line in a familiar text that they have never 'seen' before - and is thereby responsive only to the minimal cues necessary to sustain an impoverishing stereotype. In this mode *discovery* is precluded for it is contingent upon the dual transaction.

Just as the sign is not-yet-a-symbol when denied its semantic context so the semantic - the potentiality of meaning - is vitiated when denied projective reference through mediation by way of internal relation: this reflects the *dual* nature of the transaction. Deconstruction, for example, is condemned to play within, effectively, locked sets. It is in these terms, also, that the vitiation effected both by the discursive and identification are explicable. The discursive is denied access to holistic structures and the inherent value disclosed in double prescription; in identification, value is a function of the narcissistic appropriation of structures which then serve as pretexts for emotion - the imagination is blocked because identification reduces structures to stereotypes.

Learning to drive involves participation in a complex symbolic matrix. The priority here is to shift perception as quickly as possible into the recognition of signs, *deliberately* to cultivate stereotypical responses so that they become a matter of reflex. The sanctions for learning effective responsive action are danger and expense. These preclude the desirability of alternative iterations - imagine being stuck at traffic lights while the person in front works through the possible permutations in the sequence of colours. It is our habituated reflexes in the context of responsive action - the pressures of life - that make full symbolic mediation unavailable if not absurd for most of us. Given the constant reinforcing of vitiating modes

¹³ 'Word, Polysemy, Metaphor', p.79. (My italics).

of relation it is hardly surprising that for many of us reading habits are confined to the mode of identification.

Many children are initially unresponsive to literary texts not because they are stupid but because their reductive modes of assimilation are being frequently reinforced by their life's experiences. In difficult family circumstances the last thing a child may be moved to do is *imagine* - this does not preclude indulgence in *fantasy*.

In summary, it can now be seen that defamiliarisation is a pre-condition for double prescription. The prescriptive power of the novel configuration implicit in metaphor *not only reconfigures the world but simultaneously renders the revealed structure expressive*. In an imagination that operates within a teleological context this expressive power is interpreted as the work of a Creator - as with Hopkins or Coleridge. On the other hand, the whole transaction is intelligible within the logic of imagination and, indeed, constitutes its paradigm case. It is essentially *neutral* with regard to religious commitment but, nevertheless, serves to sharpen the mystery of there being intelligibility at all.

It follows, that the idea that the text exists *only* at the semantic level involves a circularity consolidated by the characteristics of the assimilating mode - the discursive. This is not to say that discursive iterations are condemned to be reductive fantasy - they can be reconstituted as elements of the constituent matrix, elements of inscape, available for the imaginative transaction - but the spontaneous nature of imagining allows for no guarantee that it will happen. What counts, is the mode of relation with the text.

Identification presupposes intelligibility but is blind to innovation. It is, therefore, blind to double prescription - its rewards are available as a sort of narcissistic recognition with the possible admixture of fantasy. The discursive becomes blindness when it *stands for* interpretation, usurps the imagination by arrogating to itself the power of the text which is, ultimately, a function of the imagination, an expressive power derived from double prescription.

We can be richly appreciative of the brilliance of the discursive iteration but it is condemned to relativism, condemned to be perpetually beside the point unless it becomes bound in to the matrix and thence becomes a constituent in imaginative refiguration.

There is an inherent difficulty in the discussion of specifically imaginative transactions in that it is possible to indicate that *here* they occur or *have* occurred, but the explication is inevitably discursive. The problem is extended through the elaboration of discursive interpretative models which may be entirely independent of the actual experience of imagining - a sort of ideal, Platonic form of explanation, a product of pure, transcendental reasoning. This is the stock-in-trade of much that passes for education: we elaborate structures of interpretation for experiences that we haven't had and these become canonical for the learning community.

We can recognize the value contingent in the mediation effected through, say, a poem - but that value is not thereby located within the world as it is for Hopkins - or Cézanne, for that matter. For the imagination, the poem is a means to an end, an attempted mediation with reality; for the discursive, the poem is an end in itself - the aesthetic is reduced to aestheticism. The search for that lucidity where objective and subjective finalities coincide is, for Hopkins and Cézanne, the whole point and finding it would constitute their success. The discursive, with its rewards of cleverness, seduces us from the final and only significant imaginative transaction that would restore us to the world and simultaneously disclose and proclaim its value. It seeks to establish reference - and thereby authenticate itself - and in reference achieves only objectification. Such reference is merely a local contingency and is, thereby, inevitably reductive - it awaits upon its apotheosis in the synthesis of double prescription.

Discursive iterations are, *inevitably*, monochromatic. They establish a relativism that can see daylight only in its constituent elements - as a spectrum. The imaginative and the religious suppose a common, synthesising transaction - double prescription - the final outcome of which depends upon differentiating mediations, contexts of significance. The movement from the discursive to the aesthetic *is* dialectical in its nature, but it involves a shift across modes, it is not a straightforward synthesis of monochromatic readings. Such readings are, in effect, reductive fantasies if they remain unsynthesised.

Ricoeur describes a dialectic depending on a synthesis effected by the reader between two modes of mimesis. The primary ground of intelligibility of a text presupposes a 'prior

acquaintance¹⁴ with the sufferings and actions that constitute life. This 'pre-understanding' (p.142) - *mimesis*¹ - is the ground of a second *mimesis* 'which is textual and literary' (p.142). The material 'prefigured' in *mimesis*¹ is 'configured' through *mimesis*².

In the context of narrative, this configuration

[...] consists in 'grasping together' the details [...] of the story. From these diverse events it draws together the unity of one temporal whole. We cannot overemphasise the kinship between this 'grasping together' [...] and Kant's presentation of the operation of judging, where the transcendental meaning of a judgement consists not so much in joining a subject and a predicate as in placing some intuitive manifold under one concept. (p.146)

This configuration is essentially what Hopkins calls 'inscape' and for him, as we have seen, the writing of the poem involves 'overing and overing', a process of 'accentuating the message "for its own sake"¹⁵. This seems close to what Ricoeur calls 'iconic augmentation' - a term which he takes from Francois Dagonet:

What is iconically augmented is the preliminary readability that action owes to the interpretants that are already at work in it. Human action can be oversignified because is already pre-signified by all the modalities of its symbolic articulation.¹⁶

That human action is *oversignified* - over and overed - in, say, the context of the drama, amounts to a *clarification* of inscape so that redundancy can be cleared away for the emergence of an emphatic, expressive structure - but that is contingent upon an *imaginative* transaction. In the discursive mode this clarity can be appropriated as a *didactic* feature :

[...] I think it may be manifest that the poet, with that same hand of delight, doth draw the mind more effectually than any other art doth. And so a conclusion not unfitly ensues: that, as virtue is the most excellent resting place for all worldly learning to make this end of, so poetry, being the most familiar to teach it, and the most princely to move towards it, in the most excellent work is the most excellent workman.¹⁷

Thus Sidney makes use of Aristotle's didactic defence.

¹⁴ 'Mimesis and Representation', from *A Ricoeur Reader*, p.140. (In what follows I have preserved the superscript in which Ricoeur designates the different types of *mimesis* though I have represented it in italic to distinguish it from footnote numbers.)

¹⁵ Norman White, *Hopkins: A Literary Biography*, op. cit., p.143.

¹⁶ 'Mimesis and Representation', p.150.

¹⁷ Sidney, *A Defence of Poetry*, op. cit., p.42.

In our terms, *mimesis*¹ supposes *identification* as its relational mode - this involves tacit recognition of 'forms of life'. To be effective, *mimesis*² involves the dialectical twist across modes into holistic apprehension - in other words, *imagination*. To speak of the 'textual and literary' could be misleading in so far as it suggests discursive analysis whereas the imagination supposes a dynamic *process*, the actual *mediating* effected through our experiencing, say, metaphor. Nevertheless, excursions into the discursive mode are necessary to indicate the facilitating 'literary' characteristics of the text.

What must be remembered are the epistemological implications of the relational modes. Identification is the 'speed reading' of the imagination. It finds cues for the engagement of *habits* of perception, *stereotypes* of behaviour. It is blind to anomaly and experiences value as *convention*. It effects rapid assimilation within familiar and, thereby, secure paradigms. It shades into fantasy - in this mode fantasy and identification cannot often be effectively distinguished. The 'text', therefore, can have no clear autonomy. Tipped into fantasy the relational mode posits the text as a source of make-believe.

Whereas identification works through both association and the internal relations *presupposed* in recognition, in imagination, perceptions, stereotypes and conventions of value are challenged, not for their own sake, but implicitly in the disclosure of new insight with its concomitant disclosure of value. Internal relations are *discovered* and in these holistic apprehensions lie their symbol-making potential. The relational mode radically changes the relationships between self, text and world: the text can be a mirror with no projective efficacy - as in identification and appropriation through fantasy - or effect a mediation which simultaneously extends self and world.

Ricoeur designates these relational issues *mimesis*³:

[...] I shall say that *mimesis*³, marks the intersection of the world of the text and the world of the hearer or reader. Therefore it is the intersection of the world unfolded by fiction and the world wherein actual action unfolds.¹⁸

He is aware that this intersection constitutes 'a very complex problematic':

¹⁸ 'Mimesis and Representation', p.148.

This is due first of all to the diversity of its modalities. A whole range of cases is open, running from ideological confirmation of the established order [...] to social criticism. (pp.148-149)

The problem is that each of the three modes of relation that I have explored - identification, imagination and the discursive - in their distinctive epistemological prescriptions endow the artefact with a protean nature - there is, in a sense, no single artefact any more than there is, say, a single language game.

In his discussion of the nature of the relations between fiction and reality Frank Palmer observes:

In order to understand Macbeth's motives for killing Duncan we have to enter Macbeth's mind [...]. For this we need to put ourselves in his place and imagine, as through the play we do imagine, what it feels like to have that kind of ambition [...]. It is not possible to understand why Macbeth did what he knew to be wrong without understanding *him*.¹⁹

I take it that such 'understanding' is what Palmer means by 'primary engagement'. (p.87) However, 'to put ourselves in his place' supposes identification - Macbeth as mirror. I no more feel myself obliged to do this than identify with Genghis Khan. A crucial aspect of the drama is to disclose the character - Macbeth - but a grasp of the *entire* tragedy is presupposed in that. I might try to *think* myself into his situation but that would suppose a discursive relation. Palmer does not adequately differentiate between the implicit modes - identification, the discursive and imagining are conflated. Imagining - with its ultimate resolution in 'understanding' - supposes the *whole* dialectical transaction *including* 'iconic augmentation'. We don't experience an inscape and then experience its being over-and-overed: the latter presupposes *all* the devices of the poetry available to us bound in to the mediation effected through the text. That is not to deny, of course, that following upon further discursive scrutiny more may be taken up into the dialectic of imagining so that our experience of the poem is enhanced. Nor is it to deny that imagining may have its origins in identification. In the end it is the discursive that is tacitly endorsed by Palmer and as a consequence of what might be called a modal circularity an epistemological problem immediately asserts itself:

¹⁹ Frank Palmer, *Literature and Moral Understanding* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p.137.

Yet for all that, novels and plays are not 'real' (i.e. actual) life. First, because it is part of what we mean by the term 'fictional world' that no matter how great its resemblance to actual life or to actual events it is not an actual world. Secondly because a representation is not just a copy of life, but life seen under the perspective of the artist's work. (p.137)

But the *work* is already presupposed in the understanding. It is not a matter of 'resemblance' to actual life.

Ricoeur approaches these issues when he considers 'the apparent invincible exteriority between the inside of fiction and the outside of life' that arises from considering art as 'representative illusion':

We must stop seeing the text as its own interior and life as exterior to it. Instead we must accompany that structuring operation that begins in life, is invested in the text, then returns to life.

To do this, we must balance the autarchy of a theory of writing through a theory of reading and understand that the operating [*opérativité*] of writing is fulfilled in the operating of reading. Indeed, it is the reader - or rather the act of reading - that, in the final analysis, is the unique operator of the unceasing passage from *mimesis*¹, to *mimesis*³, through *mimesis*². That is, from a prefigured world to a transfigured world through the mediation of a configured world.²⁰

My argument, in summary, is that this dialectic cannot occur at the discursive level and awaits the transactions of imagination for its realisation. In the mode of imagination the problem of representation is resolved. Metaphor and its extension in inscape are characterised by projective rather than specific reference. Projective reference, a function of complex structure, is consolidated through the constituent relations wrought in the artefact. Familiar structures - inviting identification - are thereby defamiliarised thus opening the way for the dawning of refiguration. The metaphor or inscape constitutes a framing, or re-framing, a prescriptive limit which engages double prescription. Paradoxically, they contract - limit and select - in order to extend. In the discursive mode, what passes for imaginative transaction *can* only be experienced as representational for the nature of reference is changed from projective to indicative with the concurrent loss of expressive power.

It will not do, however, to exaggerate the potential for novelty of imaginative transactions. Double prescription may effect a *re*-valuation of what is already familiar - this

²⁰ 'Mimesis and Representation', p.151.

explains the power of Vermeer, where the ordinary is charged with new significance. It is also possible to envisage how the implicit narrative of, say, Holbein's *Ambassadors*, which seems to locate the painting within the discursive mode, can be transformed through the prescriptive frame so that an holistic structure becomes, simultaneously, *available* and *charged* with meaning. It is precisely thus that fiction becomes available for double prescription. Joyce's epiphanies exhibit the coalescence of meaning with aesthetic integrity, that is, dual reference through imaginative transactions.

Metaphor, then, as Ricoeur argues, is the paradigm case of refiguration through configuration. That power is contingent, though, upon a dialectic *across* modes - discursive, to imaginative - or is manifest simply within the imaginative. The refiguration may not lead to anything 'new' but may, in the end, simply constitute a *re-cognition*.

The contact with Vermeer may begin in identification, remain there, or arrive through an imaginative transaction at a world essentially unchanged but recharged with meaning. The contact with Holbein may remain at the narrative or discursive level - enhancing our understanding of a moment in history - or be unforgettably energised. A Cézanne canvas may threaten rejection on the grounds of oddness or obscurity but the defamiliarisation can lead to a refiguration of the landscape. At the aesthetic level, though the outcomes may be diverse, the imaginative transaction inevitably involves disclosure of value. Perhaps the most characteristic outcome is to be restored to what we rediscover - this must be differentiated from identification where value is in the *familiar* but no imaginative transaction has been undergone. In any event, in identification the possibility of refiguration is blocked. There are, then, a number of possible outcomes contingent upon novel metaphor not necessarily involving refiguration.

Additionally, it must be said that it will not do to idealise metaphor. For example, in 'The Eve of St Agnes' at one point Madeline is described as 'Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed.'²¹ This could hardly be said to constitute an insight. The image, perhaps, exploits an underlying stereotype - Venus, naked to the waist - which engages allure,

²¹ John Keats, 'The Eve of St Agnes', stanza XXVI, from *A Selection from John Keats*, op. cit., p.138.

fantasy in identification. On the other hand, it fulfils a psychological purpose in so far as we are given access as to *how* Porphyro sees Madeline. This insight is set up in the contrast with the immediately preceding stanzas where the girl's purity and piety are stressed. To be seduced into the mode of Porphyro's seeing is a condition of subsequent imaginative insight concerning a crucial thematic issue - the relation between fantasy and reality. If we unthinkingly identify metaphor with insight we miss the point.

Wordsworth's illustration of the distinction between Fancy and Imagination is instructive:

[...] I will content myself with placing a conceit (ascribed to Lord Chesterfield) in contrast with a passage from the *Paradise Lost*:-

The dews of the evening most carefully shun,
They are the tears of the sky for the loss of the sun.

After the transgression of Adam, Milton, with other appearances of sympathizing Nature, thus marks the immediate consequence,

Sky lowered, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completion of the mortal sin.²²

Wordsworth is arguing against Coleridge's assumption that the fancy is 'the aggregative and associative power':

[...] my objection is only that the definition is too general. To aggregate and to associate, to evoke and combine, belong as well to the Imagination as to the Fancy. (p.163)

Coleridge responds in *Biographia Literaria* :

I reply that if by the power of evoking and combining Mr W. means the same as, and no more than, I meant by the aggregative and associative, I continue to deny that it belongs at all to the imagination; and I am disposed to conjecture that he has mistaken the co-presence of fancy with imagination for the operation of the latter singly. A man may work with two very different tools at the same moment.²³

At issue is the relationship between the 'shaping or modifying power' of Imagination and the 'aggregative and associative' power of Fancy. Scrutiny of Wordsworth's examples show that he is right in designating them as products of, respectively, fancy and imagination. That 'dews' are 'tears of the sky' is certainly a metaphor. It might invite sentimental identification

²² William Wordsworth, 'Preface to Poems', from *Wordsworth's Literary Criticism*, ed. by Nowell C. Smith (London: Humphrey Milford, 1925), p.165.

²³ S.T. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, op. cit., ch.XII, p.160.

but establishes nothing other than an associative link. The couplet with its emphatic rhythms and heavy masculine rhymes seems at odds with the sentiment, a force for disintegration. Of the Milton, Wordsworth observes,

[...] the effects from the act, of which there is this immediate consequence and visible sign, are so momentous, that the mind acknowledges the justice and reasonableness of the sympathy in nature so manifested; and the sky weeps drops of water as if with human eyes, as 'Earth had before trembled from her entrails, and Nature given a second groan'.²⁴

Wordsworth is right when he points to the importance of the 'momentous' nature of the issues. But is the effect of the metaphor purely a function of scale? In a way it is, but in the intensity of our identification we implicitly acknowledge a form of life - dismay, grief *together with its cause* - and the whole of our experience of *Paradise Lost* has worked towards this moment. Identification resolves into imagination. It is not that Milton's imagery provides a correlative for our emotional needs - supposing a dualistic rationalisation - but that our understanding of the situation is presupposed in our feelings. Here is the synthesis of head and heart that allows us to identify an imaginative transaction. In such a comparison poor Lord Chesterfield is on a hiding to nothing, not least, because we have no knowledge of the context of his couplet.

Yet Coleridge is surely right in his comments on Wordsworth: fancy is a product of association which engages, at best, identification; imagination represents forms of life, internal relations, its inscapes effect double prescription, a synthesis of faculties. Fancy and imagination are at odds because they presuppose distinct modes of relation.

That the 'same' metaphor - 'tears'/'sad drops' - has such radically different imaginative outcomes warns us that generalisations regarding the *genus* are untenable and that the expressive power of the *specific* metaphor depends, like that of other linguistic symbols, upon both projective reference and a context of meaning.

That said, Ricoeur persuasively identifies the hermeneutic implications of metaphor and refiguration:

²⁴ 'Preface to Poems', p.166.

Far from saying that a subject already masters his own way of being in the world and projects it as the *a priori* of his reading [...] I say that interpretation is the process by which the disclosure of *new modes of being* - or, if you prefer Wittgenstein to Heidegger, of *new forms of life* - gives to the subject a new capacity of knowing himself. If there is somewhere a project and a projection, it is the reference of the work which is the project of a world; the reader is consequently enlarged in his capacity of self-projection by receiving a new mode of being from the text itself.²⁵

I would suggest that it is rather odd to talk of '*new forms of life*'. Rather, it may be that art involves the amplification or, in discursive terms, the elucidation, of those we already know - albeit that supposes the possibility of discoveries within the forms. Nevertheless, in broad terms, Ricoeur's argument is closely akin to the argument I developed earlier in the context of discussing Pinter. It differs, crucially, in that I argued that the movement from the projected ego to the enhanced self is contingent upon the transition from identification or the discursive to imagining - that is, in the latter case, contingent upon the dialectic across modes.

It is in this context that some of the implications of the Freudian ideology may emerge more clearly. Freud's exposition of dreams is discursive - inevitably so. But his conception of their mediating symbolism is essentially dualistic - sign and referent. Dreams, therefore, *of their very nature* are conceived as discursive: this would seem to be another example of modal circularity. In so far as the logic of dreams is, as I argued, analogical, they are a function of imagining; however, their constitutive relations - their syntax - is often minimally constituted. They are, as it were, fictions which, generally, lack the creative input of overing and overing. It is precisely in the weakness of their constitutive relations that there lies potentiality for creativity in so far as they easily 'jump the tracks' so that new figurations can arise:

[...] Kekulé [...] made the suggestion that in the benzene molecule the carbon atoms it contains are joined to each other in a ring formation [...] chemists had always assumed that they were joined in a long chain [...]. Yet it was not reasoned out logically by Kekulé: rather, he thought of it spontaneously during a day-dream, in which he saw carbon-chains like snakes, one of which seized its own tail. Kekulé's remarkable conclusion from this episode was: 'Let us learn to dream, and then perhaps we shall learn the truth.'²⁶

²⁵ 'Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics', pp.315-316.

²⁶ Michael Fuller, *Atoms and Icons* (London: Mowbray, 1995), p.25.

In so far as dreams *are* coherent then Jung's argument that they are directive rather than pathological seems persuasive in that their narrative logic would suggest the adumbration of a *self* as distinguished from the projection of a consolidated ego. Indeed, it is precisely the inaccessibility of the personal unconscious that is breached by the subversion of the ego in imaginative transactions. This would suggest that our psychological health is bound up in our capacity for imagining both in the context of art and in our moral transactions.

The dictum, 'Where id was, there shall ego be' is double edged.²⁷ Effected through a polarising symbolism with a cognitive subtext - the stuff of Freudian ideology - such narrative becomes an alternative fantasy inviting identification - faith - for its efficacy. Within the imagination, on the other hand, an alternative narrative, symbolically mediated, would substantiate freedom in the context of commitment to aesthetic and moral transactions positing, in their activities, a dynamic self.

By placing it within the context of imagining, the 'hermeneutical circle' may be understood to free itself from the charge that it involves the engaging of 'two subjectivities, that of the reader and that of the author' and from the charge that it is 'the projection of the subjectivity of the reader in the reading itself.'²⁸ It is a circle that may encompass our individuation in the activity of imagining.

Thomas Hardy, in a diary entry, catches the imagination at work:

As, in looking at a carpet, by following one colour a certain pattern is suggested, by following another colour, another; so in life the seer should watch that pattern among general things which his idiosyncrasy moves him to observe, and describe that alone. This is, quite accurately, a going to Nature; yet the result is no mere photograph, but purely the product of the writer's own mind.²⁹

Hardy's observation is overstated. To explore and extend his metaphor, what is discovered in the carpet *cannot* be 'purely' a 'product of the writer's own mind'. In so far as the seer is a poet the pattern will be disclosed through the mediation of metaphor in projective reference. Nevertheless the 'working' of the pattern in terms of constituent relations will inevitably

²⁷ Sigmund Freud, *New Introductory Lectures*, op. cit., p.106.

²⁸ 'Metaphor and the Main Problem of Hermeneutics', p.315.

²⁹ Thomas Hardy, 'Diary', June 3rd, 1882, from *The Life of Thomas Hardy 1840-1928*, ed. by Florence Emily Hardy (London: Macmillan, 1962), p.153.

carry the writer's 'signature'. The intelligible structure will be redeemed from redundancy where it lay hidden in the general impression of the carpet. Such disclosure involves an imaginative transaction which simultaneously discloses value - double prescription is clearly manifest here.

E.M. Forster suggests the variety of responses that we bring to music. A response to the carpet may involve an appropriation of cues in a developing fantasy. A closer scrutiny may identify traditional patterns confirming, say, its Islamic origins. The observer may trace a pattern enjoying its ingenious intricacies. The disclosed pattern may then become a constituent element in an holistic apprehension - the carpet in its aesthetic wholeness. Each relation has its epistemological implications, supposes a distinctive ontology. A comprehensive account will take account of its capacity to fascinate, its intricacy, the carpet in the totality of its shape, pattern and colour, an awareness of its origins and place in a tradition: yet such accounts may remain discrete, unresolvable into any simple sum. Identification and the discursive have their contributory roles but if they remain unresolved in imagining they are exclusive and reductive.

Chapter Ten

Metaphor, Figuralism and the Dialectic of Imagining

Metaphor refigures aspects of the world and extends our ways of being in it. This involves the disclosure of internal relations in the context of projective reference. Figuralism involves an internal relation projected through time. Both metaphor and figuralism effect closures but the latter is, characteristically, couched in terms of the fulfilment of God's purposes. Such closure is peculiarly vulnerable to ideological appropriation. The parables and miracles of Jesus exhibit a pattern where ideology is transcended in the dialectic of imagining. The dialectic is exemplified, above all, in the climax of Christ's Passion where ideological man is transcended in the revelation of the unconditional self. The pattern is reiterated in the fiction of Patrick White where, in effect, a contemporary re-working of the mystery plays is presented. This suggests that the dialectic of imagining is a key process in facilitating the evolution of the self from ego-identity.

In one of his later 'terrible' sonnets, Hopkins again addresses the problem of suffering:

My cries heave, herds-long; huddle in a main, a chief
Woe, world-sorrow; on an age old anvil wince and sing -
then lull, then leave off.¹

The image of the anvil appears in other poems, for example, 'The Wreck of the Deutschland':

With an anvil-ding
And with fire in him forge they will. (p.15)

An additional possibility within the basic image emerges in 'That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire' where the inevitable and universal nature of suffering appears to be compounded by the tragic brevity of life:

But quench her bonniest, dearest to her, her clearest-selvèd spark
Man, how fast his firedint, his mark on mind, is gone. (p.66)

Clearly, the image grows meanings.

Yet another dimension to its potentiality is added in the contemplation of one of the paired images in the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, a typological guidebook compiled probably between 1310-1324. The juxtaposition in question involves, on the one hand, a woodcut which depicts the Crucifixion just at the moment when the nails are being hammered home - 'Christ Prays for his Torturers' - and on the other, Tubalcain and his half-

¹ Gerard Manley Hopkins, 'No Worst, There Is None', from *Poems and Prose*, op. cit., p.61.

brother at their forge. Tubalcain and Jubal appear in the fourth chapter of Genesis, descendants of Cain. They establish an origin myth with regard to music: Jubal is associated with the harp and organs, and Tubalcain with the music wrought from his anvil. The explanation for the juxtaposition can be conceptualised in terms of *figuralism*: the New Testament provides the 'antitype' - Christ's crucifixion - and the 'type' is found in Genesis. The *Speculum* makes clear the relationship between them:

The XX111 chapitle seith [h]ow Crist was nailed on Rode tree
And prayed for his crucyfours of his ineffable pitiee.
Jubal, fynder of musik, figured this thing properelye,
Finding in Tubalkaym hamers and tunes of melodye.
So Crist, as he was ruthfully hamerd apon the Croce,
Songe to his Fadire of heven in full swete voice:
So swete and faire was it, and full of all dulcoure,
Tat it convertid thre thovzand men in tat ilk one houre,
And Ysay this crucifixioun also prefigured.²

Inscape, in Hopkins, generally is associated with visual structures, presupposing, as it were, the dimension of space. Charged through double prescription and experienced in a teleological context such imagery generates symbolic significance and, presumably, has some role in sustaining Hopkins' faith. If the passage in Genesis provides the type for the crucifixion, then, taken together, this complex of type and antitype itself becomes a type for Hopkins's anvil imagery. It is as if, suddenly, we were presented with an inscape in the dimension of *time*.

Northrop Frye describes typology as,

[...] a figure that moves in time: the type exists in the past and the antitype in the present or the type exists in the present and the antitype in the future.³

Quoting his own article, 'Figura', Erich Auerbach observes:

[...] we find the Fathers pursuing the interpretation of reality - interpretation above all of Scripture, but also of large historical contexts [...] for the purpose of bringing them into harmony with the Judaeo-Christian view of history. The method employed is almost exclusively that of figures [...]. Figural interpretation "establishes a connection between two events or persons in such a way that the first

² *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, c.1310-1324, from *The Lion and the Lamb*, Tibor Fibany (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), p.106. See Fibany for an exposition of these points.

³ Northrop Frye, *The Great Code: the Bible and Literature* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), p.78.

signifies not only itself but also the second, while the second involves or fulfils the first. The two poles of the figure are separated in time, but both, being real events or persons, are within temporality. They are both contained in the flowing stream which is historical life, and only the comprehension, the *intellectus spiritualis*, of their interdependence is a spiritual act."⁴

In common with metaphor, typology - figuralism - functions through the juxtaposition of paradigms: it is essentially analogical. There is an enormous compression of meaning released through Hopkins's anvil image when it is located in the figural context. That is because figural interpretation is, of its nature, purposive, and in re-contextualising the image that sense of the purposive which is already an adjunct of double prescription must be charged up. The image becomes an icon in the symbolic domain. This is not, merely, a matter of meaning arising from *association* - fundamentally, it becomes a matter of *insight*, a transaction of the imagination.

It is clear that figuralism is a key element in the imaginative logic of the New Testament. St. Mark's Gospel begins by establishing John the Baptist as the antitype prefigured in Isaiah:

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the son of God, as it is written in the prophets: behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of a crier in the wilderness: prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.⁵

There is a pattern begun here which is deeply problematical on a number of counts. Clearly, Mark uses figuralism to establish again and again the credentials of Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Figuralism here becomes a device to establish *authority*, a discursive tool. It is interesting to see this process from a robustly Jewish perspective:

The Old Testament is far too strong a poetry to be fulfilled by its revisionary descendent, the self-proclaimed New Testament [...]. We may wonder whether the idea of figura was ever more than a self-deception [...] I am an enemy of the New Testament. My enmity is lifelong, and intensifies as I study its text more closely ... Frye's code, like Erich Auerbach's figura [...] is only another belated repetition of the Christian appropriation and usurpation of the Hebrew Bible.⁶

⁴ Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, trans. by Willard R. Trask, paperback edn, 10th printing, 1991 (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1953), p.73.

⁵ The Gospel of Saint Mark, from Tyndale's New Testament, ed. by David Daniell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), Mark 1, p.62.

⁶ *The Lion and the Lamb*, p.11. The quotation is one of a number 'conflated from various writings of Harold Bloom'.

In the context of prophecy the coalescence of type and antitype supposes that the type is swallowed up in the fulfilment - in effect, the type is *refigured*. The parallel with metaphor is striking: in effect, what is disclosed is an internal relation. But here the purposiveness implicit in the imaginative transaction, characteristically, becomes a resource for *authority*.

This is a similar source of authority to that generated in the use of *exempla*. Its dubious nature will become a characteristic focus for Chaucer's irony as, for example, in *The Franklin's Tale* where Dorigen's list of twenty-two exempla in support of her judgement that death is preferable to dishonour pushes her strategy into comic absurdity. The exemplum is a dead disclosure - its imaginative power has been vitiated by its employment in the discursive mode.

The crucial distinction between figuralism and metaphor lies in the nature of *fulfilment*. The refiguration effected by metaphor is a reciprocal matter, constitutes a, perhaps, momentary stasis in a potentially endless creative series of mediations between image and world. On the other hand, fulfilment supposes an *end*, the disclosure of God's purpose.

Nevertheless, this points to an important tension in the nature of imagining itself in that its transactions are, inevitably, completed in closure. The expressive power released in such double prescription may be followed by the exaltation of the image to canonical status thereby inhibiting further imagining. This tension is at the heart of a most poignant and devastating contradiction in the historical unfolding of religious orthodoxies. But the continuing process of imagining is not only desirable but inevitable given that its dialectic will be stimulated precisely by such closure.

Clearly, to be successful in his terms, Mark's text must involve the reader's *acceptance* of its authority - in other words, it would seem that unless it engages *identification* it would fail to convince, indeed, might serve to antagonise. Denied the mediatory function of its metaphor the text would be reduced to empowering fantasy. From the Jewish perspective, Christian identification merely serves to generate and assert an antagonistic authority so that the transactions of imagination are reduced to an ideologically committed rewriting of the Old Testament.

In seeking to establish the authority of Jesus as Messiah, Mark compromises the very mode of imagination that would engage the mediatory function of the art of his story. In other words, as far as the logic of the imagination is concerned, it is in the context of *story* that the 'reality' of the *man* remains to be established as a precondition of any possibility of his emergence as Messiah.

Though, fundamentally, Mark's text *must* be a self-conscious construct, the context of ritual and authority with which it is associated effectively blinds us to this aspect of its origin. That it is a construction is supposed in D.E. Nineham's observation that in his first chapter Mark 'depicts a typical day in the ministry of Jesus, which [...] is intended as a sample, or microcosm, of the whole.'⁷ In this resort to typicality the Gospel seems to share the priorities of, say, Solzhenitsyn's novella *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.⁸ My primary interest is to explore, in the context of St. Mark's Gospel, aspects of the imaginative transactions normally engaged between reader and text in reading poetry or fiction.

There are, however, considerable difficulties in arriving at St. Mark's Gospel as story. Not the least is the 'familiarity' of the text. I have, accordingly, chosen to use William Tyndale's translation of the New Testament. It is derived from the Greek of Erasmus and was completed in November 1534. A number of factors go towards enhancing its imaginative power. Although the basic text is recognisable - it is the unacknowledged ground of the so-called Authorised Version published in 1611 - it is sufficiently unfamiliar to catch the attention. It has something of the effect of a restored painting but its clarity is also a function of a conceptual shift in so far as the text has been de-familiarised with the effect that the reader is drawn into reading more carefully.

A simple, but very powerful effect follows from having the text presented without division into verses. Its narrative sweep is thereby considerably enhanced. The price of ease of reference has been to nudge the text into the didactic and this has been powerfully reinforced by its characteristic presentation in the context of ritual.

⁷ D.E. Nineham, *The Gospel of Saint Mark: The Penguin New Testament Commentaries*, repr. 1992 (London: Penguin, 1963), p.67.

⁸ Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, trans. by Ralph Parker, 1981 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963).

There is a significant stylistic immediacy in Tyndale. A typical example can be found in the conclusion to the third chapter of St. Matthew. The Authorised Version has, 'and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased'.⁹ This looks measured and cool compared to Tyndale's apparent spontaneity:

And there came a voice from heaven: Thou art my dear son in whom I delight.
(Mark 1, p.62)

The balance of Tyndale's sentence has been lost - but the replacing of 'delight' seems an act of vandalism. The Greek root is 'thinking well' - it could be taken either way.

The 1611 account where Jesus discusses the implications of the Parable of the Sower has:

But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come. (Mark 4.29)

On the other hand, Tyndale writes:

And as soon as the fruit is brought forth, anon he thrusteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come. (Mark 4. p.67)

Tyndale's verb, 'thrusteth', seems much more effective.

These and similar effects make the text more immediate - which is to say, they facilitate mediation. They also reflect Tyndale's own agenda, to make the Word directly available to the people through the vernacular.

Tyndale's text is sufficiently different to defamiliarize the Gospel. The effect is to open the text for imagining and in so doing it reveals itself to be a self-conscious *construct*. This is not to deny that historical research may have established the fact of Jesus of Nazareth's actual existence and confirmed his role as the founder of a new religious group amongst the Jews of the first century - there is, then, a biographical element. Accordingly, knowledge of the times and their practices can serve to illuminate the text - but they can do so, primarily, only in the *discursive* mode.

Any discussion of the modes of relation engaged in reading the Bible involves peculiar difficulties. On the one hand, the first priority of the text is to convey truth. On the other,

⁹ The Bible, 1611 Version (Oxford: Oxford at the University Press, 1891), Mark1.11

how can any text be immune from the intentional fallacy? The assertion of the authority of God merely confirms that it means what it says - but in the arrival at the meaning lies the whole problem. To assume that the prior mode of assimilation should be discursive throws the text into rivalry with philosophy and science - to its detriment. I shall argue that the text is opened only when the discursive is placed within the dialectic of imagining, and that this relational paradigm is startlingly depicted in the preaching and fate of Jesus himself. To approach St. Mark's text as a construct, then, is not to trivialise its import.

The art of the Gospel becomes evident in the construction of, say, the fourth chapter. It begins by deftly establishing a context - Jesus preaches from a ship to the crowds on the shore. He tells them the parable of the Sower. It is interesting that the disciples do not understand it. Arguably this allows Mark *to interpret the story for them* but in doing so he reduces it to allegory:

[...] they that are by the way's side, where the word is sown, are they to whom as soon as they have heard it, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts. (Mark 4, p.66)

There is a point by point explication of the parable. Nineham observes:

The German scholar A. Jülicher was broadly right in his claim that this limitation to a single point is one of the chief distinguishing features of the parable as opposed to the allegory, and he went on to argue that if a parable in its present form has several lessons, that is *prima facie* evidence that it has been allegorized in the course of transmission.¹⁰

In a curious and consistent manner the disciples are treated by Mark as if they were naive. This provides the pretext for didactic intrusion. In effect, this amounts to an extension of the dramatic irony established in the opening sentences of the Gospel whereby the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah in the role of John the Baptist gives the reader privileged access to the knowledge that Jesus is Messiah. Mark's strategy in establishing this irony is to have us marvel at the ignorance of those not yet initiated. This has the possible effect of inviting strong identification precisely in the manner evoked by the painful ignorance of, say, Othello. Again and again the Jewish establishment, as well as the disciples, are set at an ironic distance: the structure of the irony resembles that exhibited at

¹⁰ *Commentaries*, pp.130-131.

the expense of naive protagonists such as Januarie in Chaucer's *The Merchant's Tale* or, perhaps, more appropriately, Kafka's Joseph K. Imagine a rather dim disciple, denied the key of the Evangelist's faith, trying to make head or tail of what is going on: *Das Schloss* can be translated as *The Castle* or *The Lock*.

It is entirely appropriate, then, that much of the discourse concerns seeing:

To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God. But unto them that are without, shall all things be done in similitudes: that when they see, they shall see, and not discern: and when they hear they shall hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should turn, and their sins should be forgiven them. And he said unto them: Perceive ye not this similitude? how then should ye understand all other similitudes?¹¹

When the uninitiated seek understanding of the parable they shall *see*, but not *understand*.

Is the parable *designed* to baffle? Does Isaiah hold the key to this conundrum?

And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and turn again, and be healed.¹²

It seems that the Lord does not wish the people to see and repent because he wishes them first to suffer:

Then said I, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until cities be waste without inhabitant, and houses without man, and the land become utterly waste, and the Lord have removed men far away, and the forsaken places be many in the midst of the land. (Isaiah 6.11-12)

The issue here is perhaps intelligible in terms of another lock and key image.

From the midst of another waste land - as noted earlier - the voice of the Thunder exhorts us to 'give', 'sympathise', 'control':

Dayadhvam: I have heard the key
Turn in the door once and turn once only
We think of the key, each in his prison
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison.¹³

¹¹ Tyndale, Mark 4, p.66.

¹² Authorized, Isaiah 6. 8-10.

¹³ T.S. Eliot, 'The Waste Land', from *Selected Poems*, op. cit., p.67.

The key of the prison is not to be found in *thought* or through the intellect but in imagining in the context of the moral life.

Regarding Isaiah, the punctuation of the Revised Standard Version - which indicates direct speech - makes it easier to perceive that the words that God exhorts the prophet to utter are full of irony:

'Hear and hear, but do not understand;
see and see, but do not perceive' ¹⁴

As with Hopkins's anvil image, the allusion to the Old Testament suddenly fills the parable with meaning. Jesus is to fulfil the prophetic mission anticipated in Isaiah. Israel is a waste land and the way out is through a mode of understanding unavailable to the eye and the ear in their quotidian transactions. In this context the allegorical 'translation' is painfully reductive, indeed, re-establishes the mode of seeing that the parable is set to transcend.

I have previously argued that imaginative transactions involve not a direct assimilation of, say, the discursive but a dialectical movement across exclusive assimilating modes, so the many reversals implicit in the parables and in the confrontations with the Jewish establishment do not constitute a straightforward reversal of values but point towards a single paradigmatic shift which is initiated repeatedly and bears at least a family resemblance to the shift envisaged by Eliot - from *knowing* to a commitment to a *form of life*.

As the narrative moves towards its climax the tension in the running irony grows. In chapter ten, for example, Jesus succinctly anticipates the events of the Passion. The failure of the disciples to understand the astonishing reversal implicit in the mocking, scourging and killing of the Messiah is displayed in all its naiveté when James and John ask that they 'may sit one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.'¹⁵

With careful persistence Jesus spells out the implications of the abandoning of social hierarchies:

[...] whosoever of you will be great among you, shall be your minister. And whosoever will be chief, shall be servant unto all. For even the son of man came not to be ministered unto: but to minister. (Mark 10, p.77)

¹⁴ The Bible, Revised Standard Version repr. 1955 (London: Nelson, 1952), Isaiah 6.9.

¹⁵ Tyndale, Mark 10, p.77.

There follows the miracle of restoring sight to blind Bartimeus. His imprecation is the first 'objective' testimony that Jesus is the Messiah – 'Jesus the son of David, have mercy on me.' (Mark 11, p78) The blind man *sees* where the disciples have failed.

This is a striking example of how, generally, the miracles are used as *enacted* parables. Whatever their supernatural significance might be they are self-consciously integrated into the developing narrative.

Such integration makes them vulnerable to reductive readings. The second feeding miracle, for example, is clearly allegorised and we thereby see how, perhaps, the first such miracle is to be understood:

And they had forgotten to take bread with them, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf. And he charged them saying. Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves saying: we have no bread. And when Jesus knew that, he said unto them: why take ye thought because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? Have ye your hearts yet blinded? [...] Do you not remember? When I brake five loaves among five thousand [...] how is it that ye understand not? (Mark 8, p.73)

The didactic impulse is clearly illustrated also in the passage concerning the cleansing of the temple. The episode is framed by the story of the fig tree:

The temple and its worship stand for Jewish life and religion; the Messiah comes to it and when he finds that the outward foliage of ceremony hides no fruit of righteousness, his only possible reaction is one of judgement and cleansing. (Nineham, p.300)

Clearly, the miracles are as vulnerable as the parables to monochromatic readings, whether these are a result of critical commentary or of Mark's own agenda.

Generally, in so far as the Gospels are typically assimilated in the context of ritual they are the subject of relentless *interpretation* - the *initiate's* view - so that the possibility of imaginative apprehension is destroyed by the shunt into the discursive. The ultimate question is perpetually begged. Whether or not it is intended, interpretation is, of its nature, associated with power.

On the other hand, the feeding miracles can be seen as elements in a figural sequence which begins, perhaps, in Exodus:

Then said the Lord unto Moses: behold, I will rain bread from heaven down to you, and let the people go out and gather day by day, that I may prove to them whether they will walk in my law or no [...].

[...] I have heard the murmuring of the children of Israel, tell them therefore and say that at even they shall eat flesh, and in the morning they shall be filled with bread, and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God.¹⁶

The fulfilment of these types is in the Last Supper and, thereby, in its on-going re-enactment in the Mass.

Experienced in the discursive mode figuralism merely provides exemplification, the weight of authority. However, figuralism also has the potential to function rather in the manner of certain of Eliot's allusions as in, say, 'The Waste Land'. The allusion to Spenser's 'Prothalamion' does not reach for a superficial comparison where the past is seen to be preferable to the present; rather, in Spenser's vision human relationships are conceived in the context of the sacred and are thereby endowed with a meaning unavailable to the modern nymphs and the heirs of city directors. Whether or not we share Spenser's vision is not the point - even if it were nonsense the vision would still be seen in its time to have endowed human relationships with dignity and purpose. In a figural context the didactic can be recharged with meaning - but this would be an *imaginative* phenomenon.

Generally, left to speak for themselves, the characteristic movement within the parables is through the dialectic of imagination and that movement finds its structural analogue in the transactions of the miracles. Paradoxically, approached in the light of faith they cannot, *logically*, have the imaginative power that they have in the immediacy of disclosure. Is it that the full power of the text is available only to those *without* ideological commitment?

To put it another way, the willing suspension of *belief* is a condition for the suspension of *disbelief* that is the symptom and condition for the experience of the power of the narrative. This, of course, is precisely the issue that the parables illustrate: ideology is to be superseded through the dialectical twist of imaginative transactions. It follows that 'faith' - if it is to be anything other than identification - presupposes the commitment to that *process* as it is experienced in the teleological context: it is a product of a symbolic transaction which is subsequently rationalised ideologically.

¹⁶ Tyndale, Exodus 16, p.111.

This point is strikingly illustrated, as we noted, in much of the poetry of Hopkins where experience begins in the natural world, is subsequently structured through inscape and the accompanying double prescription, with its disclosure of value, becomes symbolic in the context of Divine purpose. 'The Windhover' is the paradigm case. The poems display the dialectical twist across modes that is implicit in the parabolic and miraculous in Mark's Gospel.

Such moments of dawning, of illumination occur in a text where, generally, there is great tension between contradictory modes - between didacticism, the consolidation of ideology, and imagining - tension, compounded, of course, by the modes of apprehension brought to it by the reader.

Nevertheless, in spite of these tensions, gradually, as the text unfolds, a paradigm of the self is posited in the context of imagining. The logic of parable and miracle finally coalesces in the passion and crucifixion itself. Here the dialectic of imagining is, literally, embodied in a dramatic realisation. As I have argued, the disclosure that is made available in double prescription is inherently *purposive* and thereby releases resources for the possible subsequent ascription of *purpose*. Our imaginative transactions thereby assume a symbolic dimension. The imaginative dialectic has been rehearsed again and again in parables and miracles - over and overed - as Mark's story unfolds and reaches its ultimate expression in the crucifixion. In essence, it involves the dialectical twist from conditional, ideological man, to the apprehension of unconditional man disclosed in the act of suffering. In the process of our experiencing this transaction as a *fulfilment* - imagining, in the teleological context - this unconditionality becomes transmuted into an overwhelming sense of the numinous. Whatever ideological interpretation is subsequently placed upon this experience is outwith my immediate concern - I merely suggest that this central transaction is a paradigm case for the logic of imagining and points to the centrality of imagining in our individuation. In this dialectic, ideological man transcends himself in the act of imagining.

On the other hand, the effects of subsequent rationalisation - Mark's is the earliest of the Gospels - have tended to obfuscate the transaction through the attrition of sentimental

mythologising and, more significantly, through transposing the self disclosed in imagining into ideological terms - monochromatic renderings.

With St. Paul the symbolism of imagining with its concomitant transactions of mediation between self and world, mutual refiguration, is reduced to *evidence* for fulfilment. In this monochromatic mode symbolism is bifurcated into *sign* and *idea*. Given both the context of the inner life and his methodology, Paul becomes the precursor of Freud. There is an explosive self-dramatisation that pushes Jewish history - *already* symbolically conceived - into a sort of secondary allegory. Gabriel Josipovici observes:

[...] he systematically takes the ancient Jewish rituals and transforms them into inward events: circumcision must be of the heart, the outward deed is meaningless; the unleavened bread of Passover, which, for the Jews, was a sign and a reminder that their ancestors did not have time to make leavened bread as they escaped from Pharaoh, is used to make a complex point about the inner self [...]. Indeed, the very history of the Jewish people, and events in that history such as Moses' drawing water from the rock, are allegorized and internalized: 'they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.'¹⁷

Yet there are aspects of Paul's writings that seem to endorse the paradigm displayed in Mark. Paul finds the law - as it is represented in the Pharisaical ideology previously practised by himself - crucially wanting. It is not simply a matter of hypocrisy - 'thou which teachest another teachest not thyself';¹⁸ rather, the imaginative dialectic has not been undergone. In a marginal gloss Tyndale writes:

Deeds are an outward righteousness before the world and testify what a man is within: but justify not the heart before God. (p.227)

Clearly, the dialectic is at the heart of Paul's concerns but becomes a matter of justification through *faith*:

Now verily is the righteousness that cometh of God declared without the fulfilling of the law, having witness yet of the law and of the prophets. The righteousness no doubt which is good before God, cometh by the faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe.¹⁹

¹⁷ Gabriel Josipovici, *The Book of God: A Response to the Bible*, repr. 1990 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp.242-243.

¹⁸ Tyndale, Romans 2, p.227

¹⁹ Romans 3, p.228.

It is interesting that Luther in his 'Prologue to the Romans' - which Tyndale includes in his own adapted translation - seems more sensitive to the nature of the dialectic than Paul. Could it be that Luther's responses are shaped by his *reading* of the Gospels - that he writes in the light of his experience of *imaginative* transactions?

Acquaint thyself therefore with the *manner of speaking* of the apostle, and let this now stick fast in thine heart, that it is not both one, to do the deeds and works of the law, and to fulfil the law. [...]

To fulfil the law is, to do the work thereof and whatsoever the law commandeth, with love, lust and inward affection and delectation [...]. Such lust and free liberty to love the law, cometh only by the working of the spirit in the heart [...].

And as the spirit cometh by faith only, even so faith cometh by *hearing the word or glad tidings* of God, when Christ is preached [...]. All our justifying then cometh of faith, and faith and the spirit come of God and not of us.²⁰

Certainly the emphasis here coincides with Luther's larger agenda of making the Word accessible.

Gabriel Josipovici argues that the nature of Paul's conversion obliges him to resort to *reporting* the event in order to establish its authenticity:

He needs to keep projecting an image of what he was and what happened to him just because it all happened internally and in an instant. This is the reason why there is such an amazing proliferation of autobiography in the epistles [...].

At the same time, since all that has happened has happened within the individual, there is a new insistence on morality as the external guarantor of that inner change.²¹

The self becomes locked into an internal battle between guilt and atonement:

This struggle within the self between warring factions is something with which literature has made us so familiar that it is hard for us to realize that it is not the only way to think about the self. The word Edgar Allan Poe used to describe it is 'perversity', and Dostoevsky, who explored the ramifications of perversity more fully than anyone else, made the explicit point, that it was a concept unknown to Plato or to the philosophical tradition descended from him [...].

That there is a link between perversity and autobiography, and, at a deeper level, between the Pauline vision of man and the impulse towards self-projection, is made manifest by what is generally regarded as the first proper autobiography, St. Augustine's *Confessions*. (pp.245-246)

Paul seems compelled to compromise the subtle transactions of imagining by his heady literalism that demands identification with a truth discursively conceived:

²⁰ Tyndale, 'Prologue to the Romans', pp.209-210. (My italics)

²¹ *The Book of God*, p.243.

If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.²²

In these circumstances, imagining is inevitably displaced by competition between Jewish and Christian *ideologies*: in Mark the essential conflict associated with Jesus is between the law and *imagining*.

In the context of issues such as these the imaginative power and immense tact of Kafka's vision in *The Trial* is thrown into relief. The pursuit of the law in ignorance of the 'law of righteousness' is shown to be self-destructive. To arrive at such understanding supposes a perspective possible only for the reader. We either see or fail to see - this is the source of Kafka's tact. On the other hand, Paul's self-dramatisation - compare Joseph K's - is given the authority of identification with both Jewish history and the type of the Prodigal Son. His own story demands our acceptance as truth and becomes the source of authentication of his faith.

It is precisely the capacity of *fiction* to present the possibility for symbolic mediation and in so doing, disclose a self that is reciprocally extended as the world is extended, a self that will, inevitably, through decay into a discursive, monochromatic history, undergo objectification, but can be refigured in subsequent imagining. It is this *cycle* of imagining that is inhibited by the urgency of Paul's self-authentication.

If Paul's method anticipates Freud, his notion of a self that is realized in the context of an internal battle for authenticity anticipates Jung. I would argue that there is no *final* self. The imaginative cycle in its decay provides the substance for further imagining. Ideology becomes the ground, indeed, provides the urgent *motivation* for subsequent acts of imaginative transformation - this, after all, is the underlying pattern revealed in the teachings and Passion of Jesus in the Evangelist's imagining.

It follows that the imaginative transactions at the heart of Mark's Gospel have to be repeated again and again in history, on the one hand, because the inevitable decay into the ideological establishes the ground of the subsequent dialectic and, on the other, because Christ's Passion is perpetually re-enacted: the one is the logical analogue of the other.

²² Tyndale, Romans 15, p.258.

Re-enactments: Bosch and Patrick White

In his *Christ Crowned with Thorns* Hieronymus Bosch depicts the very moment before the thorns are pushed into Christ's head. (Fig.1 overleaf) In this freezing of the instant the painting resembles Goya's *Execution of the Rebels on 3rd of May 1808* where the structural lines of the painting converge on the martyred victim's chest which, in the next instant, the bullets will enter. Both paintings are, then, intrinsically dramatic.

Pamela Tudor-Craig, Lady Wedgwood, has described how Christ's four tormentors are depicted in terms contemporary to Bosch, a characteristic of late medieval art and Mystery plays.²³ That his tormentors could be drawn from the streets serves to shock the observer into the recognition that Christ's Passion is perpetually re-enacted - our own sins continue to torment the body of Christ. Indeed, as Jung observes, the Mass itself recapitulates, 'in condensed form [...] the life and sufferings of Christ.'²⁴

Inevitably the designation has shifted from *Jesus of Nazareth* to *Christ* - the imaginative transaction has been encompassed ideologically. This leads to a question: does the painting merely iterate the self of Pauline allegory, the internal drama of guilt that necessitates atonement, or does it allow for the dialectical twist of imagining?

Lady Wedgwood exposes more layers of meaning in the painting. The four tormentors represent all classes of society, lay and spiritual. Not only that, but each is identified with one of the four elements - earth, water, air and fire. It is suddenly possible to see Christ as man, man as microcosm, imprisoned within contending dispositions, each associated with the elements: torments from without are suddenly torments from within. This has the effect of releasing the four tormentors from the grip of caricature - each can now be identified as a suffering man. But only in the perception of Christ as suffering man is the dialectical twist possible that is the ground of the symbolic transaction that pervades the depiction with the sense of the numinous. The painting catches the transaction at the very instant when the suffering Jesus is about to be crowned as the suffering Christ.

²³ Pamela Tudor-Craig, Lady Wedgwood, *The Secret Life of Paintings: Hieronymus Bosch's Christ Crowned with Thorns*, BBC, 1986.

²⁴ C.G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion*, op. cit., p.220.



Figure 1. Hieronymus Bosch, *Christ Crowned with Thorns*

The painting, in effect, is a narrative, a journey through a sequence of dawnings that arrives at its final destination in the revelation of the quintessence, the fifth element, the element of the Divine. The sequence finds its paradigmatic reflection in the poems of Hopkins and in St. Mark's Gospel.

In the modern context the paradigm emerges again in the writings of Patrick White, notably, in *Riders in the Chariot*. White recasts the riders of Ezekiel's vision as contemporary figures. Who, amongst us, are redeemable? He explores the question through the experiences of four outcasts: Mary Hare, odd and epileptic, the daughter of an ostentatious, formerly wealthy, Australian family; Himmelfarb, a Jewish intellectual, who survived the Holocaust to become a 'bloody reffo'²⁵ in the 'Promised Land' of Australia; Mrs Godbold, poor, but monumental in her naïve goodness and Alf Dobbo, the outcast, aboriginal artist. Each is a mystic; each is deeply flawed. All suffer cruelly in the context of contemporary Australian life - indeed, the climax of the book involves the mock crucifixion of Himmelfarb.

Again, the protagonists constitute a quaternity - the theory of the elements that provides a subtext for Bosch has been superseded by a psychological ideology that owes much to Jung. In particular the process of individuation is indicated in recurring images of the mandala; however, it is in terms of integration through the recognition and assimilation of projections - the Pauline drama of the shadow - that much of the exploration of the book proceeds.²⁶ To say that such a concept of self is a cultural phenomenon merely reminds us of its possible provisional status - the work creates the self that it purports to describe: but how could it be otherwise? Nevertheless, this issue is constitutive of a disturbing ambiguity in White's mature work.

The theatricality of self-dramatisation manifests itself at times in caricature - the objectification reveals itself to be a temptation of fantasy. White's caricatures are a symptom of his own projection and are, in some ways, more instructive in their revelations

²⁵ Patrick White, *Riders in the Chariot* (London: Penguin, 1964), p.199.

²⁶ See Introduction, p.14, for Jung on 'projection' and the 'shadow'.

than are his four 'endorsed' characters.²⁷ It is interesting that the power of identification with White's vision should induce partisan criticism from Peter Beatson:

From the moment they come into being in his pages they lack dramatic autonomy; the analyst and satirist will not allow them that opacity which creates an illusion of freedom. They have little chance of offering resistance to their creator, who knows them too well [...] his style probes and undermines any pretensions to autonomy they might have. In doing so, of course, he violates one of the major canons of twentieth century orthodoxy. Great artists seldom feel obliged to allow themselves to be confined by academic dogmatism. (p.125)

But the point at issue is *objectification* in a novel whose whole thrust is towards the explication of individuation, the *assimilation* of the shadow. There is a tension between White's practice and his moral vision that Beatson would wish away. This is an example of critical *identification*.

On the other hand, the confusion of modes in White's text is characteristic of St. Mark's Gospel: both texts exhibit in their construction the very symptoms that drive the necessity to transcend identical symptoms in the projected fiction. In White's case, there is a strong sense of a gnostic schism between good and evil which is cultivated through his elaboration of parody.

Each of the endorsed characters is depicted in moments of visionary experience. In the context of Mary Hare's imaginative apprehensions of nature the impact of meaning in the context of the purposive is so strong that it is as if the world itself becomes animate:

She stood still. Thinking very intently. Or allowing her instinct to play around her. [...] She stroked leaves sulkily. She broke a shaggy stick.²⁸

The metaphors of animation or implied animation are tactful here but in their proliferation through the text they have a powerful, cumulative, prescriptive effect in the imaginative landscape of the novel as a whole. Mary is determined to differentiate herself from the uninitiated - her arrogance will be revealed as an obstacle to her individuation. These ordinary mortals are rootless, doomed to wander like Cain:

²⁷ Peter Beatson, *The Eye in the Mandala: Patrick White, A Vision of Man and God* (London: Paul Elek, 1976), p.125.

²⁸ *Riders in the Chariot*, p.11.

Other people would drive along a bush road looking out of the windows of a car, but their minds embraced almost nothing of what their flickering eyes saw. Whole towers of green remained unclimbed, rocks unopened. Or else the intruders might stop their cars, and go in search of water. She had seen them, letting themselves down into the cold, black, secret rock pools, while remaining enclosed in their own resentful goose-flesh. Whereas she, Miss Hare, whose eyes were always probing, fingers trying, would achieve the ecstasy of complete, annihilating liberation without any such immersion. (pp.11-12)

This passage presents one of White's most characteristic themes. The uninitiated are distracted, perpetually on the move. They lack the sense of self posited in imaginative transactions.

White's previous novel, *Voss*, is fundamentally concerned with the forging of identity in an epic voyage of exploration which is at once external and internal; corrosive physical hardship is correlated with the bitter trials of Voss's individuation.²⁹ This is White's 'passage' to Australia - the country is thereby made available for those who dare to approach it: a parallel journey is made in imagination by the woman who loves him, Laura Trevelyan.

There is evidence here for the reciprocity implicit in imaginative transactions - the simultaneous configuration of world and self. In Wordsworth, the apprehension of the landscapes of the Lake District posits a psyche with a sense of the sacred confinable within the parameters of a more or less conventional moral ideology. Australia, on the other hand, may precipitate gnostic fault lines rather in the manner of Forster's India, which overwhelms Mrs Moore's Christianity, and is more appropriately mythologised in terms of the pantheon of Hindu gods.

The most intense of Mary Hare's visionary experiences are associated with her epilepsy. In such a moment is introduced the novel's central symbol, Ezekiel's vision of the riders in the chariot:

So she would wait, with the breath fluctuating in her lungs, and the blood thrilling through her distended veins. [...] And sure enough, the wheels began to plough the tranquil fields of white sky. She could feel the breath of horses on her battered cheeks. She was lifted up, the wind blowing between the open sticks of fingers that she held extended on stumps of arms [...]. She was aware only of her present

²⁹ Patrick White, *Voss* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960).

anguish. Of her mind leaving her. The filthy waves that floated off the fragments of disintegrating flesh. (pp.37-38)

In contrast Mrs Flack and Mrs Jolley are depicted in the celebration of unholy rites:

At that moment something would happen, of such peculiar subtlety that it must have eluded the perception of all but those involved in the experience. The catalyst of sympathy seemed to destroy the envelopes of personality, leaving the two essential beings free to merge and float. [...] As they continued sitting, the two women would drench the room with the moth-colours of their one mind. [...] This could have been the perfect communion of souls, if, at the same time, it had not suggested perfect collusion. (p.74)

Here, imaginative transaction is reduced to enveloping projection that would 'drench' the room. The comfortable containing space, the room, the house, become symbols for the unshakeable ego identity and will come to constitute the dimensions of their hell. On the other hand, Mary Hare will be released by the collapse of her mansion, Xanadu. A pervasive texture of allusion consolidates the parody, even to the extent that they, too, have their inverted 'visions' where Ezekiel's whirlwind is reduced to an attack of dyspepsia:

For the owner himself had just emerged. The Jew. The two ladies clutched each other by the gloves. They had never seen anything so yellow or so strange. [...] Now the whirlwinds were rising in honest breasts, that honest corsets were striving to contain. (p.214)

The cruelty of White's satire can be almost Swiftian at times. From the perspective of imagining, it is as if evil involved the inclusion of corrosive banality, of cruelty within a purposive, teleological context. In White's vision one senses the temptation to sanctify hatred - something he shares with D.H. Lawrence, who, clearly, had a considerable influence on his work.

If the book consisted of nothing other than the juxtaposition of objectification and imagination then it would be hopelessly split. However, the central imaginative transactions within the four endorsed characters encompass their negative as well as positive qualities. Mary Hare's arrogance and secret guilts remain to be acknowledged. Her failure of love may well be the product of a brutal and profound rejection by her parents - did she contribute to the drowning of her father? - but she will arrive at love through her communion with Himmelfarb.

Much of the imaginative power of the book is generated in the depiction of the German Jew's experience of the Holocaust. There is a certain parallel with the assimilation of the Australian hinterland in *Voss*. Himmelfarb's failures of love and his betrayals are located within a context of suffering within the Jewish experience in Germany where his wife's loving vision of him as a Messiah can, initially, be seen only at ironic distance. After his escape from Friedensdorf he cannot find the Promised Land in Israel and is moved to emigrate. In Australia the Promised Land will be seen to be, not a place, but a condition of the spirit.

Mrs Godbold pursues her loving kindness in the context of a relentless 'biological' faith (p.230) at the expense of the humiliation of her husband. As yet, love in her hands is a bludgeon. It is in the context of another order of love, in Mrs Khalil's brothel, that the whore presents Mrs Godbold with her revelation:

Suddenly she bent down, for something to do, it could have been, and got possession of the smoky cat. She laid it along her cheek, and asked:

'What are you after, eh?

So softly. But it was heard.

Mrs Khalil nearly bust herself. She answered:

'Love, I expect. Like anybody else.'

And Mrs Godbold had to see that this was true. That was perhaps the most dreadful part. Now she really did understand, she thought, almost everything. (p.277)

The novel comes to its climax in the crucifixion of Himmelfarb. As in Bosch, the incident is given a vivid, contemporary relevance, with a wealth of detail and symbolism prefigured in types from both the Jewish and Christian traditions. At times the symbolism is token but much of it generates the power associated with the figural imagination.

In the intensity of his suffering Himmelfarb experiences a vision couched in the terms of a mandala:

From the beginning Himmelfarb had known that he possessed the strength, but did pray for some sign. Through all the cursing, and trampling, and laughter, and hoisting, and aching, and distortion, he had continued to expect. Until now, possibly, it would be given. So, he raised his head. And was conscious of a stillness and clarity, which was the stillness and clarity of pure water, at the centre of which his God was reflected. (p.413)

Earlier in his life in Germany in a sort of waking, visionary nightmare he had seen himself:

But once he was roused from sleep [...] to identify a face. And got to his feet, to receive the messenger of light, or to resist the dark dissembler. When he was transfixed by his own horror. Of his own image, but fluctuating, as though in fire or water. So that the long-awaited moment was reduced to a reflection of the self. (pp.136-37)

Just as Bosch built, amongst other things, the theory of the humours into his *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, so White uses contemporary psychological theory. Himmelfarb's vision is anticipated in Jung:

The goal of psychological [...] development is self-realization, or individuation. But since man knows himself only as an ego, and the self, as a totality, is indescribable and indistinguishable from a God-image, self-realisation - to put it in religious or metaphysical terms - amounts to God's incarnation. That is already expressed in the fact that Christ is the son of God. And because individuation is an heroic and often tragic task [...] it involves suffering, a passion of the ego: the ordinary, empirical man we once were is burdened with the fate of losing himself in a greater dimension and being robbed of his fancied freedom of will. He suffers, so to speak, from the violence done to him by the self. The analogous passion of Christ signifies God's suffering on account of the injustice of the world and the darkness of man.³⁰

It is interesting why White's symbolic touchstones of individuation do not survive removal from their imaginative context. In the discursive mode they are instantly reduced to components of allegory - they become merely symbolic. Embedded in narrative, the narrative of an imagined life, they may be taken up into the text and have the power to effect dawnings through the dialectic of imagining.

In a number of important ways White's text bears a striking resemblance to medieval allegory. In his account of the Spanish chivalric romance, *Libero del Cavallero Zifar*, James Burke outlines the characteristic devices:

The author of the *Zifar* [...] gave names to persons, places and things in the work which allegorically describe their function within his framework of meaning.

[...] The second way by means of which the author [...] aided his reader [...] was to set the actions of the book, performed by characters with symbolic titles in places with meaningful names, against a background of the liturgical seasons. By skilful allusion to the circumstances of the event being commemorated or recalled in the liturgy, he is able to identify his character in time and space with the biblical figure or event.³¹

³⁰ *Psychology and Religion*, p.157.

³¹ James F. Burke, *History and Vision: The Figural Structure of the "Libro del Cavallero Zifar"* (London: Tamesis, 1972), p.47.

Such symbolism is systematically developed by White - but it is token symbolism. The purpose of medieval allegory is to reveal how, through figural correspondences with human types, actions and circumstances, divine truth, the book of God, can be read. But to succeed as imaginative experience the fiction must first function persuasively at the *human* level so that the sense of purposiveness may be generated through the dialectical twist entering into the teleological. In the context of *imagination* divine truth becomes a function of art.

In the end, it is not given to Himmelfarb to 'expiate the sins of the world' (p.418) How could it be? On the other hand, at the point of death, he comes to an understanding of 'the mystery of failure'. (p.427) Himmelfarb is now, transparently, a man. As such, he is at the centre of the unconditional love of Ruth Godbold and Mary Hare.

It is, above all, the artist, Alf Dubbo, whose imaginative power transfigures these events. Philoctetes is, clearly, the type for Dubbo. His invisibility as a black, his experience of homosexual abuse, venereal disease and tuberculosis constitute the wounds which seek exorcism. An encounter with a prostitute exemplifies that he is caught in the apparently inexorable logic of passing on the blow:

The couple proceeded to make love, or rather, they vented on each other their misery and rage. [...] As he held her by the thighs, he could have been furiously ramming a wheelbarrow against the darkness. But her misfortunes were alleviated, for the time being, and until she discovered they had been increased. (p.343)

The pattern, the 'law', is articulated in Saul Bellow's *Henderson the Rain King*:

Man is a creature who cannot stand still under blows. [...] When he cannot get rid of a punishment, his heart is apt to rot from it. [...] All wish to rid themselves and free themselves and cast the blow upon the others. And this I conceive of as the earthly dominion.³²

How is the sequence to be stopped?

To the window of the factory where Himmelfarb is employed, his fellow workers crowd to see a passing circus:

³² Saul Bellow, *Henderson the Rain King*, repr. 1986 (London: Penguin, 1959), p.213.

Most comical was one of the clowns who pretended to enact a public hanging on the platform of a lorry. Nothing but the jolting and his own skill prevented him from adapting his neck to the noose.

[...] 'They will kill the silly bugger yet!' screamed one of the grannies of Rosetree's Brighta Bicycle Lamps. (p.404)

There is confusion in the street when the circus merges with a passing funeral procession:

As the clown spun at the edge of his rope [...] a woman rose in the first funeral car [...] it could have been the widow [...] pointing, as if she recognised at last in the effigy of the clown the depth, and duration, and truth of grief, which she had failed to grasp in connection with that exacting male her now dead husband. The woman was screeching dry screams. (*Riders*, p.404)

The woman arrives at the truth through the art of the clown. Retrospectively, it emerges that this episode is a parable designed to provide an interpretative clue to the crucifixion that follows. The woman finds a passage to her grief through the *Grand Guignol* whereas the denizens of the factory find a pretext for passing on the blow through exorcism, objectification in the scapegoat:

Now several [...] realized what a very scraggy, funny, despicable sight the Jew-cove presented. One who suspected that a joke was being prepared, laughed quite short and high. (p.407)

Himmelfarb is cast as the clown:

It was possible to practise all manner of cruelties provided the majority might laugh them off as practical jokes. And there is almost no tragedy which cannot be given a red nose. (p.408)

Alf Dubbo, the artist, is doubly removed from intervention in the spectacle: this confirms the pattern of betrayal established in his childhood but subsequently projected into his own actions - Alf as St. Peter - and, as an artist, he is condemned to be a spectator.

But this distance is seen to be a condition essential for the generation of his vision:

Because he was as solitary in the crowd as the man they had crucified, it was again the abo who saw most. All that he had ever suffered, all that he had failed to understand, rose to the surface in Dubbo [...]. As he watched, the colour flowed through the veins of the cold, childhood Christ [...]. Nothing was asked. So he began also to understand acceptance. How he could at last have conveyed it, in its cloak of purple, on the blue tree, the green lips of detached, contemplative suffering. (pp.412-13)

What remains a clown for the mob becomes transfigured through Dubbo's vision.

At one level we see confirmed here the crucial role of imagining in individuation. Objectification is seen to be a transaction of the shadow; the scapegoat is a function of the blow that is passed on. On the other hand, we are presented with the possibility of the transfiguration of human suffering in the context of imagining. Located within the teleological, the spectacle of the suffering man becomes a symbolic transaction where the experience of the individual is transfigured in the bestowing of the grace of a divine purpose. For Dubbo, the sequence of blows is arrested through 'the love that he had never dared express in life.' (p.453)

It is in the act of imagining that the Christ is manifest, whether in the painting of Dubbo or in the writing of St. Mark. The process is undergone again and again, in the painting of Bosch, in the poems of Hopkins, in the contemporary Mystery play of *Riders in the Chariot*. That the transaction, the paradigm case of symbolic imagining, might be explicable conceptually is, of course, perfectly neutral with regard to ultimate questions.

Individuation is not a once-for-all achievement: it is an undergoing where the self is posited in imagining. This involves the mutual refiguration of world and self. The process can, of course, be hijacked into the transcription of an ego-identity but then the value disclosed in imagining merely serves to empower. We are caught up in this dialectical tension. Figural thinking rehearses this dialectic whereby the type perpetually anticipates its transfiguration - the symbolic transaction subsequently endows time with purpose so that, in Larkin's phrase, our compulsions become 'robed as destinies'.³³ Rendered ideologically, the elusive processes of imagining with its concomitant self become allegorised.

This is, perhaps, strikingly depicted in Bosch's testimony to sin and folly, *The Haywain*. It reflects the notion that the triumph of one deadly sin, in this case avarice, inoculates the soul so that the one vice proliferates into the other six - in Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale*, for example, the initial inoculation is of gluttony. As in *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, the central panel is flanked between visions of heaven and hell. There are, though, two

³³ Philip Larkin, 'Church Going,' from *Collected Poems*, op. cit., p.98.

additional panels to the left and right of the triptych, so that the allegorical drama is, effectively, the interiorised experience of a wayfarer:

Bosch's pilgrim makes his way through the treacherous world whose vicissitudes are represented in the landscape. Some of the dangers are physical, such as the robbers or the snarling dog [...]. The dancing peasants [...] connote a moral danger; like the lovers on top of the haywain, they have succumbed to the music of the flesh. In expressing the spiritual predicament of all mankind, the pilgrim thus resembles Everyman.³⁴

Some ten years later, Bosch, in *The Wayfarer*, returned to the same theme. (Fig.2 overlcaf) The removal, effectively, of the intervening panels of *The Haywain* has immense centripetal force as it causes the issues to coalesce in the single figure at the centre of the circular frame. The allegory of *The Haywain*, however, is now reduced to suggestion. Two more or less parallel, transverse lines create the dynamic of the painting. Pursuit of the Wayfarer's line of vision takes in what looks like a ladle on his pack, the sign of the inn, the woman's head in the window and the couple ambiguously groping in the doorway. The inn sign may be the swan associated with Venus. The parallel line is established by the wayfarer's stick. It runs through his arm and arrives at the foot of the Cross on the distant hill.³⁵ The lines pull sharply in opposite directions: the pilgrim is torn.

We are drawn into imaginative apprehension of his *predicament*. Whatever its *intentions* - perhaps, Pauline commentary? - we are caught in a moment of autonomous *drama*:

This is the time of tension between dying and birth.³⁶

Emphatically, the pilgrim is *in* the world - he has *not* gone through the gate. This is no serene affirmation, no wholesale ideological identification.

After an imaginative excursion into the painting we return changed, perhaps, in terms of

[...] internal difference,
Where the Meanings, are.³⁷

³⁴ Benedikt Taschen, *Hieronymus Bosch c.1450-1516: Between Heaven and Hell* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), p.61.

³⁵ See Taschen, p.63.

³⁶ T.S. Eliot, 'Ash Wednesday', from *Selected Poems*, p.92.

³⁷ Emily Dickinson, 'There's a Certain Slant of Light', from *The Complete Poems*, op. cit., p.118.



Figure 2. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Wayfarer*

However, we are likely to be confronted in the next instant with another imaginative challenge. There is no guarantee of success, only the awareness that other transactions have been productively negotiated in the past. Our vulnerable imaginative negotiations with the painting parallel the essentially elusive imaginative transactions at the heart of St. Mark's Gospel, and, thereby, at the heart of the Mass.

Chapter Eleven

Myth, Symbolism and Individuation

In 'The Birth of Tragedy' the immediate aim of Nietzsche's study was to explore Hellenic art and culture. Whatever his insight into his ostensible subject, in effect, he illuminates something of the nature of the modes of imagination and explores aspects of their ontological and epistemological implications. In his responses both to Nietzsche and Schiller, Jung acknowledges their contributions to the understanding of individuation - he can see reflected in their work his theory of psychological types - but judges that their 'aestheticism' is a serious shortcoming. Jung would locate the psychological issues in the religious domain. Any discussion of aesthetics that assumes a Kantian disinterestedness may be open to Jung's charge. However, our imaginative transactions and their evolution into symbolism - the revelation of value in a purposive context - are one avenue to the sacred and may take us further than Jung had supposed. Indeed, the possibility of refiguration through metaphor and the contingent achievement of impossible perspectives through fictions suppose differentiation from the shadow. All the modes of imagination have roles in facilitating or obstructing individuation. As we shift from one to another so Proteus changes his shape - but only in one mode will he surrender his revelation.

In his discussion of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* Jung observes:

Nietzsche considers the reconciliation of the Delphic Apollo with Dionysus a symbol of the reconciliation of these opposites in the breast of the civilised Greek. But here he forgets his own compensatory formula, according to which the gods of Olympus owe their splendour to the darkness of the Greek psyche. By this token, the reconciliation of Apollo and Dionysus would be a "beautiful illusion," a desideratum evoked by the need of the civilised Greek in his struggle with his own barbarian side, the very element that broke out unchecked in the Dionysian rout.¹

Jung's designation of the Dionysian and Apollinian as Nietzsche's 'fundamental pair of opposites' (p.137) does, in truth, reflect something of Nietzsche's own remarks which categorise these deities as 'opposites', but Jung, in pursuing his own agenda - in identifying psychological types in terms of opposing functions and the possibilities of psychological integration - is diverted from the *conceptual* point that, in the end, Apollo provides the forms through which Dionysus finds expression. Behind Jung's remarks lie his assumptions concerning the inadequacies of what he regards as Nietzsche's aestheticism.

In working out the nature of Jung's partial perspective on Nietzsche, it may be possible to demonstrate how the modes of imagination are implicit in Nietzsche's mythological vision and identify those aspects of imagining which are peculiarly illuminated through Nietzsche's

¹ C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, op. cit., p.139.

method. At the same time, imagining can be demonstrated to be a key element in Jung's notions concerning individuation.

Though Nietzsche would not countenance the terminology, in effect, there are *three* key 'concepts' developed in *The Birth of Tragedy* and these are represented in Dionysus, Apollo and Socrates. At this stage in Nietzsche's writing Dionysus seems to owe much to Schopenhauer's 'will'; Apollo seems associated with the '*principium individuationis*' - he brings the 'essential forms of natural knowledge', the idea.² In this scheme Socrates seems close to the 'knowing consciousness' operating through the 'principle of sufficient reason':

The principle of sufficient reason is [...] the form into which the Idea enters when it comes to the knowledge of the subject as individual. The particular thing that manifests itself in accordance with the principle of sufficient reason is thus only an indirect objectification of the thing-in-itself (which is the will), for between it and the thing-in-itself stands the Idea as the only direct objectivity of the will. (pp.99-100)

Nietzsche's Dionysus seems to be the thing-in-itself, the will, made manifest. But in *rendering* Dionysus, in the very *naming*, his nature must change in such a way that he and Apollo can no longer be regarded as *opposites* - for how, conceivably, could the one be manifest without the other? Whatever is articulated concerning Dionysus presupposes conceptualisation. Nietzsche seems, eventually, to concede their mutual dependence.

[...] the difficult relationship of the Apolline and the Dionysiac in tragedy could really be symbolized by a fraternal bond between the two deities. Dionysus speaks the language of Apollo, but Apollo finally speaks the language of Dionysus, and thus is attained the supreme goal of tragedy and of art in general.³

However, Nietzsche begins his exploration of the relationship by elaborating a metaphor couched in terms of the differentiation between the sexes:

[...] art derives its continuous development from the duality of the Apolline and the Dionysiac; just as the reproduction of species depends on the duality of the sexes [...]. These terms are borrowed from the Greeks, who revealed the profound mysteries of their artistic doctrines [...] not in concepts but in the vividly clear forms of their deities. To the two gods of art, Apollo and Dionysus, we owe our recognition that in the Greek world there was a tremendous opposition [...] between the Apolline art of the sculptor and the non-visual, Dionysiac art of music. These

² Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, ed. by David Berman, trans. by Jill Berman (London: Dent, 1995), p.210.

³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. by Shaun Whiteside, ed. by Michael Tanner (London: Penguin, 1993), p.104.

two very different tendencies walk side by side, usually in violent opposition to one another, exciting one another to ever more powerful births [...] until, finally [...] the two seemed to be coupled, and in this coupling they seem at last to beget the work of art that is as Dionysiac as it is Apolline - Attic tragedy. (p.14)

Jung's repeated 'reconciliation' - he has his eye on psychological integration - seems far from the 'coupling' envisaged by Nietzsche - the latter allows for the retention of independence in the production of something *distinct from both*. The image of coupling is suggestive of the *dialectical* nature of imagining. The fraternal 'bond', then, evolves into the *mediation* of the Dionysian through the Apolline.

For Nietzsche *visual* images presuppose mediation, whereas music is 'a general mirror of the universal will' (p.83) - in Schopenhauer's sense. Paraphrasing Schopenhauer, Nietzsche writes:

[...] he said that music differed in character and origin from all the other arts, because unlike them it was not a replica of phenomena, but the direct replica of the will itself, and complemented *everything physical in the world* with a representation of the thing-in-itself, *the metaphysical*. (p.76)

However, to experience music at all presupposes that it already has an intelligible structure, that it is already individuated or, in Hopkin's terms, inscaped. Arnold Schoenberg, for example, identifies the significance of form in music:

Without organisation music would be an amorphous mass, as unintelligible as an essay without punctuation [...].

The chief requirement for the creation of a comprehensible form are *logic* and *coherence*. The presentation, development and interconnexion of ideas must be based on relationship.

[...] Man's mental limitations prevent him from grasping anything which is too extended. Thus appropriate subdivision facilitates understanding and determines the *form*.⁴

Clearly, though, Apollo gives expression to a prior visitation of Dionysus:

A composer does not, of course, add bit by bit, as a child does in building with wooden blocks. He conceives an entire composition as a spontaneous vision. Then he proceeds, like Michelangelo who chiselled his *Moses* out of the marble without sketches, complete in every detail, thus directly *forming* his material. (pp.1-2)

⁴ Arnold Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, ed. by Gerald Strang and Leonard Stein (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), p.1.

Music is unintelligible without form and, to transpose the point, what sense can be made of the concept of a will beyond any identifiable act of willing? Nietzsche will later write:

Language belongs in its origin to the age of the most rudimentary form of psychology: we find ourselves in the midst of a rude fetishism when we call to mind the basic presuppositions of the metaphysics of language - which is to say, of *reason*. It is *this* which sees everywhere deed and doer; this which believes in will as cause in general [...]. At the beginning stands the great fateful error that the will is something *which produces an effect* - that will is a faculty [...]. Today we know it is merely a word.⁵

By this time Nietzsche conceives of language as a pragmatically evolved defence mechanism through which we provide ourselves with saving illusions. Language gives no access to the truth let alone to a world *behind* our world.

On the other hand, an important difference between music and verbal discourse may lie in the nature of the analogues through which each communicates. It may be that the expressive power of music is located in *generic* rather than *specific* correlatives for emotion. Schopenhauer suggests as much:

[...] music, if it is regarded as an expression of the world, is in the highest degree a universal language that is even related to the universality of concepts much as those concepts are related to particular things [...]. In this respect it is like geometrical figures and numbers, which are the universal forms of all possible objects of experience, *a priori* applicable to them all, and yet are not abstract, but perceptible and thoroughly definite.⁶

There is perhaps some analogy with Petrarch's use of imagery in Canzone CXXV where, as I suggested earlier, the generic imagery invites identification. Rationalised in Platonic terms the generic is open to illusory interpretation in terms of 'forms' or universals thus allowing for a metaphysical interpretation; whereas the nature of the identification that generic imagery invites, locates responses squarely in the realm of the phenomenal.

It is important for Nietzsche, though, that Dionysus should be associated with the transcending of form or, at least, with its dissolution. Dionysus is, above all, associated with the numinous. On the other hand, Socrates is associated with the imposition of form where form is inappropriate. Characteristically, Socratic reason is employed as a defence

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, from *Twilight of the Idols and The Anti-Christ*, trans. by R.J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1990), p.48.

⁶ Arthur Schopenhauer, *World as Will and Representation*, quoted in *The Birth of Tragedy*, p.77.

against pessimism, the inevitable adjunct of willing - later, as we have noted, reason will be seen to be hypostatized in language, the dead metaphor of illusion. Nietzsche identifies such pessimism in Hamlet:

This is something that Dionysiac man shares with Hamlet: both have truly seen to the essence of things, they have *understood*, and action repels them; for their action can change nothing [...] they consider it ludicrous or shameful that they should be expected to restore order to the chaotic world. Understanding kills action, depends on a veil of illusion [...]. True understanding, insight into the terrible truth, outweighs every motive for action, for Hamlet and Dionysiac man alike.⁷

I suggested earlier that absurdity followed upon consciousness of a paradigm as having limits, that awareness of its edges presupposes that a paradigm has been superseded. Another way of putting it is that absurdity is symptomatic of the exhaustion of imagining. The dead model or figure is bereft of the numinous, the charge of double prescription, so that it has lost its symbolic efficacy and is thereby irremediably located within the discursive. In the context of imagination the Socratic spirit seeks to define that which is already fled. What flies is meaning. In Nietzsche's terms:

We have already grown beyond whatever we have words for. In all talking there lies a grain of contempt. Speech, it seems, was devised only for the average, medium, communicable. The speaker has already *vulgarized* himself by speaking.⁸

I would argue, however, that this is applicable only when language is used discursively.

Nietzsche identifies the predicament of Hamlet with 'Dionysiac man'. What begins in Hamlet as desolation and grief - the crumbling of the circumscribing social dimension of meaning, the threat to that identity ordinarily sustained through mutual interaction with others - resolves eventually into an *intellectual* problem: that is to say, the predicament is *lived* by Hamlet but *discussed* in the extended play. Loss of meaning manifests itself in failure to act, for action presupposes the possibility of change, at the least, tacitly couched in terms of the evaluation of the components of choice. The play widely explores the nature of what it is to act - through introspection, through different characters in similar situations. Even the clowns are involved in this:

⁷ *Birth of Tragedy*, p.39.

⁸ *Twilight of the Idols*, p.94.

If the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he nill he, he goes; mark you that. But if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself. Argal, he that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.⁹

Hamlet's situation can be recognised in the terms Nietzsche ascribes to Schopenhauer

when he writes of

[...] the tremendous *dread* that grips man when he suddenly loses his way amidst the cognitive forms of appearance, because the principle of sufficient reason, in one of its forms, seems suspended.¹⁰

Nietzsche continues:

If we add to this dead the blissful ecstasy which, prompted by the same fragmentation of the *principium individuationis*, rises up from man's innermost core, indeed from nature, we are vouchsafed a glimpse in to the nature of the *Dionysiac*, most immediately understandable to us in the analogy of *intoxication*. (pp.16-17)

But to escape from constraint through 'singing and dancing' (p.17) or in the football crowd, or whatever, seems very far from the predicament of Hamlet. The fate of Ophelia points to a potential development in psychosis and the exploitation of the *absence* of constraint finds a terrible extension, for example, in the horrors of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* which serves as the type for a characteristic relationship between colonising and indigenous peoples.

There can be, then, a terrible price to pay for elevating the inchoate into a metaphysical principle. But the Dionysiac is unintelligible outside specific contexts of constraint: it is the nature of the constraint that defines its associated freedom. To exalt such 'freedom' as a principle is to endow a symbol with literal autonomy - a characteristic human strategy that in animating the world provides the sanction of divinity for our own projections. In other words, the metaphysical will and the Dionysiac are coextensive but the intelligibility of each supposes a defining context.

I have argued that the numinous is associated with symbolic imagining. It is as if Dionysus were the fictional projection that gave expression to that ecstatic potentiality - *that would make the god contingent upon the process of imagining itself*. Such a view

⁹ Hamlet, op.cit., V.1.16

¹⁰ *Birth of Tragedy*, p.16.

would involve the reversal of the conventional assumption regarding the flow of energy - the god would be imaginary because imagined.

Convention has it that electricity flows from positive to negative but, in fact, the negative electrons move in the opposite direction. That we continue to employ the convention testifies to the residual power of an ingrained paradigm.

Dionysus is, indeed, manifest through myth, but *exclusively* so. This explains why Dionysus' representative, the satyr, is caught so effectively in Nietzsche's oxymoron - 'the invented natural being.' (p.38) Dionysus is a function of *myth* - he is *already* individuated. Dionysus and Apollo are inconceivable in the simple, straightforward, abutting opposition that is implied in Jung's 'reconciliation' of these 'opposites'. That they can be so conceived is a consequence of imagining mediated through literal rationalisation in a discursive mode.

Nietzsche seems to identify two phases in the Greeks' encounter with absurdity. Epic poetry has its origins in dreaming, in fantasy. Dreaming is representative of artistic powers 'which spring from nature itself, *without the mediation of the human artist*'. (p.18) This assumption fails to meet the objection already expressed regarding Dionysus - dreaming is already mediated through its imagery and story. Nevertheless, the Apolline response to absurdity is to effect a further mediation of the dream world into a sustaining illusion :

The Greeks knew and felt the fears and horrors of existence: in order to be able to live at all they had to interpose the radiant dream-birth of the Olympians between themselves and those horrors. (p.22)

If the Socratic impulse is decadent in interposing rationalisation between the self and the world is not the saving lie of epic poetry equally misleading?

On the face of it the Socratic, the scientific spirit, disengages itself from the mythic. However, as we have previously argued, the discursive can be bound back into story through the dialectic of imagining and it may be that the Socratic spirit finds its essential motivation in exactly this way. A hint of this possibility is provided by Nietzsche himself:

[...] just as the immediate effect of a Socratic impulse led inexorably to the dissolution of Dionysiac tragedy, a profound experience from the life of Socrates himself obliges us to ask whether there was necessarily a polar opposition between Socratism and art, and whether the idea of the birth of an 'artistic Socrates' is itself a contradiction in terms.

[...] Might art even be a necessary correlative and supplement to science?

(pp.70-71)

What Nietzsche has immediately in mind is the 'Hymn to Apollo' written while Socrates was in prison. However, behind the scientific spirit is a profound, sustaining illusion,

[...] which first entered the world in the person of Socrates - the unshakeable belief that rational thought, guided by causality, can penetrate to the depth of being, and that it is capable not only of knowing but even of *correcting* being. This sublime metaphysical illusion is an instinctual accompaniment to science, and repeatedly takes it to its limits, where it must become *art: which is the true purpose of this mechanism.*' (p.73)

It is only at the *limits* of science that the sustaining illusion breaks down - that is, at the dawning of *absurdity* - and following the confrontation with, by now, an essentially 'tragic knowledge' art is sought 'as both protection and remedy, if we are to bear it.' (pp.74-75)

Science seems to have its distinctive, sublime Apolline illusion which, in the face of its collapse into absurdity, reaches for tragic art as its remedy.

The Socratic spirit is sustained by illusion and is vulnerable to the intrusion of absurdity in a similar way to Apolline art. Whereas the Greek response was in terms of tragedy, it will become Nietzsche's passionate concern to identify the modern crisis - to look it in the face - and to exhort us to celebrate it in terms of a new tragic vision.

It is striking that significant aspects of Nietzsche's vision seem to be anticipated in the poetry of Keats. In 'Ode to a Nightingale', it is as if Dionysus were manifest in the intoxicating beauty of the bird's song. This music is individuated through Apolline imagery:

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs
But, in embalmèd darkness, guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit tree wild.¹¹

The beautiful illusion stands over and against the intolerable reality:

Here, where men sit and hear each other groan [...]
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs. (p.82)

¹¹ John Keats, 'Ode to a Nightingale', from *A Selection from John Keats*, op. cit., p.83.

Presumably, for Keats such despair is no romantic indulgence - he had given up his apprenticeship as a surgeon a mere month before he would become qualified. That his decision weighed heavily upon him is, perhaps, evident in 'The Fall of Hyperion' in his confrontation with Moneta. Her challenges oblige him to explore in detail how he can justify his vocation as poet:

What benefit canst thou do, or all thy tribe,
To the great world? Thou art a dreaming thing,
A fever of thyself.¹²

What is a dreamer? The issue hangs on the nature of the poetry produced.

'Art thou not of the dreamer tribe?
The poet and the dreamer are distinct,
Diverse, sheer opposite, antipodes.' (l.198 p.95)

The Apolline illusion begins in fantasy, elaborates an *alternative* to reality. What Keats aspires to, on the other hand, is to articulate something very like the tragic vision and that will be made available to him through Moneta's gift of the story of the Titans - or, at least, it will point the way. 'The Fall of Hyperion' is essentially *discursive* with regard to his vocation - it is not yet an achieved vision. Keats sees his way to his vocation rather in the manner of Dante in *La Vita Nuova* who turned from the introspective indulgence of courtly love - supposing identification - to the exploration of human love as an attribute of the Divine. Keats saw that he must effect a transition from 'poesy' to a poetry adequate to express the tragic vision.

In 'Hyperion' it is Oceanus who outlines the reason for the predicament of the Titans. Nietzsche identifies the Titanic with the 'barbaric essence of the Dionysiac'.¹³ The Prometheus of Aeschylus in his striving for justice reveals his 'paternal descent from Apollo'. (p.51) Prometheus demonstrates that sacrilege is necessary for the achievement of individuation, self-knowledge - this is clearly illustrated in Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. In Keats, tragedy is bound up in the *inevitable* loss of the Titanic world.

Keats expresses this inevitability in a law:

¹² John Keats, 'The Fall of Hyperion', from *A Selection from John Keats*, l.167, pp.94-95.

¹³ *Birth of Tragedy*, p.27.

The impulse to provide explanatory retrospective projection is touched upon by Marx in his discussion of political economy:

Let us not begin our explanation, as does the economist, from a legendary primordial condition. Such a primordial condition does not explain anything; it merely removes the question into a grey and nebulous distance. It asserts as a fact or event what it should deduce.¹⁶

Subsequently Marx uses the psychological dynamics of religion - derived from Feuerbach - as a model for his exploration of the nature of alienation:

Just as in religion the spontaneous activity of human fantasy, of the human brain and heart, reacts independently as an alien activity of gods or devils upon the individual, so the activity of the worker is not his own spontaneous activity. It is another's activity and a loss of his own spontaneity (p.247)

There is a sense, then, in which we can become bewitched by a sort of symbolic literalism where the subtle dynamics of imaginative transactions are rendered discursively yet retain, though only by *association*, something of the charge of the numinous. It is this process that provides the scaffolding for religious ideology.

In the two 'Hyperions' Keats, in effect, will identify the Titanic *as a dimension of his own imagining* in his exploration of the nature and evolution of his own writing. More accurately, to begin with, the Titanic represents unassimilated suffering dissociated from the imaginative enterprise. Saturn is trapped in bewilderment. It is the timorous Clymene who articulates the nature of the first phase of the imaginative enterprise as it reaches towards assimilation. Rather as with the speaker in 'Ode to a Nightingale', Clymene's creativity arises from a mood that contrasts the sensuous richness of the natural world with her woefulness generated by the predicament of the Titans:

[...] I felt a movement in my heart
To chide, and to reproach that solitude
With songs of misery, music of our woes;
And sat me down, and took a mouthèd shell
And murmured into it, and made melody. ('Hyperion', l.267.)

¹⁶ Karl Marx, 'Alienated Labour', from *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts*, in *Nature and Industrialization*, op. cit., p.246.

It is a narcissistic impulse - felicitously confirmed by the 'echo' - that directs her song into the shell. When children hold shells to their ears to 'listen to the sea' it is the course of their own blood that they hear. And so Clymene, 'with poor skill let pass into the breeze/The dull shell's echo.' (II.273)

The closed circuit of woefulness is broken when she hears a new song, the 'blissful golden melody' (II.280) that comes from Apollo. The Titans have been superseded by the gods; Clymene comes to recognise the superiority of the art of Apollo.

It is clear, though, from the framing dream allegory of 'The Fall of Hyperion' that the protagonist, presumably Keats himself, has assimilated Apollo as an *alter ego*. Apollo's experience with Mnemosyne is rewritten in terms of the imaginative biography of the poet himself. Mnemosyne becomes Moneta. There are, then, two versions of Apollo's/Keats's passage to knowledge. In 'Hyperion' Apollo reads the history of the Titans' suffering in the face of Mnemosyne:

Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.
Names, deeds, grey voices, agonies,
Deeds, grey legends, dire events, rebellions,
Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,
Creations and destroyings, all at once
Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,
And deify me. (III.113)

In 'Hyperion' the Titanic experience will become a source for imagining, the source of the tragic vision. In 'The Fall of Hyperion' it is as if the poet finds his vocation as he reads the face of Moneta:

Then saw I a wan face,
Not pined by human sorrows, but bright-blanced
By an immortal sickness which kills not.
It works a constant change, which happy death
Can put no end to.¹⁷

In this Nietzschean moment the poet is about to enter into knowledge of the perpetual and necessary nature of suffering as couched in the story of the fall of the Titans. In effect, the suffering of the Titans - Dionysiac man - is to be mediated through the art of Apollo in the

¹⁷ 'The Fall of Hyperion', l.256.

expression of the tragic vision. The issues that Keats records in arriving at his vocation - with clear implications for psychological integration through imagining - are manifest in the larger scale in Nietzsche's 'historical' reconstruction. The 'Hyperions' suggest that *The Birth of Tragedy* is a dramatic projection involving the workings of Nietzsche's own psyche. As Nietzsche himself claimed of metaphysics, in another context, 'moralities [...] are only *a sign language of the emotions*.'¹⁸

There is a strong sense in the 'Hyperion's' that Keats understands where he has to get to but that the articulation of the problem is no guarantee of arrival - in other words, the essential meaning of these poems is conceived *discursively*. That is to say, the mode is Socratic and no matter how he might turn and twist the same is true for Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*. This merely identifies Keats and Nietzsche in these enterprises with much critical writing that justifies in the name of an end which cannot, because of the mode of the discourse, be realised - a sort of compulsive idealisation of imagining. Are we to understand Nietzsche's idea that 'our highest dignity lies in the meaning of works of art' as anything other than such an idealisation, a saving illusion?

It may be that such dignity is associated with the capacity to enter into the world of the book - or whatever else engages the imagination. In this state of imagining the ego is, in a sense, subverted. The letting go is a pre-condition for refiguration in metaphor and disclosure of value in double prescription. The mode of apprehension is a necessary condition for what is disclosed, allows for the 'fusion of horizons'¹⁹ and presupposes that what is rendered is a function of imaginative synthesis. In these circumstances the self grows coextensively with the disclosure of the world: here, if anywhere, is that augmentation, the enhancement of worth, that constitutes dignity - it is born in the *process* of imagining. It is in this context, then, that Nietzsche could come to see that the 'world' and 'the existence of man' is an aesthetic phenomenon.

On the other hand, in the discursive mode,

¹⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, op. cit., p.110.

¹⁹ Hans-Georg Gadamer, quoted in *A Ricoeur Reader*, op cit., p.235.

Truths are illusions which one has forgotten *are* illusions, worn-out metaphors which have become powerless to affect the sense, coins which have their obverse effaced and are now no longer of account as coins but merely as metal.²⁰

J.P. Stern observes,

The 'justification' of the world through 'the aesthetic activity' is identical with the 'justification' or meaning imprinted on the world through man the maker of linguistic conventions, that is, of a system of 'metaphors'. This in turn implies that gnosis on which Nietzsche's theory of tragedy was founded: it implies the existence of a hostile universe of silence before and beyond language, within which our little human world of language is an oasis of life, comfort and sustenance, but not of *truth*. (p.139)

Such a 'justification' would, in fact, constitute aestheticism. But the argument depends upon the association of metaphor with linguistic *conventions*. This amounts to a conflation of live and dead metaphor - the distinction depends upon the mode within which metaphor functions *at a given moment*. A metaphor may be alive for one individual and dead for another. In the teaching situation poetry may, at times, be nothing but clinker. On the other hand, those aspects of the world and persons revealed through imagining - in metaphor, in double prescription - are not mere *supplements* to reality - *they are constitutive of it*. In these circumstances the idea that there is a 'hostile universe of silence before and beyond language' seems little but a rhetorical indulgence that selects one perspective at the expense of the whole. The problem with dead metaphor is not that it *fails* in its constitutive function established in imagining, but that its power of insight and the concomitant disclosure of value have thinned into insignificance. On the other hand, therein, precisely, lies its *pragmatic* value - 'I *caught* a bus at 7.30 this morning.' In certain circumstances to be excited by metaphor is a sort of lunacy.

It is possible to see how the conflation of modes of apprehension resolved in favour of the discursive could lead to the development of a partial vision that resolves itself into pessimistic relativism.

To see the world, therefore, as an aesthetic phenomenon is not to be committed to aestheticism. The 'reconciliation of Apollo and Dionysus' of which Jung writes can be understood as a rationalisation of imagining couched in mythic terms which may or may not

²⁰ Friedrich Nietzsche, 'On Truth and Falsehood in an Extra-Moral Sense' quoted by J.P. Stern in *Nietzsche*, 6th impression 1990 (London: Fontana, 1978), p.136.

illuminate the nature of Greek Tragedy but certainly displays the modes of imagination as they are operative within the individual mind.

But Jung is deeply suspicious of the role of art in mediating between these gods:

[...] Nietzsche like Schiller, had a pronounced tendency to credit art with a mediating and redeeming role. The problem then remains stuck in aesthetics - the ugly is also "beautiful", even beastliness and evil shine forth enticingly in that false glamour of aesthetic beauty. The artistic nature in both Schiller and Nietzsche claims a redemptive significance for itself and its specific capacity for creation and expression.²¹

One good reason for Jung's suspicion is that he approaches Nietzsche on his own terms - as attempting to illuminate truths about Greek culture. Jung is deflected from the subtext and its disclosure of the workings of the individual imagination. His suspicions concerning Schiller have different grounds. These are revealed in his discussion of Schiller's *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*.

Of the influences that are reflected in the series of letters that came to contribute Schiller's text, two are of relevance to this discussion: Schiller was writing as the Reign of Terror unfolded - it began in June 1793 - and Kant's *Critique of Judgement* had been published in 1790. From the former event seems to arise Schiller's agenda that the 'moral man' cannot be born directly out of 'sensuous man' but only through the mediation of art - hence his commitment to *aesthetic* education. From Kant, Schiller inherits the notion that art must be disinterested. Here, perhaps, is the basis of Jung's charge that the aesthetic distorts because, ultimately, it has to do with pleasure. On the other hand, Schiller is perfectly aware of the difficulties:

Precisely because taste pays heed only to form and never to content, it finally gives the soul a dangerous tendency to neglect reality entirely and to sacrifice truth and morality to an attractive façade.²²

It remains for him to demonstrate how the reconciliation of 'form' and 'content' can be brought about.

²¹ *Psychological Types*, pp.140-141.

²² Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, trans. by Reginald Snell (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1994), p.57.

In the realm of Nature, the sensuous man is undifferentiated from his feelings and from the world. On the other hand, the man who is guided by reason exists in a world of forms abstracted from nature but at a distance from his senses:

[...] Man can be at odds with himself in a double fashion: either as a savage if his feelings rule his principles, or as a barbarian if his principles destroy his feelings. (p.34).

The characteristics of each type constitute a series of binary opposites: feeling and thinking, apprehension and comprehension, content and form. In a letter to Goethe, Schiller writes:

My mind works in a symbolizing way, and so I hover [...] between concept and contemplation, between law and feeling, between a technical mind and genius. [...] the poetic mind generally got the better of me when I ought to have philosophized, and my philosophical spirit when I wanted to be a poet. (pp.6-7)

In our terms, generally, the opposites can be seen to constitute the characteristics of identification or imagination; or, identification or imagination as opposed to the discursive. As we have argued, the mediating function is the imagination. This, essentially, is Schiller's position.

He formulates the product of such a mediating function as 'living shape':

Only as the form of something lives in our sensation, and its life takes form in our understanding, is it living shape, and this will everywhere be the case where we judge it to be beautiful. (p.76).

However, though suggestive, this coinage does not take us far conceptually. No doubt taking his cue from Kant, living shape is said to be the 'object of the play impulse'. (p.76.) It is the origin of the Beautiful, but

[...] this equilibrium always remains only an idea [...]. In actuality there will always be a preponderance of one element or the other, and the utmost that experience can achieve will consist of an oscillation between the two principles, so that at one moment it is reality, and at another form, that is predominant. (p.81)

This appears to be a *discursive* rationalisation - it cannot arrive at imagination. Later, in an illuminating passage, Schiller outlines the conceptual issues in a formulation that confirms the dialectical nature of imagining:

It is really a question of two utterly different operations, which in this enquiry must necessarily support each other. Beauty [...] links together two conditions which are *opposed to each other* and can never become one. It is from this opposition that we

must start; we must comprehend and recognize it in its whole purity and strictness, so that the two conditions are separated in the most definite way; otherwise we are mixing but not uniting them. Secondly, it is said that Beauty *combines* those two opposite conditions, and thus removes the opposition. But since both conditions remain eternally opposed to one another, they can only be combined by cancellation.¹ Our second business, then, is to make this combination perfect, to accomplish it so purely and completely that both conditions entirely disappear in a third, and no trace of the division remains behind in the whole. (pp.88-89)

The translator of this edition, Reginald Snell, observes in a footnote:

The German word thus inadequately translated is *aufgehoben*, which is here used, possibly for the first time, to mean *preserved by destruction* in the dialectical sense. [...] Goethe [...] sometimes uses *Aufhebung* to mean *disappearance in a higher import* in a very similar sense; but the peculiar logical context of this passage makes it probable that it was from these Letters that Hegel derived the characteristic technical term of his philosophical system. (pp.88-89n.)

That the basis of Schiller's discussion should be the *distinction* between form and content supposes that the imaginative issues are being approached from the perspective of the discursive. Given this orientation, and from within this dualistic epistemological paradigm, the logic of imagination *must* appear as dialectical. What is presupposed in such a dualistic categorisation is the imaginative transaction that discloses form in the first place. The dialectic is a conceptualisation that reflects retrospective rationalisation in the discursive mode.

The pathway from identification is also noted by Schiller:

The mind, then, passes from sensation to thought through a middle disposition in which sensuousness and reason are active *at the same time*, but just because of this they are mutually destroying their determining power and through their opposition producing negation. (pp.98-99)

The 'middle disposition' is imagination manifest in the synthesis of double prescription. But Schiller hints that this process too is dialectical. The failure to discriminate between modes and their epistemological implications has produced a crucial conflation.

It is important here to be clear about the relationships between identification, imagination and the discursive. Approached from the discursive - the characteristic critical stance - the relation with imagination must be dialectical. Approached from identification - the mode of

the non-specialist reader - the disclosures effected by metaphor may dislodge blindness with insight but the mediation involves no dialectical twist.

At this point Schiller re-asserts his Kantian antecedents:

This middle disposition, in which our nature is constrained neither physically nor morally and yet is active both ways, pre-eminently deserves to be called a free disposition; and if we call the condition of sensuous determination the physical, and that of rational determination the logical and moral, we must call this condition of real and active determinacy the *aesthetic*. (p.99)

Tied to a Kantian conception of 'disinterest' the aesthetic is reduced to a 'supplement'. (p.132) The aesthetic combines the 'form' that is posited in contemplation with 'life' in so far as we 'feel' (p.122):

Only in so far as it is *candid* (expressly renouncing all claim to reality), and only in so far as its is *self-dependent* (dispensing with all assistance from reality), is appearance aesthetic. As soon as it is deceitful and simulates reality, as soon as it is impure and requires reality for its operation, it is nothing but a base tool for material ends. (p.128)

Such a conceptualisation, however, offers no possibility of *insight* – which is the essential and distinctive attribute of imagining in so far as it is manifest in the refigurations of metaphor in double prescription.

It is Jung's intention to show how, underlying such opposites, are what he calls psychological *functions*. There are four functions conceived in binary opposition: thinking and feeling; sensation and intuition:

Sensation establishes what is actually present, thinking enables us to recognize its meaning, feeling tells us its value, and intuition points to possibilities as to whence it came and whither it is going in a given situation.²³

In Jung's scheme each individual is characterized by a dominant function mediated through an attitude:

[...] having an attitude is synonymous with an *a priori* orientation to a definite thing, no matter whether this be represented in consciousness or not.

[...] This automatic phenomenon is an essential cause of the one-sidedness of conscious *orientation*. (pp.414-415)

²³ *Psychological Types*, p.540.

It is the nature of the attitude that is fundamental in categorising the individual as extraverted or introverted but

[...] introverted and extraverted attitudes can never be demonstrated *per se*; they appear only as a peculiarity of the predominating conscious function. (p.520).

In the binary opposites one function is dominant at the expense of the inferiority of the other. These inferior functions

[...] remain in a more or less primitive and infantile state, often only half conscious, or even quite unconscious. These relatively underdeveloped functions constitute a specific inferiority which is characteristic of each type [...]. The one-sided emphasis on thinking is always accompanied by an inferiority of feeling, and differentiated sensation is injurious to intuition and vice versa. (p.540)

At least two forces work to consolidate such differentiation: the dominant function is exploited as a defence mechanism and, in a process that could be understood as a psychological amplification to Marx's notion of estrangement, the differentiated function is exploited in the fulfilment of a collective, a social role. Taking his cue from Schiller, Jung observes.

Man no longer appears as a man in our collective culture: he is merely represented by a function, what is more he identifies himself completely with this function and denies the relevance of the other inferior functions. Thus modern man is debased to a mere function, because it is this that represents a collective value and alone guarantees a possible livelihood. (pp.72-73)

Given this state of affairs the question remains as to how such alienation is to be resolved - in Jung's terms, how our individuation is to be achieved out of our fragmentation. What for Schiller was a problem of *imagination* becomes for Jung a problem of *psychological integration*.

Clearly, Jung is embarked on a sophisticated exploration of modes of relation. His concepts - the functions - like Kant's *faculties* are, though, uncomfortably precise. More importantly, given the psychological perspective, the objects of our intentionality are, in effect, regarded as *tabulae rasae* upon which we project unconscious contents, or which we introject, or whatever. In our terms, Jung understands that our relations with the world are characterised by identification. The implications of this are crucial in Jung's discussion of symbolism.

In the search for individuation, the resolution of the binary opposition is not to be found through the exercise of reason because that would presuppose the dominance of the thinking function. The resolution must lie in a mode of relation which involves

[...] thinking by sensing and sensing by thinking, then, out of that experience (which Schiller calls the object) a *symbol* would arise [...].

The object of the mediating function, therefore, according to Schiller, is "living form," for this would be precisely a symbol in which the opposites are united; "a concept that serves to denote all aesthetic qualities of phenomena and, in a word, what we call *Beauty* in the widest sense of the term".

(pp.105-106)

Lacking an adequate theory of imagination Jung makes a connection between 'living shape' and 'symbolism':

The profundity and pregnant significance of the symbol appeal just as strongly to *thinking* as to *feeling*, while its peculiar plastic imagery, when shaped into sensuous form, stimulates *sensation* as much as *intuition*. (p.478)

Having made this connection Jung elaborates upon his own concept of symbolism.

Jung is intent on taking a step beyond what he calls Schiller's, 'all too constricting mantle of aestheticism':

Aestheticism is not fitted to solve the exceedingly serious and difficult task of educating man, for it always presupposes the very thing it should create - the capacity to love beauty. It actually hinders a deeper investigation of the problem, because it always averts its face from anything evil, ugly and difficult, and aims at pleasure, even though it be of an edifying kind. Aestheticism therefore lacks all moral force, because *au fond* it is still only a refined hedonism. (p.121)

This is persuasive - but limited in the scope of its indictment. As we have seen, Schiller's account of the dialectic is contingent upon the *prior* transactions of imagining. Imagination *does not* commit us to aestheticism. To some extent, then, Jung is tilting at a misconception.

Concerning the aesthetic, Schiller argues that 'appearance is its essence'.²⁴ On the other hand, the aesthetic object demonstrates the possibility of a kind of freedom from reality. What is posited through the aesthetic is 'Actuality':

²⁴ Schiller, p.126.

It is Nature herself that raises Man from reality to appearance, by endowing him with two senses which lead him through appearance alone to knowledge of the actual. [...] What we *see* through the eye is different from what we *perceive*. (p.126)

That the aesthetic *transfigures* actuality is, presumably, a product of the aesthetic supplement. It is as if Schiller's intuitions transcend the limitations of his Kantian stance:

He exercises this right of sovereignty in the *art of appearance*, and the more strictly he here distinguishes between the *mine* and the *thine*, the more carefully he separates shape from being, and the more self-dependence he is capable of giving to this shape, the more he will not merely extend the realm of Beauty but even secure the boundaries of Truth; for he cannot purify appearance from actuality without at the same time liberating actuality from appearance. (p.127)

The crucial distinction seems to be between 'reality' and the mediated product of imagining - 'actuality'. The distinction between 'mine' and 'thine' anticipates the role of imagination in individuation.

On the other hand, in Jung's analysis 'aestheticism' is set up as a foil against which he can develop his own concept of symbolism. Schiller has been vulnerable to the charge of aestheticism because of his adoption of Kant's argument that beauty must be disinterested. But Schiller's intuition takes him beyond Kant towards a conception of imagination that anticipates the association of imagination with insight. To save symbolism from its association with pleasure Jung lends it appropriate *gravitas* by identifying its proper domain as the religious:

Devotion, or the sinking of libido into the unconscious, reactivates the childhood complex so that the childhood reminiscences, and especially the relations with the parents, becomes suffused with life. The fantasies produced by this reactivation give rise to the birth of father and mother divinities [...]. Characteristically, it is *symbols* of the parents that become activated and by no means always the images of the real parents.²⁵

Such transformation of images of parents into symbols Jung designates 'symbolic substitution'. (p.124)

Humanity came to its gods by accepting the reality of the symbol, that is, it came to the *reality of thought*, which has made man lord of the earth. Devotion, as Schiller correctly conceived it, is a regressive movement of the libido towards the primordial, a diving down in to the source of the first beginnings. Out of this there

²⁵ *Psychological Types*, p.124.

rises, as an image of the incipient progressive movement, the symbol, which is a condensation of all the operative unconscious factors - "living form," as Schiller says, and a God-image as history proves. (p.125)

There may well be symbols whose nature reflects what Jung describes but it will not do to equate them with Schiller's 'living form'.

In his account of the symbol in his Definitions in *Psychological Types*, Jung is more circumspect in his analysis. He discriminates between the symbol as sign - where it is effectively dead - and its dynamic phase - as I would argue, in the context of imagining. Though aware that the mode of relation is crucial - one individual's symbol may be another's sign - on the other hand, he does not acknowledge that the nature of the symbol may change in the experience of the same individual. The ritual and symbolism of the mass, for example, may be dead on one occasion yet, subsequently, dynamic.

Resolved out of the imaginative mode the symbol becomes substantive - in this mode the symbol is complete and functions as a sign. But Jung suggests that the *dynamic* symbol is in some way *incomplete* and it is this *absence* that provides the gap for a sort of psychological intrusion:

Every view which interprets the symbolic expression as an analogue or an abbreviated designation for a *known* thing is *semiotic*. A view which interprets the symbolic expression as the best possible formulation of a relatively *unknown* thing, which for that reason cannot be more clearly or characteristically represented, is *symbolic*. [...] an interpretation of the cross is *symbolic* when it puts the cross beyond all conceivable explanations, regarding it as expressing an as yet unknown and incomprehensible fact of a mystical or transcendent, i.e. psychological nature. (p.474)

Hidden in these remarks is the effective conflation of 'analogue' and 'abbreviated designation'. Clearly, the latter constitutes a sign. The former opens up the possibility of metaphor and its associated refiguration. Earlier I suggested that the symbol is manifest exclusively in relation, manifest in that dawning that accompanies the emergence of double prescription in a purposive context. Metaphor manifest as symbol is a sort of protracted 'yes'. The dawning supposes a *delayed* fulfilment not an *absence* that invites projection - 'whenever unconscious contents are activated they appear in projection.' (p.244)

How is Jung to distinguish between the unconscious projections that constitute the shadow and the projected contents incorporated in the symbol? To find a simple answer to what constitutes a protracted discussion in his work as a whole is unfair. On the other hand, at times he is suspiciously adjectival:

A symbol really lives only when it is the best and highest expression for something divined but not yet known to the observer. It then compels his unconscious participation and has a life-giving and life-enhancing effect. (p.476)

The centre of his argument concerns the capacity of the symbol to reconcile the characteristic differentiated function from its binary opposite:

[...] it cannot be a onesided product of the most highly differentiated mental functions but must derive equally from the lowest and most primitive levels of the psyche. For this collaboration of opposing states to be possible at all, they must first face one another in the fullest conscious opposition [...]. But when there is full parity of the opposites, attested by the ego's absolute participation in both, this necessarily leads to a suspension of the *will*. [...] for the will can no longer operate when every motive has an equally strong countermotive.

[...] From the activity of the unconscious there now emerges a new content, constellated by thesis and antithesis in equal measure and standing in a *compensatory* [...] relation to both. (pp.478-479)

Here the imagination is given a psychological perspective but the price of that is an excursion into psychological metaphysics in support of an essentially transcendental argument. My fundamental point is that metaphor contains the potential to refigure that with which I am in relation - the world - and that we are empowered in our search for intelligibility, new models, because of the disclosure of value and the reciprocal extension of self and world, subject and object, in the act of such imagining. Jung's model for integration simply extends the ego out of the hinterland of the self, a growth *with no apparent implications about the nature of the world within which that self is located*.

It is as if Jung's familiarity with his chosen domain - individual psychology - had resulted in the evolution of a paradigm that took into account the prescriptive nature of our modes of relation with the world as a phenomenon of *subjectivity*, but failed to acknowledge the prescriptive nature of *concepts* - or the reciprocal possibility of double prescription. This limitation is clearly indicated in Jung's discussion of what he calls the 'subjective factor':

Sensation [...] too, has a subjective factor, for besides the sensed object there is a sensing subject who adds his subjective disposition to the objective stimulus. In the introverted attitude sensation is based predominantly on the subjective component of perception. What I mean by this is best illustrated by works of art which reproduce external objects. If, for instance, several painters were to paint the same landscape, each trying to reproduce it faithfully, each painting will be different from the others [...] chiefly because of different ways of seeing; indeed, in some of the paintings there will be a distinct psychic difference in mood and the treatment of colour and form. These qualities betray the influence of the subjective factor [...]. It is an unconscious disposition which alters the sense-perception at its source, thus depriving it of the character of a purely objective influence. (pp.393-394)

The issue here is reflected in the assumption that there is an area of the world - 'the *same* landscape' - to which we can have some common access outwith the mediating and prescriptive concepts that are a condition of intelligibility at all. There is a conceptual issue to which Jung is blind.

There are then two distinctive sorts of discovery. The first involves abstraction from a prior identification whereby the 'subjective factor' can be identified. Such are the discoveries made available through the irony of Chaucer and Kafka. On the other hand, there is the discovery that is contingent upon conceptual change - paradigm shifts in science, the refiguration effected by metaphor. In fact the two are distinguishable only *retrospectively* as each prior state is the very condition of seeing and such distinctions are not available to the protagonist. This privileged perspective - presupposing our imaginative transactions resolving into abstraction - is a crucial factor that fictions make available for us in the furtherance of individuation.

The worlds of Chaucer's Merchant or Kafka's Joseph K. are monolithic, seamless - that is the source of their ultimate, claustrophobic horror. But the horror is *retrospective* and contingent upon my imaginative apprehension of the world of the book whereby a world and an *alternative* are available to me but not to the protagonist. The condition for *letting go* is provided by the freedom from responsive action, the very freedom that allows us to jump tracks in pursuing the polysemic byways of language. Metaphor and integration share the same pre-condition.

As we have already noted, Jung is not convinced that the necessary high seriousness is reflected in Schiller's 'aestheticism'. However, already implicit in our discussion of

imagination and its key expression in metaphor is the argument that imagining involves a refiguration of the world and simultaneous extension of the self.

For Jung the unconscious is always manifest in projection:

So long as they are unconscious our unconscious contents are always projected, and the projection fixes upon everything "ours," inanimate objects as well as animals and people. And to the extent that "our" possessions are projection carries, they are *more* than what they are in themselves [...]. They have acquired several layers of meaning and are therefore symbolical, though this fact seldom or never reaches consciousness.²⁶

Individuation involves the emergence of the ego from the self:

The conscious mind does not embrace the totality of man, for this totality consists only partly in his conscious contents [...]. In this totality the conscious mind is contained like a smaller circle within a larger one. Hence it is quite possible for the ego to be made into an object, that is to say, for a more compendious personality to emerge in the course of development and take the ego into its service. Since this growth of personality comes out of the unconscious, which is by definition unlimited, the extent of the personality now gradually realizing itself cannot in practice be limited either. But unlike the Freudian superego, it is still individual. It is in fact individuality in the highest sense [...]. (I have called this process of realization the "individuation process") (p.258)

But if the unconscious is manifest in projection then it must be bound up in identification - it is precisely in *transcending* the subjective factor in *imagining* that projection can be prised away from the world.

It can be seen that the assimilation of artefacts through what I have called 'identification' fails to identify unconscious projections and assimilates material by way of familiar paradigms and stereotypes. Identification *must incorporate the shadow*. Such a process has negative implications for psychological integration - it merely flatters in consolidating, empowers the ego-identity. Only in *imagining* - specifically, in its characteristic refiguration of self and world - lies the potential for the enlargement of the individual. In that context, metaphor, and its extension in symbolic imagining, is the key to individuation.

It is the *strangeness* of metaphor that provides the distance, the points for leverage, that allow us to prise away the familiar with its contaminant shadow. With irony the work is done for us: Chaucer and Kafka are essentially didactic, for a perspective based in approved

²⁶ *Psychology and Religion*, p.256.

value is presupposed. The mode of assimilation is critical - the strangeness and reconfiguration must be *undergone*. But the moment of insight - Shelley's 'fading coal' ²⁷ - coalesces into history. Individuation cannot, therefore, be a process of step by step assimilation, a brick by brick extension. At best, it functions inside a habit - though, momentarily, it transcends habit. It is directed by an attitude cultivated in the light of a history of insight with its contingent disclosure of value as reward. Above all, this is a *modest* process of enhancement - succeeded by partial retraction following the change of mode - and conditional upon a reverence for what stands over and against us. Through the dialectic of imagining the world and the self are rendered available for discursive enquiry; such underlabouring then establishes the ground for subsequent imaginative transformation with its regeneration of motive and vision.

Nietzsche's aim was to explore 'artistic doctrines' in the manner of the Greeks, in terms of their deities, but this cannot release his discourse from the discursive - yet what it *points* to is crucial. The relation between Dionysus and Apollo mirrors in its dialectic the workings of the imagination. Jung balks at Nietzsche's aestheticism but his analysis of symbolism again adumbrates the logic of imagining but fails to identify the reciprocal revelation of self and world manifest through it. Indeed, it is imagining - manifest in metaphor and, thence, symbolism - that makes individuation possible.

When Nietzsche observes that 'Myth does not find adequate objectification in the spoken word' ²⁸ I would argue that this is exactly so but his remarks constitute a truism in that the point at issue is *conceptual* involving the logic of symbolism - the language of myth. The longing for an undifferentiated world - a prelapsarian existence - at once exalts and subverts the subtle workings of the imagination in a way that binds them into an illusion that they cannot sustain. And that involves the paradox that imagining itself thereby becomes the objective of an ideological programme. On the other hand, Nietzsche's observation of our situation seems familiar:

²⁷ P.B.Shelley, 'The Defence of Poetry', from *Nature and Industrialization*, op cit., p.214.

²⁸ *The Birth of Tragedy*, p.81.

[...] in all likelihood almost everyone, having subjected himself to a rigorous examination, will feel so undermined by the critical-historical spirit of our culture that it is only by scholarly means and mediating abstractions that the former existence of myth can be made credible. Myth alone rescues all the powers of imagination and the Apolline dream from their aimless wanderings. (p.109)

It is not myth, however, that *rescues* imagination - myth is a function of symbolic imagining. In this context nostalgia is corrosive, misdirects our energies from the more modest possibilities open to us.

Just such possibilities - and the issues concerning the discursive and imaginative modes - are illustrated in *The Tempest*. Coleridge observed that the play 'addresses itself entirely to the imaginative faculty'.²⁹ There is a hint, though, that he experienced a failure of imagination in a production that he had seen:

[...] and although the illusion may be assisted by the effect on the senses of the complicated scenery and decorations of modern times yet this sort of assistance is dangerous. For the principal and only genuine excitement ought to come from within, - from the moved and sympathetic imagination; whereas, where so much is addressed to the mere external senses and hearing, the spiritual vision is apt to languish, and the attraction from without will withdraw the mind from the proper and only legitimate interest which is intended to spring from within. (p.63)

Presumably the presentation of the masque was one of the sources of Coleridge's disquiet - but does his worry about the production reflect a certain thinness, a theatricality about the masque itself? The problem, though, would not seem to be Shakespeare's, for the text is quite explicit that the masque is Prospero's:

[...] Spirits, which by mine art
I have from their confines called to enact
My present fancies.³⁰

What then, does the masque reveal about Prospero's imagining?

The vision of the masque has intrinsic beauty - man and nature are represented in productive harmony in the terms of pastoral convention. It is, however, a harmony of conscious design - in other words, myth is mediated through a Socratic attitude: for

²⁹ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'The Moved and Sympathetic Imagination', from *Shakespeare: The Tempest, A Casebook*, ed. by D.J. Palmer, repr. 1975 (London: Macmillan, 1968), p.62.

³⁰ William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. by J.H. Walter, repr. 1988 (Oxford: Heinemann, 1966), IV.1.120.

Prospero, at this stage, knowledge is power. This subtle corruption could justly be identified as aestheticism.

The masque is brought to an abrupt end when Prospero remembers

[...] that foul conspiracy
Of the beast Caliban and his confederates
Against my life. (IV.1.139)

Prospero is suddenly more angry than Miranda has ever seen him - and we are familiar with his characteristic irascibility. The conspirators are under the control of Ariel and pose not the slightest practical problem for Prospero. It must be that the challenge is to his *vision*. Both the low-life and aristocratic conspirators seem to represent an intractable element of human nature which reveals the masque to be idealistic, too fragile for the cut and thrust of reality. Ultimately, his betrothal gift is humiliating in its inadequacy. Prospero falls into a moment of that nihilistic despair so characteristic of the great tragedies:

[...] like the baseless fabric of this vision,
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind. (IV.1.151)

It is interesting that Prospero's shares the fate of other 'visions' in the play. Gonzalo's paraphrase of the prelapsarian vision of Montaigne; Antonio's vision of power for Sebastian and, thereby, power for himself; the plan of the confederates - Stephano and Trinculo; the love of Ferdinand and Miranda couched in the terms of courtly love - 'Sweet lord, you play me false' (V.1.172): all, except one, are undermined. The exception is the vision of Caliban:

Be not afeared. The isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about my ears; and sometimes voices,
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,
Will make me sleep again; and then in dreaming,
The clouds methought would open, and show riches
Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked,
I cried to dream again. (II.2.128)

This evocation, couched in musical imagery, is remarkable in its association with Nietzsche's Dionysus. Significantly, although Prospero will accept responsibility for Caliban - 'this thing of darkness I/Acknowledge mine' (V.1.275) - he is entirely ignorant of this aspect of his servant's experience *as are all the other characters*. There are the possible exceptions of Stephano and Trinculo who hear Caliban's words - but they are so mesmerised by material considerations that their vision extends only to having their music for nothing so that they, too, are blind to the significance of Caliban's experience.

Prospero's is a self-conscious vision of didactic intent. Together with other important realisations of Prospero's moral intentions it reflects what Nietzsche called, 'aesthetic Socratism':³¹

For now the virtuous hero must be dialectical, there must be a necessary, visible bond between virtue and knowledge, faith and morality; the transcendental justice of Aeschylus is reduced to the flat and impudent principle of 'poetic justice', with its usual *deus ex machina*. (p.69)

Appropriately - reflecting Nietzsche's observations - it is the more ready sympathy of Ariel, the gratuitous *god*, who nudges Prospero into that resolving awareness that leads to the supersession of revenge by forgiveness.

However, Prospero understands that the restoration of the guilty to 'themselves' (V.1.32) though it may have been brought about through the exercise of his power also entails the resignation of that power. Even in its resignation Prospero relives the exultation that he found in exercising it:

I have bedimmed
The noontide sun, called forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault
Set roaring war. [...]

Graves at my command
have waked their sleepers, oped, and let 'em forth
By my so potent art. (V.1.41)

The continuing seduction of such power is revealed in the extreme measures that he will be driven to take in disposing of it:

[...] I'll break my staff,

³¹ *The Birth of Tragedy*, p.64.

Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book. (V.1.54)

The younger generation have their betrothal gift - the masque - and it is left to them to make of it what they will. Their freedom is brought about by Prospero's resignation. To attempt the direct transformation of life in terms of art constitutes aestheticism - as we saw in *The Portrait of a Lady*. At the very least, in these circumstances, art becomes didactic. On the other hand, freedom releases Ferdinand and Miranda to imagine - and in imagining lies the possibility of a further freedom associated with the moral life and individuation. Prospero's gift now assumes a far greater value in the light of its limitations than it had when circumscribed in his didactic intent.

In freeing others, Prospero frees himself, but he is restored to a dangerous world where urgent, conflicting motives often prove intractable and cannot be wished away. And there remains beyond the scope of his wisdom the unassimilated ecstasy of Caliban.

The resolution of the play is, therefore, rich in ambiguity. Shakespeare's mature vision is diagnostic rather than prescriptive. In its modesty it resolves where it can. The *artifice* of the masque is exactly its point - it is a function of power rather than of imagination. The play itself stands over and against it. As a phenomenon of imagination the play becomes, retrospectively, an essential element of its own argument in the illumination of Prospero's temptation and final, partial vision. It provides the impossible perspective. Such self awareness on Shakespeare's part would be, literally, inconceivable without, at least, a tacit awareness of the distinction between imaginative and discursive modes.

A further, important element is disclosed through Miranda. Coleridge saw that within the greater design Miranda *exemplifies* psychological integration - the imagination in the context of the specifically personal:

[...] in Shakespeare all the elements of womanhood are holy, and there is the sweet, yet dignified feeling of all that *continuates* society, as sense of ancestry and of sex, with a purity unassailable by sophistry, because it rests not in the analytic processes, but in the sane equipoise of the faculties, during which feelings are representative of all past experience, - not of the individual only, but of all those by whom she had been educated, and their predecessors even up to the first mother that lived. Shakespeare saw that the want of prominence [...] was the blessed beauty of the woman's character, and knew that it arose not from any deficiency, but from the

more exquisite harmony of all parts of the moral being constituting one living total of head and heart.³²

It is striking that within six lines of her first speech - 'O I have suffered/With those that I saw suffer' (I.2.5) - Miranda has arrived at that state of integrated vision that it takes Gloucester a lifetime and terrible suffering to reach:

Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he does not feel, feel your power quickly;
So distribution should undo excess,
And each man have enough.³³

Miranda's vision establishes a dramatic irony against which her father's inner struggle and eventual insight is illuminated. As in *King Lear*, there is no magical resolution in terms of poetic justice - indeed, that possible outcome is consciously rejected.

In the end, the limitations of Prospero's masque render it absurd - a superseded paradigm. But it becomes a crucial element in a dialectic resolving into a larger awareness that acknowledges freedom as a condition for the moral life. Prospero transcends his own Socratic vision - this, in a way, is the whole point. There is a striking parallel with the central imaginative transactions depicted in St. Mark. The play anticipates Nietzsche's strictures and restores us to that imagining exemplified in Miranda. It is open-eyed - it refuses to capitulate to its own mythic temptations - yet it offers consolation in its understanding of the possibilities and limitations inherent in imagining.

We have in Coleridge's assessment and in *King Lear* a cluster of associated ideas concerning education, individuation and our moral transactions with the world. What I have tried to suggest is that these are significantly linked and that the key concept is the imagination. There is a conceptual problem in articulating the nature of the link because it can only manifest itself outwith the discursive. Imagining in the context of the arts *rehearses* the activity of the moral imagination - there is no *direct* link so that crude claims for the demonstration of the *efficacy* of imagining cannot be answered. Nevertheless, the disclosure of value in the world that is contingent upon imagining empowers our curiosity

³² 'The Moved and Sympathetic Imagination', p.63.

³³ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, op. cit., IV.1.66.

and sustains our search for individuation. Even in the act of articulation, finding the words, there is a sublimation in imagining, a value added. Though myth, of its nature, is only conceivable for us as a poignant loss, we recognize how it came to be constituted through its symbolism, and even for us, in the context of the modern age - for which Shakespeare's play stands as testimony to our internal division - there is the potential in imagining to take us across thresholds into an overwhelming sense of the purposive.

Conclusions

Definitions and Pedagogical Implications

The aim of this study has been to try to bring a little more conceptual clarity to issues concerning the imagination. Generally, these issues have presented themselves to me in the course of teaching in a secondary school, a context where little can be taken for granted either in terms of response or motivation. Yet there are peculiar advantages in teaching groups which are, largely, not self-selected and reflect wide ranges of ability. Precisely *how* are texts to be opened in these circumstances? Exploration of the modes of imagination becomes motivated by the need to win hearts and minds – a key element in a teacher's strategies for survival.

The context demands that the explication of texts becomes a *social* phenomenon. In a way this connects the imaginative enterprise to certain of its distant origins in the drama and the bardic tradition – in teaching, there is a strong element of *performance*. In the pedagogic strategies of universities the imaginative transactions are, largely, presupposed. In schools, the first and essential priority is that some imaginative transaction must be engaged: how can youngsters be expected to expatiate on experiences they have not had?

It is not my aim to discuss teaching strategies. Suffice it to say that the first practical step to engage imagining is to invite *identification* and that in the absence of a spontaneous engagement this can be encouraged for the student through a sort of infection – the social context, the *collective* excitement, is important:

His tale was over now. The Phaeacians all fell silent, hushed,
His story holding them spellbound down the shadowed halls [...].¹

There is no difference *in principle* between the identification engaged by fictions and a characteristic mode of relation within which we negotiate large areas of our lives. On the other hand, successful writing supposes the effective use of strategies to enhance identification – indeed, a change in quality may effect a change in essence, a shift into imagining.

¹ Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. by Robert Fagles, this edn 1990 (New York: Viking Penguin, 1996), p.286.

Identification is a mode of imagination that is essentially pragmatic in so far as it negotiates with the world by abstracting what is familiar and, thereby, our urgent, day to day negotiations within the world can proceed efficiently. It is conditioned by the requirement for responsive action contingent upon the 'identification' of minimal sequences of cues. It proceeds by the projection of *structures* of significance so that it is useful to use the term *Gestalt* to suggest its fundamentally holistic nature. In the context of art it appropriates by means of what is already familiar. Put in other terms, it assimilates through the intuitive 'identification' of forms of life as they are manifest in, say, fictions.

The interpretative powers of identification are dependent upon a sort of accident, a coincidence of projected structures that may or may not match with states of affairs in the world. Identification has a ready pragmatic endorsement. The projected signification may hide anomalies that would otherwise demand adjustment or reformulation. It is in this sense that identification is associated with blindness.

Whereas fantasy is always associated with unreality, identification may or *may not* engage with the world but, characteristically, it allows us to bask in the comfortable, because unquestioning, assumption that it does. The use of camouflage in nature supposes the disruption of an identifiable form that would otherwise provoke a ready response in, say, the victim. Formal cues associated with the identity of the predator are effectively obscured in the assumption of the familiar visual characteristics of a context – say, a patch of light and shadow. The murderous success of the tiger demonstrates that any complacency that might be founded in the assumption that identification unerringly picks out true states of affairs is profoundly misplaced.

It is easy to see how in the assimilation of texts identification may pass apparently seamlessly into fantasy. Indeed, it is entirely characteristic that through identification we seek to exert power over the world to make it negotiable – with the inherent danger that conservatism may pass into a more radical denial, into the mode of fantasy.

Whatever its psychological nature might be I would claim that fantasy is a mode of imagination in so far as it presupposes a distinctive *relation* to states of affairs with demonstrable epistemological implications: fantasy is a negative response to the world

characterised by the projection of unreality. Its dysfunctional nature may serve a purpose though, especially in children, where, to use a military metaphor, withdrawal allows for regrouping. Compensation in fantasy may sustain us in the face of intolerable reality. Fantasy empowers – with either productive or destructive consequences. To seek ‘authentication’ of emotional priorities is one of the roles of fantasy. This is the source of the power of its attempted transformations of what stands over and against us.

We also use identification in describing, say, individuals *modelling* their behaviour or appearance upon that of others. Clearly this involves an imitative assimilation of specific cues and a matching of interpretative visions. In being caught up in a ‘fashion’ a latent paradox is engaged involving the appropriation of what appears to be distinctive – the projection of an interesting or powerful self – by submission to a common identity. To the outsider, the adopted fashion has the characteristics of a closed paradigm so that it is seen as absurd, a subject for mockery. What is fashionable is always too late. Again, identification involves a blindness that resolves into fantasy characterised by collective denial.

The success of extended fictions more or less depends upon the engaging of identification. Sophisticated didactic intent naturally reaches for irony to establish perspectives impossible for protagonists – with a concomitant premium upon ‘seeing’. The forms of life projected in most popular fiction cannot withstand the assault of irony. There readers seek to find the gratification of unchallenged denial – we call this ‘escapism’. Such transactions explain the power of fictions for younger readers and are crucial in establishing the habit of reading. In general, the value of the habit outweighs adult strictures concerning the ‘value’ of the literature.

The price of fantasy is retreat into private worlds with the associated danger that fantasy may be narrowed to obsession. On the other hand, identification presupposes a distinctive kind of social adjustment. But its inherent conservatism involves, in effect, the abrogation of an important area of personal responsibility in so far as it cannot conceive of alternatives outside its immediate perspective. Through identification we are unable to establish the

grounds for significant choice. In the absence of adequate argument, characteristically, its judgements are couched in terms that slide easily into personal invective.

Only through our specifically imaginative transactions can we further our individuation and participate in the moral life. It is useful to consider such issues in the larger scale, at the interface between cultures. There, to establish some insight depends upon a *recognition* of common humanity. This may, at first sight, appear to depend upon identification. However, to come to terms with what may be strange, alien, incomprehensible, supposes a passage through defamiliarisation. The impossible perspective is available only following an imaginative leap out of identification. Multicultural education, placed within a context that develops strategies for imagining, ceases to be merely politically correct, and can be seen to encourage alternative perspectives upon conservative paradigms. We may then come to understand more of what it means to engage the moral life within a *single* culture. We come to know ourselves by knowing others. Nietzsche observes:

It was precisely because moral philosophers knew the facts of morality only somewhat vaguely in an arbitrary extract or as a chance abridgement, as morality of their environment, their class, their church, the spirit of their times [...] it was precisely because they were ill informed and not even very inquisitive about other peoples, ages and former times, that they did not so much as catch sight of the real problems of morality – for these come into view only if we compare many moralities.²

The didacticism that operates through the generation of *insight*, the engaging of abstractive cognition following imaginative transactions, must be clearly differentiated from that crude didacticism which is straightforwardly prescriptive. Teaching should be at odds with indoctrination. Clearly, any educational programme that seeks to inculcate values directly can operate only by inviting identification. Such a strategy is inherently contradictory in so far as identification significantly curtails the possibilities available for moral choice. Where it succeeds, the crude didactic approach is seductive because its ground in identification generates rectitude, the emotional fuel for projection.

² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, op.cit., pp.108-109.

To escape from identification involves the capacity to ‘see’ anomalies. But how is this possible where the seeing itself is a function of conservative structures of interpretation? Where is the Archimedean point to be found that would allow the prising away of possible illusion from reality? Having fostered identification as the endorsed response to texts, how are the young to be shifted into imagining?

Important issues concerning imagining are to be found in the consideration of metaphor. Some metaphor involves the *substitution* of one thing for another. There is a certain delight generated in the perception of the resemblance and some aspect of what is described is enhanced. This is also a characteristic of simile. The metaphor focuses our attention and rewards with the pleasure of recognition. Supposed here is the priority of naming and description in our use of language. Metaphor as substitution involves no disruption of identification – indeed it enhances it:

Pike, three inches long, perfect
Pike in all parts, green tigring the gold. ³

Another kind of metaphor presents us with anomalies. It makes things strange. Within the inherent reassurance of identification it is an irritant. In the teaching situation it might even engage protests about ‘difficulty’. To arrive at meaning involves a twisting in perception that reveals hitherto unseen configurations – there is no simple linguistic *substitution* but a *redrawing* of certain aspects of reality. What we took the world to be is now adjusted. More often than not, the adjustment does not so much involve the discovery of *novelty* within the world as the revelation of what has been obscured by identification. As Proust observes of the greatness of ‘true art’:

[...] we have to rediscover, to reapprehend, to make ourselves fully aware of that reality, remote from our daily preoccupations, from which we separate ourselves by an even greater gulf as the conventional knowledge which we substitute for it grows thicker and more impermeable [...]. ⁴

Such radical metaphor is complex in that it has an articulated structure, which, itself, has a crucial, constituent role in the extended structure of, say, the poem. We see the world

³ Ted Hughes, ‘Pike’, from *The New Dragon Book of Verse*, ed. by Michael Harrison and Christopher Stuart-Clark, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p.60.

⁴ Marcel Proust, *Time Regained*, op.cit., p.931.

differently in the light of it. The structure, the form, constitutes a limit, which, through its projective efficacy puts an aspect of the world into inverted commas, as it were. Such metaphor engages *double prescription*. In these circumstances the revealed structure within the world is found to be expressive, characteristically, of *an aspect of our experience, a form of life*. We have experienced a transaction of the imagination:

Man's spirit will be flesh-bound when found at best,
But uncumberèd: meadow down is not distressed
For a rainbow footing it [...].⁵

In painting, the first 'prescription' is imposed by the frame; in metaphor, by the novel linguistic configuration. Our attention is now drawn to the articulation of the expressive form, the disposition of the parts of the complex within the framing 'punctuation'. *At the same time*, we become aware, through the projective reference of the unfolding structure, that some aspect of reality is being revealed.

The second prescription is effected through the expressive power of what is disclosed – and there is a supplementary excitement in the disclosure. Characteristically, what is revealed in landscape paintings are structures or forms that were already inherent in the world. Through metaphor, it is more likely that some truth of our *being in the world* is made manifest. The sheer rightness of the articulation engages a kind of reverence for the artist or writer: this is the aesthetic response.

Double prescription in the context of nature finds some of us predisposed – using Kant's distinction – to endow the *purposive* articulation with a sense of *purpose*. Our sense of the religious is now engaged. Double prescription allows, perhaps, for a little more conceptual clarity concerning our age-old intuitions about aspects of the relationship between the aesthetic and the religious.

To be caught up in the world of the book, the poem, through identification provides the emotional and intellectual energy to take the reader across the barrier of the strange. The pleasure in identification is now extended into the experience of the revelatory power of the imagination and in that form comes to constitute a kind of faith that such transactions

⁵ Hopkins, 'The Caged Skylark', from *Poems and Prose*, op.cit., p.32.

are possible. The student has now touched upon a kind of autonomy that is at the heart of what it is to be educated – motivation is found in the imaginative enterprise itself with its associated simultaneous disclosure of meaning and value.

Whereas a successful approach through identification supposes the arrival at *some* experience of the world of the text – and that awaits enhancement – the approach through the discursive has no such guarantee. So much teaching is a waste of time simply because children have no experience within which to locate the pedagogical explication. Their only resort is to pick up *information* about texts. Knowing about texts has a high premium in the examination system – this exerts a pervasive, almost irresistible pressure upon both students and teachers. Is there no role for the discursive? Are imagining and the discursive simply locked in contradictory antagonism? The assumption that they are perhaps lies behind the debate concerning the ‘two cultures’.

My method in this study has been to take the reader in and out of texts and paintings. I have argued that imagination involves the disclosure of *articulated* structures and have invited exploration of constituent ‘parts’. It has been my tacit aim in the discussion of some of the shorter poems to try to *induce* imaginative responses precisely through such discursive scrutiny. Whether or not I have succeeded is another matter – the shift to imagining is spontaneous. Above all, my own failures of imagination *cannot* be accessible to me until I have achieved, through a leap of imagination, a further impossible perspective.

It is for this reason that *negative* judgements of works of art should be made in a spirit of humility, should be acknowledged as provisional. To persuade the young into accepting the epistemological implications of tact is often difficult when so much hangs upon the aggrandisement associated with the power of dismissal.

What are the characteristics of failure of imagination? Simply, it involves failure to *see* – remembering that in the context of double prescription failure to arrive at how components are located within the articulated structures involves a simultaneous failure of insight. At the very least the discussion of why I failed, in the context of pointing to undisclosed elements of the poetry – is *intelligible*.

I have attempted both to engage the issues discursively, and to involve the reader in imagining – success in the latter would provide, in effect, *ostensive* definitions to support the argument. However, there is no ‘linear’ progression from the discursive to imagining because the relationship is *dialectical* – imagining and the discursive are in antagonistic relation until the transactions of double prescription transfigure discrete components into articulated structures.

A reconstruction of the understanding of a poem, conceived schematically in the terms of the modes of imagination, would involve, say, initial identification which would generate the emotions that would fuel further scrutiny. The imagination might then be engaged by anomalies, or disruptions to identification engendered by strange metaphor. Moments of subsequent insight would begin to reveal aspects of the articulated form or structure. The discursive might now be engaged in amplifying this insight through knowledge of, say, context or genre. Further transfiguration of such knowledge through imagining would now extend the grasp of the inherent structure. The dialectic would frequently be engaged until such times as the articulated structure emerged as an illuminating whole. Now we experience the joyous ‘rightness’ of it – aesthetic apprehension is engaged.

The logic of the dialectic suggests that, paradoxically, failure at the level of the discursive may *block* the shift into imagining. Indeed, intellectual failure is sometimes rationalised by proclaiming the incompatibility of the discursive and imaginative modes with a concomitant, sentimental, obscurantist exaltation of ‘art’. On the other hand, unsuccessful teaching will arise from the assumption that the discursive is all there is. It follows that value disclosed through double prescription will not be available as motivation.

It is also characteristic that structures revealed through previous imagining will block a more comprehensive vision in so far as, becoming ‘historic’, they have reduced aspects of the articulated structure to cues for identification. In this way the ‘interpretation’ of a text has become ‘canonical’ for the individual teacher. At its worst, such interpretations become hallowed in notes. The text may become more or less invisible under such

assaults. There is a similar, incipient problem associated with the ready access to pass notes, study guides and CD-ROMs. It is possible to conceive of an education, involving primary, secondary and tertiary levels, which *never* arrives at imagining except at the level of occasional identification. In teaching, knowledge about texts demands transfiguration through the dialectic.

Successful teaching often follows from choosing a complex poem which is half known so that excitement is generated in mutual discovery. The value experienced through the framing and falling into place associated with double prescription, imagining, then has an important effect in consolidating the group.

Intellectual rigour, far from being redundant in the process of imagining, is, in the right context, a *condition for its emergence*. With this realisation, successful examination results become not ends in themselves but a by-product of successful imagining. I am perfectly aware that the demand for such rigour may be seen as a reactionary, conservative position. Nevertheless, the modal logic of the imagination points to a crucial role for discursive reasoning.

Presumably in an apparent attempt to avoid such demands, certain recent examination papers for GCSE have presented texts for analysis which invite strong identification. This has the great danger of prompting contemptuous dismissal in those candidates who do not share the ideological presuppositions or fashionable standpoint implicitly endorsed by examiners in their choice of material. Passages which engage the imagination may, initially, appear to be more 'difficult' but have the potential to achieve a certain autonomy from preconceived stances.

From the practical point of view an understanding of the relationships between the modes of imagination and their relation to the discursive would allow for discrimination between teaching objectives. It is possible to envisage a co-ordinated programme projected over time that, taking into account the cognitive development of children, would involve the stimulation of fantasy, identification and intellectual rigour directed towards the end of imagining. To some extent this is already adumbrated in the curriculum but without a clear understanding of what we are about.

Concerning the vexed question of 'values' in education, clearly, the prescriptive, didactic approach can only succeed where it engages identification. This merely establishes conformity – it may provoke reaction in those who are not engaged. On the other hand, in imagining we *experience* value, we find *rootedness* through our transaction with art or with the world and simultaneously gather insight. Of course our culture from the perspective of the discursive endorses relativistic perspectives – how could it be otherwise? But our capacity to imagine presupposes Kant's *sensus communis* and a world, thereby, in which we can establish a reverence for what it is for ourselves and others to have a home. This is a form of faith – but it is rooted in imaginative *experience*. In this broad sense, culture is profoundly orientational. Naïve didacticism, in endorsing identification, *can* only, in the end, promote estrangement and establish the conditions for conflict between ideologies.

Here again, awareness of the different modes of imagination and their epistemological, ontological and moral implications suggests a significant role for multicultural education. When we consider culture as merely supplementary rather than constitutive we consign art to the merely decorative or conceive of it as a domain for an elite. That the self is inescapably *within*, and knows itself *through* culture explains why *transculturation* involves mutual refiguration. We are changed through our arrival at previously impossible perspectives.

Our sense of ourselves, then, is bound up in whatever relational modes we characteristically inhabit. At any given moment that self cannot be other than in the world in a state of denial or rootedness. An important aspect of such denial is represented in the shadow. Jung argues that what we reject about ourselves we project. The shadow, then, must be bound in to identification. But in the shift from identification to imagination, in negotiating the disturbance of defamiliarisation, we achieve a sort of fleeting autonomy in the simultaneous extension of the world and the self. We achieve a momentary freedom in imagining. Such insight, arrived at in negotiation with others, rather than with art or aspects of the natural world, forms the basis for our moral transactions. In so far, then, as education concerns itself with identity and the moral life, it falls into self-defeat unless it

establishes imagining as the essential means whereby it seeks to address these specific aims.

Traditionally, discussion of ethical and aesthetic issues has presupposed that we make our judgements within the discursive mode. In practice, most of our judgements are made in the mode of identification. An implication of my argument is that such judgements can be adequately made only when they *follow* imaginative transactions. Only then are the structures and their associated values that are latent in our experience available. Just as we habitually demand that children should analyse experiences they have not had, so, in the mode of identification, we make judgements on issues, the real nature of which may be opaque to us.

But having experienced such imaginative transactions how can we be sure that what is revealed to us is not illusory, or that we have not brought events to premature closure? The dialectical nature of the relationship between the discursive and imagining allows that the nature of the perceived structures becomes available for rigorous intellectual scrutiny. On the other hand, an issue of premature closure can only emerge upon the discovery of a further 'impossible' perspective. Anomalies will have emerged, again, as a product of intellectual scrutiny, but in this case they await the resolution of a further imaginative transaction.

No *final* certainty can be available to us. To be aware of this is itself a salutary and necessary contextual assumption for imagining. Our first ethical commitment is to the *process* of imagining. It is a commitment to a way of life. It is adumbrated in the parabolic logic of the New Testament, manifest in the situation of Bosch's 'Wayfarer'. Imagining locates us within a *larger* world extended through the *intelligibility* of great works of art and their capacity to transfigure through their projective reference. We thereby enlarge our understanding of ourselves and of others. The world grows meanings through increments of such intelligibility – and the record of that is in our culture. Our moral responsibility is coextensive with this growth. In an important sense, those who are denied access to imagining are consigned to different worlds.

In the end, there is no significant choice, no either/or, between science and arts subjects. The dialectic of imagination shows how both depend upon intellectual rigour though there is differentiation in their complementary ends – to know about the world and to find a home in it.

I sit on a rock above Gruinard Bay on a summer's morning looking across at the heartbreaking beauty of a mountain, *An Teallach – The Anvil*. I wander away and return to the same spot an hour later. *An Teallach* is endowed with other beauty – the change of light has engendered another inscape. But the mountain can be bleak, forbidding, awesome. Climbers have died on it. Do I resort to a classical epistemology – many appearances, pointing to an unknowable noumenon? I remember Cézanne's obsession with *La Montagne Sainte-Victoire*. The struggle in each painting is not so much to arrive at a single underlying entity but to realise what makes itself manifest at any given time. The structures which he draws to the eye are already implicit in the landscape – the world is protean, dynamic.

At one stage in his life Coleridge found himself able to 'see' but not 'feel' the beauty of the world.⁶ In his 'Dejection: an Ode' a cause of his failure was attributed to his habitual immersion in the discursive. In his 'Dejection: a Letter' the issue is more obviously bound up in his relationship with Sara Hutchinson. It was from the perspective of his unhappiness that he wrote:

I may not hope from outward Forms to win
The Passion and the Life, whose Fountains are within! (p.95)

In his despair at what he sees as the failure of his creativity he locates the source of 'passion' in subjectivity. (There is, of course, no reason why his exposition of his situation may not in itself be 'beautiful') A diagnosis of his predicament suggests that, for one reason or another, he was unable to engage the dialectical shift from the discursive into imagining. His capacity to engage double prescription was lost so that he was estranged from the source of his creativity. We may see *that* something is beautiful and we may

⁶ Coleridge, 'Dejection: A Letter', from *Selected Poems of S.T. Coleridge*, op.cit., p.95.

circumscribe it in pleasurable associations but to *experience* beauty presupposes an imaginative transaction.

Any question of the *adequacy* of imagination in establishing aesthetic judgements is replaced by the realisation that imagining is a *condition* for the experience of beauty. Retrospectively, of course, criteria may emerge from discursive scrutiny of the articulated structure. But the dialectical nature of the passage from the discursive to imagining prescribes that there can be no guaranteed access to the experience of beauty. In this sense only, obscurantist arguments can be seen to have a grain of plausibility.

As for *An Teallach*, I can find it on a map, establish its grid reference and its height, study its geology, its natural history. Whatever the mode of discursive appraisal I am inevitably driven to the pronoun 'its'. Is it simply a bewitchment of language that posits the question of the entity within which all descriptions seem to inhere? Is there, also, an emotional need generated by our awareness that the mountain changes even as we look so that we are moved to establish a transcendental dogma, the noumenon in its timelessness? Our sense of mutability is a rich resource for the lyrical impulse.

In order to facilitate our day-to-day transactions, what we need from our environment is stability. Our customary relational mode is identification – it is inherently conservative. We need, at least, the illusion of stable forms on which to base the urgent judgements that allow us to negotiate with the everyday world. We endorse identification by the assumption that what we see through it is 'reality', the common sense world. But it is precisely mediation in that mode that generates characteristic epistemological problems regarding appearance and reality. The world posited through identification is the domain of the shadow. Such a world is obscured by what we have rejected in ourselves.

Through our imaginative transactions with the world and through great works of art we negotiate passages to reality. The structures revealed by such art are there in the world and in ourselves. Characteristically, the passage to such structures involves the negotiation of *instability*.

Amongst the most powerful examples of this are experienced in the contemplation of those landscape paintings which relate to scenes with which we had assumed more or less

complete familiarity. Mediated through the artist's vision our familiar world is suddenly transfigured, enlarged, rendered beautiful.

Indeed, double prescription is a property even of some amateur paintings – provided the viewer has a prior familiarity with the particular setting against which the mediating function can be judged. Familiarity provides the cues for initial identification which the painting, in its inadequacy, may not establish under discursive scrutiny.

We are compelled by *King Lear* because of its truths, the unfolding of which are experienced in our involvement in the articulation of its imagery and associated structure. Primed by the ritual of performance, within the dramatic frame we grasp at the shifting structures of intelligibility to arrive at a joyous and terrible conclusion, that there is love, but that the universe refuses to comply with our demands for justice. Our being in the world is changed by it. We cannot return to the old dispensation. This is a truth within the text – it is as old as Homer. We may, of course, subsequently find a larger resolution of the play that takes things we had not seen into account. Our imaginings have to be tempered by a necessary humility. If the world changes as we look, that simply reflects truths concerning both the relational conditions of our seeing it and the fascinating complexity of what stands over and against us.

The Franklin and Joseph K. represent us in our existential situation. But we achieve impossible perspectives through the distancing ironies of Chaucer and Kafka. This is a paradigm case for imagining that begins in identification then evolves through the mediation of imaging to understanding. Metaphor, too, provides us with impossible perspectives involving projective reference and its associated refiguring that adjusts our ways of seeing the world and allows us fleeting glimpses of the shadow, and, thereby, provides us with the possibility of moral choice. Through double prescription, the beauty of the world is revealed in holistic structures. Simultaneous disclosures of value engage our sense of the purposive and thereby generate symbolism which, for some, is extended into a celebration of purpose, a teleological vision of nature and a source of our awareness of the sacred. When all is said and done the imagination has a role in intelligibility itself.

It is implicit in the possibility of thought and the assessment of what we do. To be a little more clear about its role may steady the nerves in situations where the projections for its immediate well being in the context of the urgencies of life may seem inauspicious.

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