ENERGEIA

FALL 1985

Cover photo by Ondine McRoberts
It's called "Highland Down"

Printed by the
St. John's College Press
St. John's College,
Annapolis, Maryland

ENERGEIA: The activity in which anything is fully itself.

ἡ...νοῦ ἐνέργεια ζωή...(Aristotle's Metaphysics, 1072b)

Unfortunately due to the limited length of Energeia only excerpts have been taken from some of the senior essays. If you would like to read these essays in their entirety, you may find the prize essays in the library or by contacting the editors.

The editors of Energeia extend an apology to Bruce Johnsen for the unauthorized editing, excerpting, and publishing of his essay "For My Soul is Filled with Troubles" in the Fall 1984 issue.

Energeia is a non-profit, student magazine which is published three times a year and distributed among the students, faculty, alumni and staff of St. John's College, Annapolis and Santa Fe. The Fall issue contains a sampling of the student work from the previous school year which the prize committees of both campuses have selected for public recognition. For the Winter and Spring issues, the Energeia staff welcomes submissions from all members of the community - essays, poems, stories, original math proofs, lab projects, drawings, and the like.

Note: A brief description of the author accompanies all work not by current St. John's students. Please include some such statement along with your submission. Thank you.

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*excerpts

"A horrible and bloody mischancing of human affairs": William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*

Mark Streeter

It's just incredible. It just does not explain. Or perhaps that's it: they don't explain and we are not supposed to know. We have a few old mouth-to-mouth tales; we exhume from old trunks and boxes and drawers letters without salutation or signature, in which men and women who once lived and breathed are now merely initials or nicknames out of some now incomprehensible affection which sound to us like Sanskrit or Chocktaw; we see dimly people, the people in whose living blood and seed we ourselves lay dormant and waiting, in this shadowy attenuation of time possessing now heroic proportions, performing their acts of simple passion and simple violence, impervious to time and inexplicable--Yes, Judith, Bon, Henry, Sutpen: all of them. They are there, yet something is missing; they are like a chemical formula exhumed along with the letters from that forgotten chest, carefully, the paper old and faded and falling to pieces, the writing faded, almost indecipherable, yet meaningful, familiar in shape and sense, the name and presence of volatile and sentient forces; you bring them together in the proportions called for, but nothing happens; you re-read, tedious and intent, poring, making sure that you have forgotten nothing, made no miscalculation; you bring them together again and again nothing happens: just the words, the symbols, the shapes themselves, shadowy inscrutable and serene, against that turgid background of a horrible and bloody mischancing of human affairs.

--Mr. Compson (pp. 100-101)

Absalom, Absalom! by William Faulkner is the story of Thomas Sutpen. However, it is not a story in the sense that one would expect, where a narrator, first person or third, omniscient or limited, tells the story with at least some regard for chronology and fact. Rather, the story of Thomas Sutpen is told by four narrators[1]: Miss Rosa Coldfield, Sutpen's sister-in-law; Mr. Jason Compson; Quentin Compson (his son); and Shrevlin McCannon, Quentin's roommate at Harvard, from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Each of them gives an account of a part or of the whole of the story, often repeating and revising previous accounts by other narrators; they disregard chronology, jumping from one scene to another twenty years previous without warning or explanation; they not only have a limited knowledge of the facts of the story, but often seem not to care about the facts. For the narrators speak in 1909 and 1910, forty years since the death of Thomas Sutpen, and their interest lies not so much in exactly what happened (though they certainly do guess about what must have happened) as in why what happened did happen. When Quentin and Shreve are imagining together the scene on that Christmas Eve when Sutpen called Henry into the library, imagining Bon and Judith walking in the garden just beyond the library, the author as omniscient narrator inserts:

> It would not matter here in Cambridge that the time had been winter in that garden too, and hence no bloom nor leaf even if there had been someone to walk there and be seen there since, judged by subsequent events, it had

been night in the garden also. But that did not matter because it had been so long ago. It did not matter to them [Quentin and Shreve] anyway.

(p. 295)

Nor is the narrators' a passing interest, for their enterprise seems at times to border on an obsession (especially with Miss Rosa and Quentin), or at least a fascination with the motivations and thoughts of their long-dead subjects. The cause of their fascination is not at this point immediately apparent; however, let it suffice for now to say that they are all involved and interested in the story and in their telling of it, even though only one of the narrators, Miss Rosa, was present and involved when any of the events took place (and she only in a relatively minor role). In telling it, even by telling it, the narrators are trying to make sense of the story, to make the story itself make sense. Their involvement with and interest in the story of Thomas Sutpen and his design demand that they endeavor to obtain some meaning and truth from it (and this is possible only by telling it), which is often personal, and prejudiced, and yet is not useless or even false. The narrators tell and retell Sutpen's story, each of them seeing (telling) it differently, as if each sees through a piece of tinted glass colored according to his or her own character or personality, which often results in a distorted, inaccurate, and, for the reader, confusing picture. It is through this medium that the reader must come to learn, know, and be fascinated with, the story of Thomas Sutpen.

The Narrators

The reasons for each narrator's fascination with Thomas Sutpen are dependent upon each narrator's character and experience and are therefore as different as the narrators themselves. Because the novel is also in some sense the story of the narrators, I will here concentrate on them and their enterprise, returning to the subject of Thomas Sutpen later in this essay.

Miss Rosa's account comprises Chapters I and V: in Chapter I she is talking to a somewhat unwilling Quentin, having asked, "summoned," him to call on her on that September afternoon, while in Chapter V Quentin is recalling internally her words while sitting upon the porch of his house that same evening, waiting for the time when he must go and get her in the buggy to make the trip out to Sutpen's Hundred. Rosa's subjects in Chapter I are Sutpen's early days in Jefferson, his marriage to her sister Ellen, and her relations with and attitude towards the Sutpen family in the days before the war. In Chapter V she recalls the events following the death of Charles Bon by Henry's hand, and, with herself as main character, tells of Sutpen's return from the war, her engagement to him, and her life in Jefferson following her outraged flight from Sutpen's Hundred.

Rosa's account is filled with her visions of Sutpen as a hell-born demon or ogre, with outrage and unforgiveness, and with her "cold, implacable, and ruthless" hate of the man whom she blames for the destruction of her family. She blames him not only for the destruction of her family, and of his own, but also for the destruction of the South itself:

> *[this is] why God let us lose the War: that only through the blood of our men and the tears of our women could He stay this demon and efface his name and lineage from the earth. (p. 11)

*All quotations marked with an asterisk are passages from the book which appear there in italics. In the book, italics are used to signal the thoughts of a character as opposed to his or her speech; for instance, almost the whole of Chapter V is not Rosa speaking, but Quentin remembering Rosa speaking (he is still on the porch).

Rosa portrays Sutpen as an unscrupulous and ruthless villain with a hidden and unspeakable past, who not only knew what he was doing, but went ahead and did it anyway, as if, she says, he was sent by Heaven as the bearer of retribution and punishment to expiate some long-forgotten familial sin. She speaks in a stylized and extravagant language, employing many "religious" and sexual images to express the extent of her outrage. Combined with the affront which Sutpen committed against her when he suggested that they "breed like dogs" and await the result before marrying, the ruination of the Coldfield family causes Rosa not only to hate Sutpen and desire revenge, but to cry when she learns that he is dead:

> *'Dead?...Dead? You? You lie; you're not dead; heaven cannot, and hell dare not, have you!' (p. 172)

Rosa herself is an old woman of sixty-four years, who was born into her parents' middle age (her mother died while giving birth to her), and who describes herself as never having been young,

> Since what creature in the South since 1861, man woman nigger or mule, had had time or opportunity not only to have been young, but to have heard what being young was like from those who had, (p. 19)

and because, she says,

> I was born too late. I was born twenty-two years too late--a child to whom out of the overheard talk of adults my own sister's and my sister's children's faces had come to be like the faces in an ogre-tale between supper and bed. (p. 22)

When Rosa was young she was isolated and outcast, for her father was neither prepared nor inclined to give her what she needed. The aunt who lived with them did not provide the care and attention which was her due either. Both father and aunt were too concerned with Ellen, who had already been married seven years and given birth to her two children by the time Rosa was born. It was, Rosa thinks, as if she had never been born because she had never been raised. This was why Rosa was never young: she had neither received the attention proper to an infant nor ever heard any words but those about Ellen's marriage to that "ogre."

Rosa was rudely introduced to the anguished adult world very early in her life by listening outside of closed doors.

> *So that instead of accomplishing the processional and measured milestones of the childhood's time I lurked, unapprehended as though, shod with the very damp and velvet silence of the womb, I displaced no air, gave off no betraying sound, from one closed forbidden door to the next and so acquired all I knew of that light and space in which people moved and breathed.
>
> (p. 145)

Rosa was always on the outside looking in, unable to participate in the scene unfolding before her. So was it also with love. During that "summer of wistaria" when she was fourteen, Rosa fell in love. She at first fell in love with Judith's beau Charles Bon, even though she had never seen him. However, in realizing that Bon was unavailable to her she,also realized that she would forever be on the outside of any possible love relationship. She therefore fell in love with love itself; she became *"all polymath love's androgynous advocate" (p. 146)

When Ellen on her deathbed asks Rosa to protect Judith and Henry, she is inviting Rosa into her family as an actual participant, yet Rosa, who is herself younger than both the children, is unable to comply. Her inability stems not from herself, she would probably desire such a role, but from the children themselves. Henry is away at the war, and she will not see him again until that September night in 1909. She attempts to save Judith when she goes to Sutpen's Hundred immediately after the death of Charles Bon, hoping to give comfort and sympathy to Judith in her mourning. Yet when she gets there she is met not with bereavement but with that mask which Judith wears that shows no emotion. Rosa is repulsed and relegated to her role of onlooker once again.

Sutpen's proposal of marriage to her was probably a source of hope for her, hope that someone would see her and care for her, yet this too turned sour. Rosa believes that she died at that moment when she realized that Sutpen did not want her for herself but only for her possibility as a breeder ("my life was destined to end on an afternoon in April forty-three years ago" (p. 18)). She never could get past that moment. She is a Southern lady of tradition, principle, honor, and pride, who is obsessed with her hatred of Thomas Sutpen. Mr. Compson says that she is now a ghost because that is what the war did to ladies, though she herself blames Sutpen (who for her practically represents, symbolizes, the war) for her ghosthood. Her character and words recall Dylan Thomas' words[2]:

> 'We who are young are old. It is the oldest cry.
> Age sours before youth's tasted in the mouth
> And any sweetness that it has
> Is sucked away.'

For Rosa, any sweetness that she ever had has long ago turned to bitterness and rage.

Mr. Compson's narration dominates Chapters II through IV as he talks to Quentin on the porch the evening following Quentin's visit to Miss Rosa. Mr. Compson first tells of Sutpen's early days in Jefferson, his arrival, the town's reaction, and his marriage to Ellen. He then takes up Rosa as his main character and examines her relationship with Sutpen and his family. (It is interesting to note that Mr. Compson's narration covers the same material as Miss Rosa's immediately preceding in Chapter I. This allows the reader to get some sense of what is going on in the book, for he is confronted with two narrators telling the same part of the story differently.) Finally, in Chapter IV, Mr. Compson speaks about the relationship between Charles Bon, Henry, and Judith.

Mr. Compson is detached, even cynical, in his telling, using his skeptical cynicism as a defense against becoming too involved with the story, against being forced to acknowledge the tragedy which he ultimately believes the story to be. He is afraid of the force of the story, its ability to move him, and protects himself by his personae using his knowledge of classical mythology and tragedy to create separate personae for the characters of the real story. He sets up a stage upon which Sutpen and his fellow actors move and strut, where while Sutpen was "still playing the scene to the audience, behind him Fate, destiny, retribution, irony,--the stage manager, call him what you will--was already striking the set and dragging on the synthetic and spurious shadows and shapes of the next one" (pp. 72-73). Mr. Compson applies this tragic and theatric formula to the story, completing the metaphor himself by becoming the director who sits in the empty auditorium and tells the actors what to say and do. The characters become his playthings. Mr. Compson does believe Sutpen's story to be tragedy; yet by applying to it his own tragic form and setting, he denies the real tragedy of it, and changes it into a trite, banal, and distant happening.

Mr. Compson distances himself from the story because he sees in Sutpen's fall a

microcosmic symbol for the fall of the South, and sees in its characters "the people in whose living blood and seed we ourselves lay dormant and waiting" (p. 101). The story is part of Mr. Compson's heritage, which is filled with those same undying ghosts of which Quentin speaks, and which is that past or history which is yet present. Consistent with his tragic setting, Mr. Compson believes the characters of the story larger-than-life, heroic.

> ...of that day and time, of a dead time; people too as we are, and victims too as we are, but victims of a different circumstance, simpler and therefore, integer for integer, larger, more heroic and the figures therefore more heroic too, not dwarfed and involved but distinct, uncomplex who had the gift of loving once or dying once instead of being diffused and scattered creatures drawn blindly limb from limb from a grab bag and assembled, author and victim too of a thousand homicides and a thousand copulations and divorcements. (p. 89)

Mr. Compson obviously envies this distant and "simpler" time, and accordingly withdraws, not only from the trenchancy of the story, but from his own life as well.

The reader of the book very well may pause at this point and breathe a sigh of relief, for with the end of Chapter V comes also the end of the most difficult half of the book (from the standpoint of a first reading). The reader at this point has been provided with most of the known facts of the story, and the second half is an attempt by Quentin and Shreve to further explain and understand those facts. The two of them try to recreate the events of the story by placing themselves in the shoes of their characters. In this manner they hope to understand why and how such a "bloody mischancing of human affairs" could ever occur.

The character of Quentin Compson dominates the book - he is the central narrator and his role is of almost equal importance to Sutpen's. The book is in many ways about Quentin Compson. He is always present, listening more often than speaking, yet when he speaks or thinks he gives voice to some of the most important and germane ideas and themes of the novel. His "section" comprises Chapters VI through IX where he and his Canadian roommate Shreve recreate (or relive) the story, their enterprise occasioned by Quentin's receipt of a letter from his father telling of Miss Rosa's death. It is now almost exactly four months since Quentin and Rosa went out to Sutpen's Hundred to find whatever it was "living hidden" in the house.

Quentin resembles his father in many ways, yet differs in one major aspect: he is unable to distance himself from the story, to allow it to remain mysterious and inexplicable, as his father can and does. Quentin is obsessed with the story of Thomas Sutpen and is compelled to listen to it and tell it, even though the listening and telling disturb him both emotionally and physically ("now he began to jerk all over, violently and uncontrollably until he could even hear the bed" (p. 360)). Quentin is consumed by his feeling of purposelessness. He cannot reconcile himself with his tradition, the tradition and history of the South, and because of this has no foundation upon which to build his life. He is lost.

Quentin grew up in a land where "tragedy is secondhand"[3] and he accordingly seeks to understand those tragedies in the hope that he might finally understand himself.

> It was a part of his twenty years' heritage of breathing the same air and hearing his father talk about the man Sutpen...Quentin had grown up with that; the mere names were interchangeable and almost myriad. His childhood was full of them; his very body was an empty hall echoing with sonorous defeated names; he was not a being, an entity, he was a commonwealth. He was a barracks filled with stubborn back-looking ghosts still recovering,

even forty-three years afterward, from the fever which had cured the disease, waking from the fever without even knowing that it had been the fever itself which they had fought against and not the sickness, looking with stubborn recalcitrance backward beyond the fever and into the disease with actual regret, weak from the fever yet free of the disease and not even aware that the freedom was that of impotence. (pp. 11,12)

The characters of those Southern tragedies are to Quentin also ghosts which haunt and inhabit his very soul. With the story of Sutpen, Quentin is confronted with one of those tragedies, yet this one is more meaningful than the others, because in the story of Thomas Sutpen, Quentin sees not only a story of the South but also himself in the person of Henry.[4] Because of this Quentin is obsessed with the tragedy of Thomas Sutpen and most specifically with the character of Henry Sutpen.

Quentin sees himself as two separate entities; the one self trying to continue living in the present, and the other unable to live in the present without the copresence of the past.

He [Quentin] would seem to listen to two separate Quentins now--the Quentin Compson preparing for Harvard in the South, the deep South dead since 1865 and peopled with garrulous outraged baffled ghosts, listening, having to listen, to one of the ghosts which had refused to lie still even longer than most had, telling him about old ghost-times; and the Quentin who was still too young to deserve yet to be a ghost, but nevertheless having to be one for all that, since he was born and bred in the deep South the same as she was--the two separate Quentins now talking to one another in the long silence of notpeople, in notlanguage. (p. 9)

These two polarized selves pull Quentin apart and render him a non-entity, one of the "notpeople." Like the post-war South, he is impotent, unable to act; he is paralyzed into a permanent state of anxiety and indecision. This is apparent in his relation to the story. The telling of the story fills him with a kind of terror, yet he desperately wants and needs to tell it. Finally he is unable to prevent the telling of it:

*Am I going to have to have to hear it all again...I am going to have to hear it all over again I am already hearing it all over again I am listening to it all over again I shall have to never listen to anything else but this again forever. (p. 277)

Furthermore, Quentin's impotence makes him unable to bring peace to his two warring and conflicting selves; the war will always be still being fought within Quentin.

'Nevermore of peace. Nevermore of peace. Nevermore Nevermore Nevermore.' (p. 373)

Unable to relegate that ghost-history of the South to the past, Quentin lives in guilt, shame, and remorse. Quentin's attitude towards the South is best expressed in his answer to Shreve's question: "Why do you hate the South?" When Quentin answers "I don't hate it," the reader must know that Quentin both loves and hates the South, and that he is forever doomed to both love and hate the South, its history, and his tradition. Nor is this any passive ambivalence about his home; rather, it is a passionate affirmation of his own bipartite and lost self. The guilt and confusion which Quentin feels, and which Jim Bond both excites and symbolizes ("You still hear him at night sometimes. Don't you?" (p. 378)), must make him hate the South and the

heritage it has bequeathed to him. Nevertheless, Quentin deeply loves the South and its traditions because it is his home. Unable finally to break the hold which the past has on him, Quentin commits suicide in June of the same year,[5] finally silencing the ghosts which haunt him and which have made him "older at twenty than a lot of people who have died" (p. 377). Quentin himself expresses his condition best, and finally one can only conclude with him,

*Yes. I have heard too much, I have been told too much; I have had to listen to too much, too long. (p. 207)

Shreve is obviously the most curious choice as a narrator, yet he is entirely necessary to the purpose of the book. Set as a counterweight to Quentin in order to balance the narration and keep it sane, he at first forces the reluctant Quentin into reliving the story once again, then insures that Quentin does not become bogged down in his obsession by either prodding Quentin along or by taking over the telling himself. Neither born in the South, nor involved in the story, and from farther north even than the North, Shreve is the one narrator who can ever be disinterested or ambivalent to the story, who can lay it aside and forget it when he so desires; however, he too is fascinated by Sutpen. One reason for his interest in the story is his natural youthful enthusiasm of a freshman at Harvard; for Shreve the telling is a kind of "play" (p. 280), that is, his fascination with Sutpen is not imbued with the outrage, anxiety, or dread of the other narrators. Shreve simply recognizes that the story of Thomas Sutpen is an amazing and incredible one, and one that excites his interest.

But perhaps Shreve is most valuable because he takes upon himself the part of the reader, giving voice to words that must at times be on the reader's own tongue. One often hears Shreve saying "Wait!", trying to slow Quentin down and make him explain those points about which, though Quentin knows the truth, neither the reader nor Shreve have the slightest understanding.[6] Shreve is also of great value to the non-Southern reader, whose interest and confusion about the South are expressed in Shreve's words:

*Tell about the South. What's it like there. What do they do there. Why do they live there. Why do they live at all. (p. 174)

On the subject of what it's like to live in the South, to be a ghost living among other ghosts, Shreve gives the best explanation, even though he is only voicing his own confusion and ignorance, and although Quentin answers him with a final "You can't understand it. You would have to be born there."

I just want to understand it if I can and I don't know how to say it better. Because it's something my people haven't got. Or if we have got it, it all happened long ago across the water and so now there ain't anything to look at every day to remind us of it. We don't live among defeated grandfathers and freed slaves (or have I got it backward and was it your folks that are free and the niggers that lost?) and bullets in the dining room table and such, to be always reminding us to never forget. What is it? Something you live and breathe in like air? A kind of vacuum filled with wraithlike and indomitable anger and pride and glory at and in happenings that occurred and ceased fifty years ago? A kind of entailed birthright father and son and father and son of never forgiving General Sherman, so that forevermore as long as your childrens' children produce children you won't be anything but a descendant of a long line of colonels killed in Pickett's charge at Manassas? (p. 361)

Shreve encourages the reader to dare to fashion his own version of the story by showing no hesitation in submerging himself in the story and in telling portions of it, though he is unqualified and ill-equipped to do it in comparison with the other narrators. Though he often stings Quentin with his jokes and irreverance ("Jesus, the South is fine, isn't it...It's better than Ben Hur, isn't it." (P. 217)), Shreve is sincere in his efforts to understand the South and Thomas Sutpen.

Considering the relativistic and biased accounts of the narrators, which they yet hold to be true, one must wonder about the nature of truth in this book. Is truth a personal thing, where each narrator's account is true only because it is true, because it has meaning, to them? The following quotation sheds some light on what the narrators are doing as they tell their stories, and search for what is true.

> It did not matter to either of them [Quentin and Shreve] which one did the talking, since it was not the talking alone which did it, performed and accomplished the overpassing, but some happy marriage of speaking and hearing wherein each before the demand, the requirement, forgave condoned and forgot the faulting of the other--faultings both in the creating of this shade whom they discussed (rather, existed in) and in the hearing and sifting and discarding the false and conserving what seemed true, or fit the preconceived. (p. 316)

The narrators are trying to "conserve" what seems true, and yet what is true to them is oftentimes that "might-have-been which is more true than truth," and the true that is more true than truth (factual truth) is actually factual falsity. In their act of creating the characters of Sutpen and all those who surround him, the narrators are like the woman singer in Wallace Stevens's "The Idea of Order at Key West" who gives order and meaning to the otherwise mute and meaningless sea in and by her singing. The story of Thomas Sutpen is nothing without them.

The narrators' distance from the actual events allows them not only to embellish the story, but also, it seems, to see it more clearly and meaningfully. When Quentin is imagining Sutpen's return to Jefferson in the middle of the war with the marble slabs for his and Ellen's graves, the omniscient narrator states, "he could see it; he might even have been there," and Quentin thinks, *"No. If I had been there I could not have seen it this plain" (p. 190). Thus, the narrators examine the story as they are telling it for its meaning and truth, for had they been involved in the actual events, their involvement would have been too much for them to have any perspective on it; they would have been overwhelmed with the living of it. Shreve, it seems, speaks for all of the narrators when, recalling Miss Rosa's words, he says:

> there are some things that just have to be whether they are or not, have to be a damn sight more than some other things that maybe are and it don't matter a damn whether they are or not. (p. 322)

Shreve is saying that some things are truer than fact, that facts can get in the way of truth and obscure it, and that what is most true is that with which the narrators imbue their accounts: their own innate meaning which they find in their hearts, or sub-conscious, or somewhere. Because the narrators' accounts are meaningful and true, and put together where the reader can experience all of them, they yield, from the very union of these personal and true accounts, a truth which is the reader's own, and which is greater than any of them separately.

Quentin and Shreve demonstrate the problem of historical truth; how anyone can ever really know the past. They attempt to "know" by placing themselves inside their characters and by trying to imagine what they felt and thought. Their endeavor to experience history "first-hand" indicates the historical validity and value of a nov-

el like War and Peace; by placing his reader in that world, Tolstoy allows him to feel what it was like to be there and to know at least better than before what went on in the hearts and minds of the people living at that time.

Quentin thinks that the narrators have a true relation to the story and that any differences between their stories and the original are due only to a different "temperature" and "molecularity" of the medium through which the story must pass. That medium is the narrator. Yet Quentin, with his relationship to history, believes that the story in its truth is "unchanging", and that all the narrators are determined by and dependent in their very being upon Thomas Sutpen; for Quentin, history determines both the physical and spiritual reality of the present, and is therefore present also.

> *Maybe nothing ever happens once and is finished. Maybe happen is never once but like ripples maybe on water after the pebble sinks, the ripples moving on, spreading, the pool attached by a narrow umbilical water-cord to the next pool which the first pool feeds, has fed, did feed, let this second pool contain a different temperature of water, a different molecularity of having seen, felt, remembered, reflect in a different tone the infinite unchanging sky, it doesn't matter: that pebble's watery echo whose fall it did not even see moves across its surface too at the original ripple-space, to the old ineradicable rhythm thinking Yes, we are both Father. Or maybe Father and I are both Shreve, maybe it took Father and me both to make Shreve or Shreve and me both to make Father or maybe Thomas Sutpen to make all of us. (pp. 261-262)

Thomas Sutpen

So who is this man Thomas Sutpen? For the reader, he must at first be, and finally remain, an enigma. Reminiscent of Milton's Satan, he is described as a demon, a Faustus, a man who "given the occasion and the need...can and will do anything" (p. 46), and yet also as a tragic hero whose "trouble was innocence" (p. 220), a symbol of human folly before Nature, Fate or God, and a man who embodied those American ideals of hard-working ambition, independence (self-reliance), integrity, perseverance, and success. He is portrayed as an unscrupulous and inhumane man, about whom the townspeople "thought of ruthlessness rather than justice and of fear rather than respect, but not of pity or love" (p. 43), who "had never learned how to ask anybody for help or anything else" (p. 273), and was underbred yet still accomplished his climb to the aristocracy, and who at times legitimately arouses the reader's pity and sympathy. He is Cadmus with his "ironic fecundity of dragon's teeth," and Abraham whose children "should have been the jewels of his pride and the shield and comfort of his old age, only--(Only they destroyed him or something or he destroyed them or something. And died)" (p. 9), and lastly David, who wanted a son and got one too many. The narrators never stop talking about him or thinking about him, even when they are talking about someone or something else, and the reader is therefore inundated with descriptions, opinions, and reflections about him. The image of the townspeople who chant "in steady strophe and antistrophe: *Sutpen. Sutpen. Sutpen. Sutpen." (p.32) hangs over and infiltrates the book. Sutpen elicits both the reader's awe, respect, and fascination, and his revulsion and indignation.

Finally, however, one must make a decision about Sutpen. Was he a victim of history, circumstance, and coincidence, or was there something truly evil in and about him? Perhaps by examining his life, his design and his actions, his motivations and concerns, we can reach some understanding of the man who was Thomas Sutpen.

The years of his youth in the mountains were definitive in forming his charac-

ter. There, a man was judged "by lifting anvils or gouging eyes or how much whiskey [he] could drink then get up and walk out of the room" (p. 226), and not by either possessions or birth. So that when he was introduced to traditional Southern society, plantation society, with its rigid caste system and blatant discrimination, he was shocked.

> He had never heard of, never imagined, a place, and land divided neatly up and actually owned by men who did nothing but ride over it on fine horses or sit in fine clothes on the galleries of big houses while other people worked for them; he did not even imagine then that there was any such way to live or to want to live, or that there existed all the objects to be wanted which there were, or that the ones who owned the objects not only could look down on the ones that didn't, but could be supported in the down-looking not only by the others who owned objects too but by the very ones that were looked down on that didn't own objects and knew they never would. (p. 221)

Sutpen thought that these "down-looking" men were only "lucky", men whose advantage and "superiority" were given them by chance and circumstance, "and that the lucky ones would be even slower and loather than the unlucky to take any advantage of it or credit for it, or to feel that it gave them anything more than luck; and he still thought that they would feel if anything more tender toward the unlucky than the unlucky would ever need to feel toward them" (p. 226). Thus, when he walked up to the front door of that plantation house and was told by a house servant to go around to the back, the shock was not only because of the intrusion of reality upon his private world, but also from the realization of his own innocence of that reality.

He lost that innocence then, but not all of it, or maybe it was that he lost one kind of innocence and retained or gained another. This other innocence was implicit in his design, though it was not the innocence or naivete that allowed him to believe that he could ever be anything but underbred in that aristocracy to which he aspired; rather, it was the innocence which believed that the features of this aristocratic life could be bought and possessed like objects, and that they were accessible in their genuine form to anyone, provided that he was courageous and shrewd (and Sutpen probably did understand one or the other of these to mean unscrupulous). Sutpen's innocence takes the form of an abstraction which he performed upon and extended to all the facets of his life, and his life was really only one prolonged and iron-willed struggle towards the implementation and accomplishment of his design; anything beyond or outside of it, which could not be used towards the fulfillment of it, was of no interest or concern to him. (He could never love nor hate anyone or anything because neither love nor hate made any difference in his plan.)

This innocence become abstraction is visible in his conceptions of tradition, respectability, morality, and slavery. Sutpen thought of tradition and respectability not as traits inherited or handed down in families and towns, but as material as could be assumed upon oneself like a new set of clothes could be purchased and worn. Because these were necessary to his design, he chose to possess them regardless of the personal or familial cost, though he never lost sight of his personal integrity, for that too was for him part of respectability. When speaking to General Compson about his "second choice," the decision about what to do about Bon, Sutpen says,

> either choice which I might make, either course which I might choose, leads to the same result: either I destroy my design with my own hand, which will happen if I am forced to play my last trump card, or do nothing, let matters take the course which I know they will take and see my design complete

> itself quite normally and naturally and successfully to the public eye, yet to my own in such fashion as to be a mockery and a betrayal of that little boy who approached that door fifty years ago and was turned away, for whose vindication the whole plan was conceived and carried forward to the moment of this choice. (p. 274)

This need for respectability is also why he had to "put aside" his first wife. Whether he objected personally to her black blood is beside the point here; plantation owners just did not have part-Negro women, not even octoroons, as their "ladies-of-the-house."

Sutpen's morality is likewise abstract and betrays the same kind of innocence. According to General Compson, Sutpen believed:

> that the ingredients of morality were like the ingredients of pie or cake and once you had measured them and balanced them and mixed them and put them into the oven it was all finished and nothing but pie or cake could come out. (p. 263)

General Compson also testifies that it was this same morality, "his code of logic and morality, his formula and recipe of fact and deduction whose balanced sum and product declined, refused to swim or even float" (p. 275), which would not permit him to "malign or traduce the memory of his first wife, or at least the memory of the marriage even though he felt that he had been tricked by it" (p. 272). He refused to do this even when she had, it seems, sought him out in order to avenge herself upon him after more than thirty years. Thirty years, Sutpen says,

> after my conscience had finally assured me that I had done what I could to rectify it. (p. 265)

All these things, morality, justice and conscience, are caught up in Sutpen's rational, business-like, and abstract scheme of things. For Sutpen, conscience is something that can be bought off and convinced either by arguing with it long enough or by utilizing that concept of justice which is nothing more than a business transaction. The simplicity and innocence of Sutpen's morality is most evident in the way he handles his first wife; he believed that by giving her money he would automatically gain her forgiveness, and that his conscience should not trouble him because of the great amount of money which he gave her. General Compson can reply to Sutpen's words quoted above only by exclaiming,

> 'Conscience? Conscience? Good God, man, what else did you expect? Didn't the very affinity and instinct for misfortune of a man who had spent that much time in a monastery even, let alone one who had lived that many years as you lived them, tell you better than that? Didn't the dread and fear of females which you must have drawn in with the primary mammalian milk teach you better? What kind of abysmal and purblind innocence could that have been which someone told you to call virginity? What conscience to trade with which would have warranted you in the belief that you could have bought immunity from her for no other coin but justice?' (p. 265)

Such characters as Miss Rosa and Wash Jones associate Sutpen with the South and the sin of slavery, that South which had, according to Mr. Coldfield,

> erected its economic edifice not on the rock of stern morality but on the shifting sands of opportunism and moral brigandage. (p. 260)

One interpretation may indeed equate Sutpen's fall with the fall of the South and view the book as a kind of allegory and explanation of the ruin of the Old South. Yet such an interpretation of the book, where Sutpen in his prosperity, sin, and final ruin is a metaphor for the South, does not fit in many ways. The failure of Sutpen's design is not contingent upon the outcome of the war; even if the South had won, Henry still probably would have had to kill Bon in order to prevent him from marrying Judith. Nor is Sutpen typical of Southern plantation owners; his character traits, the optimism, innocence and strong-willed and unflagging determination, are neither emblematic nor especially suggestive of the planter class. Sutpen was always on the fringe of the aristocracy,and the town's partial acceptance of him was a truce called only when the townspeople realized that it was too late to stop him because of the money and power he had amassed. The following passage indicates both Sutpen's differences with the typical male Southerner, and his attitude towards those "committees" which were the germ of the Ku Klux Klan:

> *That was the winter when...the ruined, the four years' fallow and neglected land lay more idle yet while men with pistols in their pockets gathered daily at secret meeting places in the towns. He did not make one of these; I remember how one night a deputation called, rode out through the mud of early March and put him to the point of definite yes or no, with them or against them, friend or enemy: and he refused, declined, offered them (with no change of gaunt ruthless face nor level voice) defiance if it was defiance they wanted, telling them that if every man in the South would do as he himself was doing, would see to the restoration of his own land, the general land and South would save itself. (p. 161)

Finally, the differences between Sutpen and Southern aristocracy are most apparent in his attitude towards blacks and slavery. Sutpen grew up in a place "where the only colored people were Indians and you only looked down at them over your rifle sights" (p. 221), and so he not only had no understanding of the fact that the lives of people of another race could be usurped for one's own ends, but also he had none of the fear and insecurity inherent in such an attitude. Slavery was just another practice which he appropriated for himself from the planter society; there was in him no innate belief in his own white superiority, a superiority which never needed to be doubted or tested. Sutpen's belief in his own superiority was something which he tried and proved both to himself and to his slaves by stripping down and stepping into the ring with them, "fighting not as white men fight, with rules and weapons, but as negroes fight to hurt one another quick and bad" (p. 29), gouging eyes and drawing blood. Sutpen never escaped from those brutal tests of a man's worth which he had learned as a boy, because they were part of his innocence.

The presence and acceptance of Clytie in the family also indicates that Sutpen had no special discriminatory feelings about blacks. She is acknowledged as his daughter and lives with the family in the house, and her sometimes being discovered sleeping with Judith in the bed or on the pallet probably caused no especial consternation or distress for Sutpen. Rosa's indignation about this is the appropriate and expected Southerner's response. Because Sutpen regards Clytie as benign with respect to his design, he allows her to coexist and grow with his family.

Yet with Charles Bon it is a different matter. Sutpen, seeing in Bon a definite threat to the success of his plan, cannot tolerate Bon's presence in the family. The harm which Bon could do is of two sorts: the first concerns his marriage to Judith, and the second involves Sutpen's inability and refusal to recognize Bon as his son. Neither of these matters devolves from Sutpen's own opinions or feelings about Bon's black blood; it is only the perfection, both inner and outer, of his design with which he is concerned. For had he allowed Charles to marry Judith, the apparent completion and success of his design would be a "mockery and betrayal" of the design itself, not in the eyes of the world and the society, for no one would ever need to know of Bon's true nature, but in Sutpen's own eyes. The reality of his design would not fit that abstract picture in his mind of the perfect aristocratic family and life. The fact that he knew that Bon was black disallowed any marriage, for such an event would render his design imperfect. It is Sutpen's abstract conception of blackness as something unsuitable and bad which determines his thoughts and actions.

Sutpen's inability to recognize or acknowledge Bon as his son also depended on the success and ultimate perfection of his design. To have acknowledged Bon would mean to acknowledge and accept his own failure, again not necessarily in society's view but in his own. The perfection of his design had already been impeded and marred by the travesty (in Sutpen's eyes) which was his first marriage. Sutpen regarded his virginity as part of his design, as he tells General Compson:

> 'On this night I am speaking of (and until my first marriage I might add) I was still a virgin. You will probably not believe that, and if I were to try to explain it you would disbelieve me more than ever. So I will only say that that too was a part of the design which I had in my mind.'
> (p. 248)

Not only did he lose his virginity in that first marriage, but for the price of it got a black wife and a black son, who:

> made an ironic delusion of all that he had suffered and endured in the past and all that he could ever accomplish in the future toward that design.
> (p. 263)

So that when he saw Bon when Henry brought him home that first Christmas, he knew, sensed, what was going to happen, and:

> he must have felt and heard the design--house, position, posterity and all--come down like it had been built out of smoke, making no sound, creating no rush of displaced air and not even leaving any debris. (p. 267)

Sutpen had failed and probably knew it, yet never gave up trying. He chose to play his last trump card and use Henry to stop Bon. Sutpen's inability to acknowledge Bon is also the reason why he had to use Henry as his instrument in disposing of Bon; had Sutpen himself acted against Bon, it would have been tantamount to acknowledging Bon's existence both as his son and as a problem.

Sutpen did practice slavery, yet did not reserve blacks for this treatment. He used anyone who could possibly further his design: both his wives, Eulalia and Ellen, Rosa, Henry, Mr. Coldfield, the French architect, and his slaves. Sutpen "chose them with the same care and shrewdness with which he chose the other livestock--the horses and mules and cattle" (p. 61), and used them in the same way, as tools and instruments to accomplish his design, never recognizing them as individuals, human beings who had lives and thoughts and feelings of their own. In one sense he was trying (like Judith in giving Bon's letter to General Compson's wife) to make an impression, leave his mark, only in his case by establishing a dynasty; yet, he never realized (as Judith did) that his own actions affected and were intertwined with the actions and lives of other people, and that in his blind monomania he might hurt one of those people to the extent that his business-like justice and recompense could never repair the injury done. Sutpen touched and harmed the "central I-Am" of many of the people with whom he came in contact, but the harm arose not out of any particular verbal or physical blow; rather, the harm arose out of his rejection of

and his blindness to the fact that those people even had an "I-Am," that they had any other existence but that which he could manipulate and use.

Sutpen did not deny his own humanity because he was never aware that there existed anything like humanity that could either be embraced or denied; he was simply "innocent" of any concept which postulated a shared and common existence. He could never imagine or comprehend that he had wronged anyone, or done anyone an injustice, or, if he had, he believed that he had done everything in his power to make it right. He never realized that someone might give him something like love and not demand something in return.

> 'You see, I had a design in my mind. Whether it was a good or bad design is beside the point; the question is, Where did I make the mistake in it, what did I do or misdo in it, whom or what injure by it to the extent which this would indicate. I had a design. To accomplish it I should require money, a house, a plantation, slaves, a family--incidentally of course, a wife. I set out to acquire these, asking no favor of any man.' (p. 263)

Sutpen is incapable of seeing himself as culpable for any injustice or inhumanity which would warrant the seeming punishment and destruction which Bon was poised (whether intentionally or not) to mete out and accomplish.

> And he [Sutpen] not calling it retribution, no sins of the father come home to roost; not even calling it bad luck, but just a mistake: that mistake which he could not discover himself. (p. 267)

Sutpen's inability to recognize his shared humanity, his inability to ask something of someone without believing that sooner or later they would require him to repay his debt, and his "crimes" against humanity, are part of the tragedy of his life.

The final and fatal irony, however, which completes the tragedy of Sutpen himself, is that in perpetrating his crimes, Sutpen re-enacts the very offense which was done to that little boy before the front door of that plantation house, and which was the impetus and reason for his design. The plantation owner rejected him because he was guilty of that very same blindness of which Sutpen himself was subsequently guilty, that blindness which in the planter's case designated some people as simply inferior because of the color of their skin or because of their poverty. At one point in the book Sutpen tells General Compson that if a little boy were to knock on his front door:

> that now he would take that boy in where he would never again need to stand on the outside of a white door and knock at it: and not at all for mere shelter but so that that boy, that whatever nameless stranger, could shut that door himself forever behind him on all that he had ever known, and look ahead along the still undivulged light rays in which his descendants who might not even ever hear his [the boy's] name, waited to be born without even having to know that they had once been riven forever free from brutehood just as his own [Sutpen's] children were. (p. 261)

This passage might be viewed as a glimpse of Sutpen's humanity, of some kindness, yet I think that it only lends further emphasis to Sutpen's innocence. I do not doubt that he might say this and believe it of himself, yet it is ironic that even while saying this he was in the process of turning away a little boy (Bon) and that he had shut the door in the faces of many others, while simultaneously (and unconsciously) advocating and practicing that very "brutehood" from which he believed he had escaped.

Though until now Sutpen has been portrayed as a tragic figure, it is difficult to see him as the final embodiment or resultant of that tragedy. Sutpen never does escape his innocence, he never learns the true nature of his mistake or fault, and lastly he never gives up trying to bring his design to fruition. It finally requires Time itself to come personified as Wash Jones with that rusty scythe to stop him. Sutpen simply refused to admit and accept his ultimate failure.

Conclusion

Thomas Sutpen was an amazing man; one cannot help but be attracted and fascinated by him. I have tried in this paper to illuminate the tragic aspects of Sutpen and his life, but finally I think his character resists any simple or easy formula. Sutpen refuses to be labeled as simply "tragic" because he never learns (as Judith and Henry do) and never gives up on his design. Yet other characterizations lead to problems also, such as the identification of Sutpen as a symbol for the South, or as simply an evil man. I have chosen the tragic because I think that it yields the most fruit; that is, reveals the most about Sutpen's character. He remains an enigma. The sensitive reader, I think, may very well sympathize and understand Wash when he thinks:

> *How could I have lived nigh to him for twenty years without being touched and changed by him? (p. 287)

Thomas Sutpen and his story affect one powerfully, but not simply. The reader may very well find himself vacillating between two extreme and opposite feelings about him; at one moment he may feel pity for Sutpen, and at the next be thinking with Wash,

> *Better if his kind and mine too had never drawn the breath of life on this earth. Better that all who remain of us be blasted from the face of it than that another Wash Jones should see his whole life shredded from him and shrivel away like a dried shuck thrown onto the fire. (pp. 290-291)

Thomas Sutpen's story is a story about the South, but it is also a story about America, in which the American dream of rising from poverty to wealth and fame becomes a nightmare.

> Because you make so little impression, you see. You get born and you try this and you don't know why only you keep on trying it and you are born at the same time with a lot of other people, all mixed up with them, like trying to, having to, move your arms and legs with strings only the same strings are hitched to all the other arms and legs and the others all trying and they don't know why either except that the strings are all in one another's way like five or six people all trying to make a rug on the same loom only each one wants to weave his own pattern into the rug; and it can't matter, you know that, or the Ones that set up the loom would have arranged things a little better, and yet it must matter because you keep on trying or having to keep on trying and then all of a sudden it's all over and all you have left is a block of stone with scratches on it provided there was someone to remember to have the marble scratched and set up or had time to, and it rains on it and the sun shines on it and after a while they don't even remember the name and what the scratches were trying to tell, and it doesn't matter. And so maybe if you could go to someone, the stranger the better, and give them something--a scrap of paper--something,

anything, it not to mean anything in itself and them not even to read it or keep it, not even bother to throw it away or destroy it, at least it would be something just because it would have happened, be remembered even if only from passing from one hand to another, one mind to another, and it would be at least a scratch, something, something that might make a mark on something that was once for the reason that it can die someday, while the block of stone can't be is because it never can become was because it can't ever die or perish... (pp. 127-128)

Footnotes

1. There is also an omniscient narrator who plays a minor role. He sets the scene for each conversation, and gives an account of Sutpen's arrival in Jefferson in the beginning of Chapter II.

2. From Dylan Thomas's poem "The World Is Too Much With Us." This is the first stanza.

3. From The Sound and the Fury by William Faulkner. I cannot find the line, but it is something that Mr. Compson says to Quentin.

4. In The Sound and the Fury we learn that Quentin is obsessed with his sister's virginity, and contemplates incest as a means to "preserve" it. Quentin and Henry share many common traits, not the least being the close relationships they have with their sisters.

5. From The Sound and the Fury. Quentin drowns himself in the Charles River on June 2, 1910.

6. The best example of this is the delayed fact that Milly's baby was a girl (see p. 292).

(All page numbers used in this essay refer to the Vintage Books Edition of Absalom, Absalom! by William Faulkner.)

"A Shallow Reading of Marx" and Other Likely Stories

Michael Strong

This is a waffling essay. I have tried to be fair in judging two antagonists. They have each in turn seduced my judgement entirely. I hope that I have put each in some perspective so that the place of each contribution might be appreciated. If nothing else, the issues have been clarified somewhat, at least for me.

First I introduce the problem: virtually all of those who make it their profession to study economic phenomena believe that Marx is wrong. In trying to understand their reasons for believing so, I point out the flaws in Marx's theory of value from their perspective. I then review the teaching on value of the father of economics, Adam Smith. Although he adheres to a labor theory of value that is not in its essence different from Marx's labor theory of value, I show how his theory is "corrected" by subsequent economists. I then turn to Marx and follow his argument on value in the beginning of Das Kapital. I try to show how radically different the entire endeavor of his theory is. Finally, I try to delineate the advantages and disadvantages of each theory.

It is almost too easy to defeat his argument: first, it is unnecessary, if not ridiculous, to assume that the commonality of commodities relies on a property inherent in them. It can be pointed out that the relational aspect of the exchanging parties, both with respect to each other and each with respect to their commodities, is obviously significant in determining the quantitative relation in which use-values are exchanged. That is, how much of each commodity each party has in its possession, and how great the need or desire is for each commodity that is not in its possession. Or to be generous and speak in Marx's terms, it is not true that "only one property remains, that of being products of labor." (p. 128) Another property remains, that of being scarce items relative to demand. Marx has been defeated in his argument for his labor theory of value.

It is too easy to "defeat" Marx's arguments. Especially when he is not arguing what one thought he was arguing. I shall consider the foregoing a shallow reading of Marx as I now proceed to understand him on his own terms. It is very plausible to read Marx in the above manner, and, given the presuppositions of a political economist, it is difficult not to do so.

First of all, such a concept of "defeating" an argument assumes that Marx is arguing in a logically sequential and dependent manner: a deductive sequence rather than in the dialectical mode. I here understand the dialectical mode as one in which a thought is developed until it makes sense, and then another is contrasted with it to deepen it. Like the verbal process of dialectic, the dialectical mode is almost a series of approximations, asymptotically approaching the truth, although a definite margin of error may exist on either side. Indeed, the error is almost used to define the next step in the logic, for it necessitates its own correction. If this is an accurate description of Marx's method of argument, it is pointless to pull out individual statements as inaccurate in hopes of "proving" Marx wrong. Inaccurate statements will probably be corrected by subsequent developments in the theory.

Second, Marx is not trying to argue for a labor theory of value. He is creating the first theory of the commodity. This distinction will prove most helpful in un-

derstanding his argument and hence his contribution to the study of political economy. Statements that seemed to be virtually ridiculous will now have a context in which they make sense. The first step towards understanding Chapter 1 is to read the preface to the first edition.

Marx writes in the preface to the first edition of Das Kapital his conception of the nature of his project:

> Beginnings are always difficult in all the sciences. The understanding of the first chapter, especially the section that contains the analysis of commodities, will therefore present the greatest difficulty. ... The value-form, whose fully developed shape is the money-form, is very simple and slight in content. Nevertheless, the human mind has sought in vain for more than 2,000 years to get to the bottom of it, while on the other hand there has been at least an approximation to a successful analysis of forms which are much richer in content and more complex. Why? Because the complete body is easier to study than its cells. Moreover, in the analysis of economic forms neither microscopes nor chemical reagents are of assistance. The power of abstraction must replace both. But for bourgeois society, the commodity-form of the product of labor, or the value-form of the commodity, is the economic cell-form.

Marx conceives Das Kapital to be the beginning of a science. He believes that no one before him has satisfactorily illuminated the economic process; he is writing a critique of all previous political economy. His conception of the scope of his science does not seem to be limited to measuring variations in the Market. He perceives his great scientific triumph to be the discovery of "the value-form, whose fully developed shape is the money-form." If it is thought that Marx is offering a labor theory of value, then it does not make sense for him to make the extravagant claim that he has discovered something that "the human mind has sought in vain for more than 2,000 years." At the very least, Smith and his followers had been discussing something like that for almost 100 years. However, he is not simply offering a theory of prices, for Marx understands the value-form to be prior to the money-form. Moreover the form is very important to Marx. Nor is he studying the Market, for that would be "the complete body". Marx understands wealth to be nothing more than a great collection of commodities. The commodity is the cell-form or capitalism, the basic unit behind even the great structure of the Market. Thus Marx begins his analysis of economic activity by examining the commodity. I will return to Chapter 1, "The Commodity", Section 1, "The Two Factors of the Commodity: Use-Value and Value" and try to understand the development of his argument a little more deeply.

The first step for Marx is to define what is meant by a commodity. Marx's analysis of the commodity-form is philosophical rather than scientific. He wants to know the nature and the source of this form. He begins with the distinction between use-value and exchange-value. To be a commodity, an article must have both kinds of value: There must be a use for it, and it must have some value in exchange.

Marx describes use-value as the value that an object has through its usefulness to human beings in a given society at a given time. An object with use-value has qualities which satisfy human needs of whatever sort. "Use values are only realized in use or in consumption." (p.126) They are "only realized", meaning they are merely potentially use-values previous to their consumption. Use-values are strictly a function of the qualities of an object, without regard to quantity.

Marx centers his discussion of the commodity on exchange-value, because it is exchange-value which distinguishes the commodity-form of use-value from other forms of use-value:

> [Exchange-value] appears first of all as the quantitative relation, the proportion, in which use values of one kind are exchanged for use values of another kind. This relation changes constantly with time and place. Hence exchange value appears to be something accidental and purely relative, and consequently an intrinsic value, i.e. an exchange value that is inseparably connected with the commodity, inherent in it, seems a contradiction in terms. (p. 126)

"Appears first of all as the quantitative relation" refers to the genesis of the existence of exchange-value. The question is "How does the commodity-form come to be?" Its distinguishing component is exchange-value. Thus he embarks on his investigation of exchange-value.

Marx has introduced the basic problems associated with having a knowledge of "exchange value". It is true that it appears first of all as the quantitative relation, and it has always been quantified. The exact amount, however, does change constantly with time and place. It does seem to be a purely relative phenomenon. But some exchange-value is the prerequisite to a commodity-form. If Marx wants to understand the commodity-form, then he must understand the nature of this exchange-value as prerequisite. Thus, in this logical structure, Marx knows a priori that the relativity is merely an appearance. This statement still appears at first to be absolutely absurd; the high exchange-value of a fashionable dress this year can fall to virtually nothing in five years. However, such examples are easily dismissed already; in order for an object to be a commodity, it must have a use-value. In such extreme examples, the object no longer has a use-value. Or if it does have a use-value, it is not the same use-value it originally had, and therefore is not the same commodity that it originally was. The original use-value of the dress was to display the fashionability of the wearer much more than to protect against the elements. As the original use-value vanishes with time, the remaining use-value transforms the dress into a very different commodity with a very different exchange-value. An intrinsic value becomes a possibility because a commodity is not simply a material object in Marx's usage.

Marx now deduces the relation of exchange-value to commodity:

> Let us now take two commodities, for example corn and iron. Whatever their exchange relation may be, it can always be represented by an equation in which a given quantity of corn is equated to some quantity of iron, for instance 1 quarter of corn = X cwt of iron. What does this equation signify? It signifies that a common element of identical magnitude exists in two different things, in 1 quarter of corn and similarly in X cwt of iron. Both are therefore equal to a third thing, which in itself is neither the one nor the other. Each of them, so far as it is exchange-value, must therefore be reducible to this third thing. (p. 127)

"Let us now take two commodities"--The question is, what is the common element between two commodities that makes them such? Because they are commodities, they must have a common element. Exchange-value is that which makes two commodities commensurable entities. Because he is investigating specifically the nature of the commodity, not value, it is no longer absurd for Marx to state:

> This common element cannot be a geometrical, physical, chemical or other natural property of commodities. (p. 127)

When he claims that "only one property remains, that of being products of labor", he is intentionally defining his analysis in terms of the properties of the commodity.

Moreover, he is not ignoring the relational aspects of exchange-value (the supply-demand arguments), as his subsequent discussion of the nature of this "labor" reveals. In the analysis of his theory, it is more helpful to consider some kind of "labor" as being a property of the commodity-form. In addition, this sort of analysis falls out of the dialectical method--he proposes a hypothesis that is plausible and then refines it as additional theoretical burdens are required of it. It will turn out that this labor is very abstract and relational.

Indeed, Marx's next point is that this labor is not any particular kind of labor--it is abstract labor:

> But even the product of labour has already been transformed in our hands. If we make abstraction from its use-value, we abstract also from the material constituents and forms which make it a use-value...All the sensuous characteristics are extinguished...With the disappearance of the useful character of the products of labour, the useful character of the kinds of labour embodied in them also disappears; this in turn entails the disappearance of the different concrete forms of labour. They can no longer be distinguished, but are all together reduced to the same kind of labour, human labour in the abstract. (p. 128)

The point seems easy enough to understand: the labor that is the source of value is abstract labor, not any particular kind of labor. It has to be something general enough to contain all the varied particular forms of labor. Apparently all that is meant by "abstract labour" is labor insofar as it creates value. However, this is a topic on which Marx provides some wonderful metaphors to help us understand how he is really thinking of abstract labor:

> Let us now look at the residue of the products of labour. There is nothing left of them in each case but the same phantom-like objectivity; they are merely congealed quantities of homogeneous human labour-power expended without regard to the form of its expenditure. All these things now tell us that human labour-power has been expended to produce them, human labour is accumulated in them. As crystals of this social substance, which is common to them all, they are values--commodity values. (p. 128)

Marx paints a vivid picture of the commodity-form of value. He speaks in terms of labor as a human experience. The "residue of the products of labour" suggests that which is left behind after one has labored. That nothing has been left in them but "the same phantom-like objectivity" tells us that the subjectivity, the personality, has been taken out. That they are merely "congealed quantities of homogeneous human labor" provokes images of something blood-like having been left behind in the process of laboring towards this commodity. Abstract labor is not simply non-specific labor. It is also no longer human labor, a sign that the capitalist system of production itself is no longer a system of economic relations between people, per se. An observer of the Market would pass over this facet of the economic relation as not pertinent to economics. Marx places it in the middle of his dialectical analysis of the commodity.

Next Marx refines the concept of abstract labor: The labor must be "socially necessary" labor. In discussing how labor is to be measured, Marx discovers that it is to be measured by duration. He then replies to himself:

> It might seem that if the value of a commodity is determined by the quantity of labour expended to produce it, it would be the more valuable the more unskillful and lazy the worker who produced it, because he would need more

time to complete the article.

He then corrects himself:

> The labour that forms the substance of value is equal human labour, the expenditure of identical human labour-power.

In addition to the abstraction from the particularities of any given profession, Marx's abstract labor is abstracted from the proficiencies of any given worker. It is becoming clear that Marx is not suggesting any simple proportion between hours worked and exchange-value resulting. His theory of value is not meant to be a calculus for comparing prices separated by great temporal or geographical distances, though it is similar enough to Smith's theory to work at that level as an approximation. Marx's point is that regardless of particular conditions, the source of value behind all market variations, in all commodities, is abstract labor.

We have learned that a commodity has two factors, use-value and exchange-value. Use-value was purely qualitative, exchange-value was purely quantitative. Labor was the only "property" that commodities had in common which could explain the possibility of exchange-values. This labor was very abstract, at the least an abstraction from the particularities of type of labor and proficiency of labor. Marx wants to learn what makes a commodity what it is. In the last Section of Chapter 1, on "The Fetishism of the Commodity and its Secret", Marx states:

> A commodity appears at first sight an extremely obvious, trivial thing. But its analysis brings out that it is a very strange thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties and theological niceties. So far as it is a use-value, there is nothing mysterious about it...But as soon as it emerges as a commodity, it changes into a thing which transcends sensuousness... The mysterious character of the commodity-form consists therefore simply in the fact that the commodity reflects the social characteristics of men's own labour as objective characteristics of the products of labour themselves...the commodity-form, and the value-relation of the products of labour within which it appears, have absolutely no connection with the physical nature of the commodity and the material relations arising out of this. It is nothing but the definite social relation between men themselves which assumes here, for them, the fantastic form of a relation between things. (p. 163-165)

In the first analysis of Marx's text, I took a commodity to be an obvious, material thing. Marx's explanation of value in that context was lacking. Here we see that Marx's conception is much more complex. The commodity-form is a congealed version of the social relations between men. As such, for Marx there can be no separation between an economic science and a sociological science, and thus any moral implications that are associated with the revealed social relations. The cell-form of the economic system represents the relations between men.

Now that I have some appreciation of the richness and complexity, as well as a knowledge, of the basic elements, of Marx's commodity theory, I am ready to begin to understand what he is saying. To help in this, I will move to his discussion of classical political economy with regard to its failings in analyzing the value-form.

In "The Fetishism of the Commodity and Its Secret", Marx states:

> Political economy has indeed analyzed value and its magnitude, however incompletely, and has uncovered the content concealed within these forms. But it has never once asked the question why this content has assumed that

particular form, that is to say, why labour is expressed in value, and why the measurement of labour by its duration is expressed in the magnitude of the value of the product. These formulas, which bear the unmistakable stamp of belonging to a social formation in which the process of production has mastery over man, instead of the opposite, appear to be political economists' bourgeois consciousness to be as much a self-evident and nature-imposed necessity as productive labour itself. (p. 173-175)

Now, one sentence at a time:

> Political economy has indeed analyzed value and its magnitude, however incompletely, and has uncovered the content concealed within these forms.

The first clause is a statement of the purpose of value theory in classical political economy. Marx is aware of the insufficiencies of classical value theory in achieving its purpose of analyzing economic magnitude. The "content concealed within these forms" is opaque from the point of view of political economy. For Marx, the "content" is labor and the "form" is exchange-value.

> But it (political economy) has never once asked the question why this content has assumed that particular form and why the measurement of labour by its duration is expressed in the magnitude of the value of the product.

What does he mean "Why the measurement of labour by its duration is expressed in the magnitude of the value of the product"? What kind of answer could there be to such a question? I thought that Marx had deduced this relationship in Section 1. There is no need to ask such a "why". Isn't it like asking why mass "is expressed" as weight? Mass is expressed as weight because the force of gravity pulls on masses equally, thus assuring a proportion between the masses of bodies and their weights. That's just the way gravity works. Likewise, labor "is expressed" in value because the demand for labor pulls on the products of labor equally, assuring a proportion between the duration of labor in a product and its value. That's just the way demand works.

Fortunately, Marx provides us with a footnote to clarify this point:

> It is one of the chief failings of classical political economy that it has never succeeded, by means of its analysis of commodities, and in particular of their value, in discovering the form of value which in fact turns value into exchange-value.

"which in fact turns value into exchange-value." What value into exchange-value? In conformity to the usual contrast, I take the it to be use-value that is transformed into exchange-value. The point Marx is developing is that it is not necessary for use-values to be exchange-values. There are alternative value-forms, in alternative economic systems: (same footnote continued)

> The value-form of the product of labour is the most abstract, but also the most universal form of the bourgeois mode of production; by that fact it stamps the bourgeois mode of production as a particular kind of social production of a historical and transitory character. If then we make the mistake of treating it as the eternal natural form of social production, we necessarily overlook the specificity of the value-form, and consequently of the commodity-form together with its further developments, the money-form, the capital-form, etc.

These remarks provide some idea of the scope of Marx's investigation and what he means by a deeper analysis than that of classical political economy. Marx is concerned with where the Market came from and where it is going to. Since the commodity is the cell-form, he is interested in how it came to be that particular cell-form and what other cell-forms are possible. In a communist society, commodities, and thus exchange-values, will not exist. In feudal society, use-values were distributed by means of the corvee and tithes in addition to the commodity-form and its exchange-value; thus Marx's criticisms of the narrowness of political economy. Nor are these idle observations, of interest solely to those who believe in the revolution or with a historical fondness for medieval times. The distinction between use-value and exchange-value, taken for granted in a capitalist system, is the source of a major difficulty, even in a capitalist system. Use-values are commensurable with "human" values; exchange-values are not.

We choose between the various ways of using our time: eating, sleeping, thinking, acting, etc. Our time is necessarily consumed by acquiring certain use-values, such as food and shelter. Human values, too, must be expressed in the same finite period of time. There are circumstances in which we choose between the two in our allotted time. We can build an extra shelter or we can study the stars, build a plaything or take time with our civic responsibilities. In our decision-making, we naturally decide between use-values and human values.

This is not the case with exchange-values and human values. Exchange-values are the quantity of labor that can be commanded by a given article, a commodity-form of labor. Exchange-values are quantitative, and, qua exchange-value, more is better. (Thus Marx's later characterization of capital as an uncontrollable, self-sustaining creature that necessitates its own growth.) There are no qualitative considerations in exchange-value. Marx recognizes the critical importance of the distinction between use-value and exchange-value; this importance is not in facilitating calculations, but in the fact that it is an unnecessary, and largely undesirable, social distinction.

If we return to the quoted text (leaving the footnote), we can now understand the last sentence:

> These formulas, which bear the unmistakable stamp of belonging to a social formation in which the process of production has mastery over man, instead of the opposite, appear to the political economists' bourgeois consciousness to be as much a self-evident and nature-imposed necessity as productive labor itself.

To start with the final (easier) clause, of course the commodity-form, exchange-value, and duration as a measure of labor's value producing capacity appear as givens in the system of economic science. Economics by Marx's time had already defined itself as the study of the Market in capitalist society. An economist would not find Marx's insult interesting or informed.

Why "these formulas" bear the stamp of a social formation, in which the production process has mastery over man, is directly related to Marx's emphasis on understanding the nature of the commodity-form. The "stamp" that these formulas bear is that of the alienating commodity-form, with its congealed abstract labor; the commodity-form, of which the only intrinsic property is exchange-value. Marx sees, in the "givens" of political economy, the essence of human domination by the material forces of production. One of his more extravagant metaphors might now be taken more seriously: The "dead" labor of a commodity, because of the very nature of the commodity-form, sucks the life-blood from living labor.

Marx's theory does provide us with a more detailed picture of economic relations than does a merely descriptive theory. Because of science's wondrous successes at

prediction, the bulk of attention is directed towards meticulous description, in hopes that it will lead to accurate predictions. An understanding for its own sake, of what occurs in economic transactions, is not generally appreciated. Yet regardless of accuracy, Marx's theory enables us to consider the type of interactions that occur. It thus allows us to consider factors other than maximizing material wealth.

Marx's theory is not very useful for analyzing the fascinating rules which govern the Market mechanism. On the other hand, economic relations become significant human activities in the theory, in that it depicts the dehumanizing aspects of commodity-production in a capitalist system. In addition, one might question the legitimacy of a social theory based strictly on man's material intercourse. Objects that are bought and sold can be quantified and commodities can be defined as such objects. If value is simply a reflection of price, it too can be quantified. But there may yet be a purpose in qualitative observations on these material relations; such observations may even be useful to the quantifiers.

The issue of whether the laborer is "exploited" depends on whether labor is the sole source of value. This question remains undecided.

Marx uses the claim that labor is the sole source of value; whether that claim is derived from an explicit labor theory of value or a theory of the commodity-form, it still amounts to the same thing when he applies it to his theory of surplus value and exploitation of the worker. Is this claim defensible?

Marx's labor is abstract, identical, socially average labor. In order for an object to be a commodity, it must have both a use-value and an exchange-value. If a commodity has use-value in a given society, then Marx would claim that the ultimate source of its value is congealed socially average labor-time. Such a statement seems true; I know of no objects that are purchased that do not have some labor-time congealed in them. The claim that their value is in some sense proportionate to the amount of labor-time congealed in them is less obvious. Yet the qualifications that the labor-time be socially average labor-time and that the object have a use-value make the proportion impossible to calculate with any precision. Moreover, Marx is willing to believe in a discrepancy between relative price and exchange-value. Given Marx's conditions, it is very plausible that labor is the source of value; but it is not proven in any definite sense.

I had hoped to resolve something in this essay. I now fear that Marx is right in that there can be no compromise with bourgeois political economy. Marx's analysis of the commodity has convinced me that exchange-value is incommensurable with human values. I had hoped to see an economic science that could be cognizant of the human condition, as Marx's analysis is. As long as the first distinction in an economic theory of value is between use-value and exchange-value, such a "sensitive" economics is impossible. It is difficult to imagine an economics that begins in any other way.

All page numbers used refer to the Vintage Books Edition of Capital by Karl Marx.

Ma . . . demoiselle

Stuart Sobczynski

Ma...demoiselle
   Liquide
   Splendide
Flowing down the street
Glancing from curb to curb
Like your eyes within your gaze
   So often
   So often
I remember my delight at the beach
Staring sullen straight into the sunset
   As patience alone
Caused the sea to stand still
Though the waves sang still
And the same at the sight
   Of your eyes
   Dancing within your face
Your smile
   Singing
      Light
         Still
Still

A Translation From Louis Ménard's *Circe*

Liz Waldner

Sweet as a beam of moon, as a tone of lyre
At her single smile the feral yield with soft moan.
With her eyes' caressing a magical fire
Burns each our breath with ecstasy kindling on bone.

The lions wild and roaring, the great grizzled bears
Lick their ivory claws; a cloud slow from her censers
Envelops them. She sings, she allures, she ensnares,
Sinister Pleasure, with all powerful philtres.

Under yoke of desire she draws in her wake
Innumerable troops of creatures, her retinue,
Charmed by her virgin regard, her mouth's lies rehearsed

Tranquil, irresistible. Ah! accurst, accurst!
Since you change man into beast at least lull to sleep
The shame and remorse in our hearts sore full of you.

A Fishhook for Hobbes's *Leviathan*

Daniel Schoos

How are we to understand the Leviathan to be Christian, or in other words, in what way is a Hobbesian commonwealth a Christian commonwealth? Hobbes is subtle in revealing his true thoughts on this matter, despite his passion for his exactness in speech and his apportionment of the entirety of Part III of Leviathan to the topic "Of a Christian Common-wealth." Hobbes's caution is merited by the heretical and atheistic foundation on which the structure of his commonwealth stands, for his analogy between the sovereign and God, which appears throughout Leviathan, is not an analogy at all, but rather an identity, a practical equivalence.

In chapter 43, Hobbes states, "The (Unum Necessarium) Only Article of Faith, which the Scripture maketh simply Necessary to Salvation, is this, that Jesus is The Christ. By the name of Christ is understood the King,..." However, throughout the book Hobbes's intent is to argue for the converse of that assertion, namely that the king, or sovereign, is Christ. When we say, "is Christ," it is not meant that the sovereign is truly Jesus Christ, the Saviour, God-man, of Scripture. Rather, the sovereign takes the place of Christ. This is the essence of Hobbes's perfect Leviathan, or Christian commonwealth, specifically, that if the "sovereign" be Christ, then his commonwealth is salvation, or heaven on earth. What Hobbes does not mean is for salvation to rest in God replacing the sovereign. Instead, it is that salvation rests in the sovereign replacing God.

The first step towards a better understanding of this answer lies in recognizing the difference between the "Commonwealth" or "Leviathan" as described by Hobbes, and any other kingdom or commonwealth. Hobbes is not looking at any past or contemporary government as a model for the art whereby he builds his "Common-wealth." Instead, he compares himself with Plato, as one who is creating new rules by which the best of commonwealths would be structured. This is an important distinction whose significance is highlighted by a complimentary distinction Hobbes makes in chapter 31.

Throughout Leviathan Hobbes speaks of a "Kingdom of God," but there are two kinds of such a kingdom, and these are described in chapter 31. The first is the "Naturall," the second is the "Prophetique," also called the "peculiar." Hobbes defines the "Naturall" as, "wherein God governeth as many of mankind as acknowledge his Providence, by the naturall Dictates of Right Reason." Shortly before this passage Hobbes had explained that those who do not "acknowledge his Providence," such as "Bodies Inanimate" and "creatures Irrationall," as well as "Atheists" and "They that believe not that God has any care of the actions of mankind," are not properly speaking, God's subjects, but, at least for human beings, "are to be understood as Enemies."

The "Prophetique" or "peculiar" kingdom is described as, that "one peculiar Nation (the Jews)" which God chose to rule "not only by naturall Reason, but by Positive Lawes, which he gave them by the mouths of his holy Prophets." Later, in chapter 35, Hobbes dismisses the notion that by the kingdom of God is meant, "Eternall Felicity, after this life, in the Highest Heaven." He restates his belief that it means nothing more than "the Monarchy, that is to say, Soveraign Power of God over any Subjects acquired by their own consent,..." (italics mine) The first of these "peculiar" kingdoms was that with Abraham. Hobbes is careful to stress in chapter 40

that the covenant God made was with Abraham only, and that it was due to the prior situation, wherein Abraham had a "lawful power" to make all his family and future family "perform all that he covenanted for them," that Abraham was able to extend his covenant over them. This kingdom lasted through Jacob, "but afterwards no more, till the Israelites...arrived at the foot of Mount Sinai; and then it was renewed by Moses..." According to Hobbes, Moses was not the true "soveraign" of the Israelites until at Sinai they declared: "speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak with us, lest we die." Afterwards, the succession continued through Aaron's heirs, ending with the election of Saul as king. For when the Israelites "deposed the High Priest of Royal Authority, they deposed that peculiar Government of God."

It is this "peculiar" kingdom which Hobbes claims Christ shall restore at his second coming, as in "The World To Come" presented in chapter 38. Hobbes makes it clear in chapter 35 that this is a "Civill Kingdome" and explains:

> The Kingdome therefore of God, is a reall, not a metaphoricall Kingdome; and so taken, not onely in the Old Testament, but the New; when we say, For thine is the Kingdome, the Power, and Glory, it is to be understood of Gods Kingdome, by force of our Covenant, not by the Right of Gods Power; for such a Kingdome God alwaies hath; so that it were superfluous to say in our prayer, Thy Kingdome come, unlesse it be meant of the Restauration of that Kingdome of God by Christ, which by revolt of the Israelites had been interrupted in the election of Saul.

In Chapter 12, Hobbes reveals that in the "peculiar" kingdom of God, "the policy, and Lawes Civill, are a part of Religion; and therefore the distinction of Temporall, and Spiritual Domination, hath there no place." Now as there was a distinction between a "Naturall" and "peculiar" kingdom of God, so is there a distinction made in chapter 12 between the "Naturall" seeds of religion and the "supernaturall" seeds of religion. What shall proceed to be shown is that the "peculiar" kingdom of God is one based on the supernatural seed of religion planted by God. Yet for Hobbes this supernaturall seed, based on revelation by God, is only an empty argument, leading us back to the natural seeds of religion. From there the only path is that to the converse of the "peculiar" kingdom of God, where the sovereign replaces Christ.

That the "peculiar" kingdom of God is based on the supernatural seed of religion is evident from chapter 12, where Hobbes describes the two seeds of religion. "Divine Politiques," as opposed to "humane Politiques," is organized by men "by Gods commandment," men such as Abraham, Moses, and Christ, men "by whom have been derived unto us the Laws of the Kingdome of God." Hobbes elucidates later: "But where God himselfe, by supernaturall Revelation, planted Religion; there he also made to himselfe a peculiar kingdome; and gave Lawes."

The relationship between the "peculiar" kingdom of God and "supernaturall Revelation" clearly established, let us explore the significance of "supernaturall Revelation," to see why it cannot stand on its own as a viable foundation for a Hobbesian "Common-wealth." The very opening of chapter 12, "OF RELIGION," immediately throws suspicion on any attempt to distinguish between seeds of religion. Hobbes writes: "seeing there are no signes, nor fruit of Religion, but in Man onely; there is no cause to doubt, but that the seed of Religion, is also onely in Man." Hobbes explains that "every man" is "in an estate like to that of Prometheus," because he "hath his heart all the day long, gnawd on by feare of death, poverty, or other calamity." Fear and ignorance are the basis of the natural seed of religion.

But to return to the "supernaturall Revelation," the seed of God's "peculiar" kingdom, we find throughout Leviathan that Hobbes meticulously and methodically removes all power from the side of the supernatural. Hobbes more often connects

"supernaturall" or "spirituall" with fear, darkness, strife, and evil, than with God. Hobbes disparages the "Pretense of Inspiration" (ch. 29), cautions against the role of miracles (ch. 37), and is utterly suspicious of prophecy (ch. 36).

Hobbes is clear: "there is no Covenant with God, but by mediation of some body that representeth Gods Person; ...[viz.] Gods Lieutenant, who hath the Soveraignty under God." In Leviathan the example is given of Abraham, previously mentioned, whose covenant with God extended to his heirs only because of a previous, natural and civil, agreement. "God spake onely to Abraham," Hobbes claims, "and therefore contracted not with any of his family, or seed, otherwise than as their wills...were before the Contract involved in the will of Abraham." In other words, the "peculiar" kingdom of God was first founded, indeed, could only have been founded, because there existed already a civil sovereign. In chapter 40 Hobbes states that, "they to whom God hath not spoken immediately, are to receive the positive commandements of God, from their Sovereign; as the family and seed of Abraham did from Abraham their Father, and Lord, and Civill Soveraign."

What of those to whom God hath spoken immediately? Hobbes's discussion on prophecy and inspiration is lengthy and complicated, yet a concise explanation of this particular situation can be given. Hobbes is careful by dividing such prophets into two categories, the "Prophets of perpetuall Calling" and "subordinate prophets." The former class were "first Moses; and after him the High Priest, every one for his time, as long as the priesthood was Royall." After the so-called revolt of the Jews from God, "those Kings which submitted themselves to Gods government" were the "Soveraign Prophets. "Of the subordinate Prophets" Hobbes concludes:

> I find not any place that proveth God spake to them supernaturally; but onely in such manner, as naturally he inclined men to Piety, to Beleef, to Righteousnesse,... Which way, though it consist in Constitution, Instruction, Education...yet it is truly attributed to the operation of the...Holy Spirit...For there is no good inclination, that is not of the operation of God. But these operations are not alwaies supernaturall.

We see that the "Prophets of perpetuall Calling" are already sovereigns. The only outstanding quality of the "subordinate Prophets" is their inclination to virtue, nurtured by institutions of the state. As a result, Hobbes asserts: "When therefore a Prophet is said to speak in the Spirit of God...he speaks according to Gods will, declared by the supreme Prophet." Therefore, a true prophet is either a sovereign or one who obeys the sovereign.

It is the "peculiar" kingdom of God which Christ is expected to restore in "the World to come." The "Naturall" kingdom is not mentioned. How will this new "peculiar" kingdom arise? It can only be instituted through the cooperation of a civil sovereign, as with Abraham or Moses. Will Christ be striking deals with the world's leaders at his coming to rule? This is peculiar. Hobbes stressed in chapter 41, "Of the Office of our Blessed Saviour," that during his first coming, Christ did or taught nothing which would tend "to the diminution of the Civill Right of the Jewes, or of Caesar," and "did therein nothing against their laws." Hobbes explains, "The Kingdome hee claimed was to bee in another world," and consequently his preaching of it was not seditious. But what is to happen at Christ's second coming? Hobbes states that Christ will "execute the Office of a King." How will he be able to do this without finding himself guilty of the very sedition that Hobbes describes he was innocent of at his first coming? What if Christ restores the "peculiar" kingdom through conquest? Still, as Hobbes writes in chapter 20: "It is not therefore the victory, that giveth the right of Dominion over the vanquished, but his own Covenant." The problem remains.

We have shown that the "peculiar" kingdom of God is founded on divine revela-

tion, the "supernaturall" seed of religion, and have furthermore outlined what little power Hobbes leaves for divine revelation. Hobbes observes in chapter 12 the following:

> For seeing all formed Religion, is founded at first, upon the faith which a multitude hath in some one person, whom they believe not only to be a wise man, and to labor to procure their happiness, but also a holy man, to whom God himselfe vouchsafeth to declare his will supernaturally,...

If we view the possibility of supernatural governance with grave suspicion, and as a result postpone consideration of the supernaturall as related in the quote above, what remains is the definition of a "Common-wealth." Compare the quote from chapter 12 with the following from chapter 17:

> ...the Common-wealth;...is One Person, of whose Acts a great Multitude, by mutuall Covenants one with another, have made themselves every one the Author, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all, as he shall think expedient, for their Peace and Common Defence.
>
> And he that carryeth this Person, is called SOVERAIGNE, and said to have Soveraigne Power; and every one besides, his SUBJECT.

We notice that in the passage from chapter 12, Hobbes speaks of the foundation of "all formed religion" (italics mine). No distinction is made for "peculiar" or "Naturall." Hence, if we include the "peculiar" with the "all," it appears that the "Common-wealth" or "Leviathan" can be equated with the "peculiar" kingdom of God, the "Mortall God," which Christ, the "Immortal God," the "SOVERAIGNE," will restore as "the World to come."

Let us consider the passage in chapter 38 where Hobbes speaks of this "World to come," salvation:

> There are three worlds mentioned in Scripture, the Old World, the Present World, and the World to come... So the first World was from Adam to the generall Flood. Of the present World, our Saviour speaks, (John 18.36) My Kingdome is not of this World. For he came onely to teach men the way of Salvation, and to renew the Kingdome of his Father, by his doctrine. Of the World to come, St. Peter speaks, Neverthelesse we according to his promise look for new Heavens, and a new Earth. This is that World, wherein Christ coming down from Heaven, in the clouds, with great power,...and thence forth reign.

The World to Come is only in the future insofar as Hobbes states earlier, in the conclusion of Part II, that: "I am at the point of believing this my labour, as useless, as the Common-Wealth of Plato." And later: "I recover some hope, that one time or other, this writing of mine, may fall into the hands of a Soveraign, who will...convert this Truth of Speculation, into the Utility of Practice." In other words, the World to Come does not begin on Judgement Day, as one may think after reading that passage in chapter 38, but it begins when some prince privately reads Leviathan and puts the entirety of it into practice. (Maybe this is the Day of Right Judgement.) That prince would be the practical equivalent of Christ. Christ does not replace the prince. The prince, or "soveraign," replaces Christ. (And Hobbes is John the Baptist?)

Only now is the power of that which is called supernatural restored. All such power has as its source the "soveraign." There is no covenant with God, except

through the sovereign. The hazards of action in accordance with that which men may think to be divine inspiration or prophecy, a folly which would lead such men to, "despise the Commandements of the Common-wealth," (ch. 26) dragging the state into civil war, are all removed when the sovereign is the sole determiner of divine Law and true prophecy. There is no universal church, only the church which the sovereign creates. Hobbes states in chapter 39:

> I define a CHURCH to be, a company of men professing Christian Religion, united in the person of one Soveraign: at whose command they ought to assemble, and without whose authority they ought not to assemble.

Again in chapter 42, on ecclesiastical power, Hobbes asks:

> How then can wee be obliged to obey any Minister of Christ, if he should command us to doe any thing contrary to the Command of the King, or other Soveraign Representant of the Common-wealth...? It is therefore manifest, that Christ hath not left to his Ministers in this world, unless they be also endued with Civill Authority, any authority to Command other men.

In addition only the interpretations of scripture presented by the sovereign are to be accepted. In chapter 40 Hobbes uses a metaphor to explain this point further. (Whatever became of the warning against metaphor?) He first quotes two passages from Exodus:

> Take heed to yourselves that you goe not up into the Mount, or touch the border of it; whosoever toucheth the Mount shall surely be put to death.
>
> Goe down, charge the peoples, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze.

Hobbes then explains that the Scriptures are the Mount Sinai mentioned above, and "the bounds whereof are the Laws of them that represents Gods Person on Earth." For the subjects in a commonwealth, as the sovereign replaces God, so do the laws act for the Scriptures (as interpreted by the sovereign). Hobbes continues:

> To interpret them; that is, to pry into what God saith to him whom he appointeth to govern under him, and make themselves Judges whether he govern as God commandeth him, or not, is to transgresse the bounds God hath set us, and to gaze upon God irreverently.

The "them" above are the laws of the commonwealth, as with the bounds previously mentioned and again seen above: "the bounds God hath set us." Then clearly is for "God" in that context to be read "soveraign."

The equating of the sovereign with God is given special attention in chapter 30, which is entitled, "Of the Office of the Soveraign Representative." In this chapter Hobbes explains the duties of the sovereign and his subjects in light of each of the Ten Commandments. The first in this pattern, "Subjects are to be taught not to affect change of Government," is presented:

> The desire of change, is like the breach of the first of God's Commandements: For there God sayes,...Thou shalt not have the Gods of other Nations; and in another place concerning Kings, that they are Gods.

Another list appears in chapter 31, for the "Attributes of Divine Honour." Many of these reflect standard, widely-accepted notions on the nature of a supreme being, for example, that he exists, and is infinite. Later, however, this is all qualified by Hobbes: "And because words (and consequently the Attributes of God) have their signification by agreement, and constitution of men," then those attributes and their associate honors, obedience being of paramount importance, depend on "the will of the Common-wealth, by Lawes-Civill." Hence the sovereign, as the maker of laws, determines what attributes and honors are to be followed in his commonwealth. This is something of an expansion on the placing of ecclesiastical powers in the sovereign's hands, which we have previously discussed. The sovereign not only makes the ceremonies, he makes the god, and this god is himself.

Hobbes even accounts for the doctrines of the immortality of God in his argument for the sovereign. In chapter 19 he states: "...as there was order for an Artificial Man, so there be order also taken, for an Artificiall Eternity of life," and then proposes that, "This Artificiall Eternity, is that which men call the Right of Succession."

In chapter 31 Hobbes asserts:

> The Right of Nature, whereby God reigneth over men, and punisheth those that break his Lawes, is to be derived, not from his Creating them, as if he required obedience, as of Gratitude for his benefits; but from his Irresistible Power.

As a result, those attributes of God one may generally think to be universal, especially God as creator, disappear on the whim of the sovereign. By excluding all such elements while solely concentrating on power as the cause of God's right to rule, Hobbes again points to the special relationship of God and the sovereign of a civil state. "Jesus Is the Christ. By the name of Christ is understood the King,..." is, if by the name of King is understood Christ, this exclusive interpretation as to the nature of God which can allow Hobbes to found his World to Come in the present, on earth.

In other words, when it is said that the king is Christ or replaces Christ, we mean not that the sovereign is similar to Christ, or "is as Christ" metaphorically. Instead, we mean that the sovereign defines Christ; that for Hobbes, although he never openly reveals himself, there is no God, unless he be that "Artificiall Soul" of the commonwealth, the king. As we have seen, throughout Leviathan Hobbes systematically removes all of God's powers to the civil sovereign. At the same time, he warns that if the absolute power be usurped from the sovereign, the commonwealth would be dissolved, and the former sovereign be not a sovereign anymore. In chapter 29, Hobbes discusses this subject, "those things that Weaken, or tend to the DISSOLUTION of a Common-wealth." His list proceeds in every case to describe a situation where absolute power of the sovereign is being diminished, including "Private Judgement of Good and Evill," the "Pretense of Inspiration," and "Subjecting the Soveraign Power to Civill Lawes." The attributes which define God's power become for Hobbes both the necessary and sufficient attributes which define the sovereign.

"The Present World" as Hobbes speaks of it in chapter 38 is consistent with this view. He quotes John 18:36, "My Kingdom is not of this World," which is clearly opposed to earlier lengthy and vehement arguments - Hobbes citing from many passages in both the Old and New Testaments - for an earthly kingdom of God. The quote from John is simply a restatement of Hobbes's observation that no Leviathan, as he is describing it, has ever been seen in world governments. Following the quote from John, Hobbes writes: "For he [Christ] came onely to teach men the way of Salvation, and to renew the Kingdome of his Father, by his doctrine." There is no renewal or restoration, since no true Hobbesian commonwealth, according to the author, ever ex-

isted. The doctrine is, in Hobbes' view, nothing more than obedience.

Obedience is for Hobbes the same thing as faith, and obedience is assured of being obtained only when power is present to enforce it. Hobbes gives examples in chapter 12 of the causes which weaken faith, one of which is a dearth of miracles. The example is cited from Exodus of the absence of Moses and the resulting revolt from God through the act of constructing the gold calf as a god. Hobbes continues:

> And again, after Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and that generation which had seen the great works of God in Israel, were dead; another generation arose, and served Baal. So that Miracles fayling, Faith also failed.

However, earlier in the same chapter, Hobbes left open the chance that a "soveraign" has an effective means with which to restore faith. As we have seen, when "they that have the Government of Religion," the sovereign, "shall be unable to shew any probable token of Divine Revelation," then their religion shall become suspect and rejected. But there is a very important qualifier added parenthetically by Hobbes, namely: "(without the feare of the Civill Sword)." In other words, miracles are not necessary to the sovereign if he retains power in the commonwealth. As Hobbes explained in the beginning of chapter 17, there must be a visible power to hold men out of the "condition of Warre," and to "tye them by feare of punishment to the performance of their covenants."

The Leviathan is Christian, then, in the sense that the sovereign replaces Christ (with Hobbes as the voice crying out in the wilderness). The sovereign may enforce in any way his right to honor through obedience, this honoring (obedience) being another formulation of what faith is. Rules which guide the subjects in their endeavor to obedience must be promulgated by the sovereign, and can be derived from the Ten Commandments. The commonwealth is sustained by the obedience of its subjects to their sovereign, or rather, Salvation, the kingdom of God, is only possible through faith.

> In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow is turned into joy before him.
>
> (Job 41:22)

All quotes from Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan are taken from the Penguin English Library edition, edited by C. B. Macpherson.

The quote from Job was taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible, published by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

The Two Hands of God: An Examination of Goethe's *Faust*

Nancy Loevinger

> What good is it if you construct a whole?
> The public takes it all apart again.
> (102-103)

Faust is a different man from most of us, more ruthless, more passionate, more destructive, more noble. Yet through his striving he asks the same questions that we ask: What does it mean that man was created in God's image? What kind of life, and hence what kind of action, will render man's life meaningful in the face of death? What place does love have in this life?

Faust's striving is ruthless and unrepentant, and it is hard to understand why he is saved in the end. Interceded for by a creature whom he had abandoned and destroyed, he is whisked off to Heaven by seductive cherubs in a battle of roses, on the very day that he had caused the deaths of a pious old couple. What does this mean? The most obvious interpretation of the work is that it is a glorification of striving as such, regardless of means or end. When I started this paper I believed in a diametrically opposed interpretation: it was Gretchen's love alone that saved Faust. Slowly I have come to realize that neither interpretation alone is true, that wanting to choose either one or the other is succumbing to Faust's need for dichotomies, not Goethe's, and that it is not Faust's striving alone that saves him, nor is it Gretchen's love alone. It is the combination of the two, the mysterious and illogical reconciliation of two irreconciliably opposed ways of life.

> I have not fought my way to freedom yet.
> Could I but banish witchcraft from my road,
> Unlearn all magic spells -- oh, if I stood
> Before you, Nature, human without guile,
> The toil of being man might be worthwhile.
> (11403-11407)

As the first scene of Part Two opens we see Faust "reclining on a lawn with flowers." He is still restless (unruhig), but he is immediately comforted by spirits who "cleanse his mind of memories that smart," and rock his heart "in Kindesruh," the rest of children. It was the memory of such childhood peace that saved Faust from despair on the night before Easter, and here too Faust is saved from despair, from the pain of remembering Gretchen's ruin without understanding her salvation. Just as the chorus of angels sang then of Christ's resurrection, the heavenly spirits have now come to Faust with a message of rebirth. The spirits bathe Faust in "the dew of Lethe's spray," instilling in him the ritual forgetfulness that will prepare him for a new life.[1]

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As the spirits descend to Faust they sing:

> When the vernal blossom showers
> Sink down to embrace the earth,

When green fields, alive with flowers,
Fill all human hearts with mirth,
Then great spirits, looking lowly,
Rush to help those whom they can;
Whether wicked, whether holy,
They would heal the wretched man.
(4613-4620)

This is a very different song from the one the angels sang on Easter morning. Both songs speak of love and rebirth, but the change in language from Christianity to nature broadens the message in a way that changes its meaning. Since the love of Christianity only applies to those who believe in Christ, Faust was ultimately excluded from grace that Easter morning; but the forgiveness of nature applies to all, "whether wicked, whether holy." In the dungeon scene we saw that ordinary moral justice was allied with the devil, rather than with heaven, and here too the ordinary dichotomy between good and evil is superseded. Heedless of these supposed opposites, heaven, despite Faust's clear moral guilt, heals him of remorse so that he can continue his striving. "Deep within you (Nature) prompt a stern decision: to strive for highest life with all my powers" (4684-4685).

Since nature is no longer acting as judge, Faust need no longer confront it merely as an antagonist, and this change is reflected in a change of imagery. Instead of being shown within his study, surrounded by dusty books, Faust is shown reclining upon a spacious lawn, surrounded by flowers. The flowers, with their ephemeral beauty and annual rebirth, represent the regenerative power of nature, and so its eternal forgiveness. Moreover, the spirits that heal Faust are "charming" and "friendly," as opposed to the more impersonal angels of Part One. This change is also brought out in the appearance of Ariel. Ariel had appeared earlier, in "Walpurgis Night's Dream," a dream of the devil. Here, however, he acts in conjunction with heaven, as a personification of the aethereal, and so spiritual, aspect of nature. In this way hell, heaven, and earth are shown to be united.

This change in nature, and so in Faust, is also evident in Faust's first speech. Forced to turn away from the sight of the rising sun, Faust contemplates with delight a waterfall and its rainbow:

The rainbow mirrors human...strife.
Consider it and you will better know
In many-hued reflection we have life.
(4725-4727)

In Part One, Faust spoke on Easter morning to Wagner about the beauty of nature (1068-1099), but there the glorious sight of the sunset angered and dismayed him, by reminding him of his limitations in not being able to follow it. Here Faust accepts, at least for a moment, man's inevitable failure to directly confront life, and in doing so recognizes the value of capturing a reflection of nature in transitory images, a capitulation that earlier would have seemed to him ignoble. Furthermore, the image of the waterfall itself is an image of hope. The constant action of the water forms mist, and when this is illuminated by the light of the sun, a rainbow appears, "enduring through all change." Thus human striving, despite the ephemeral nature of its effects, is capable of creating beauty when it is illuminated by a sense of the divine (v. 4634, "the holy light.").

Healed in this manner, Faust returns to the world, and his less antagonistic, and so more fruitful relation to nature is reflected in his marriage to Helen. Faust first saw Helen in the witch's mirror, where she personified both the beauty of nature and its elusiveness. Helen is, for Faust, the incarnation of beauty without

shame, and so an image of man before the fall. This image can only be represented on earth by innocence and purity, a representation necessarily sterile. Faust pursued Gretchen after his view of Helen in the witch's mirror. He sought in her Helen's earthly image, and he left her, among other reasons, because, once possessed, her innocence was destroyed, and so she no longer contained that image. But Helen forgives herself for her actions in a way that Gretchen could not, and, because of this, her kinship with nature and her ability to create are not destroyed by her lack of innocence. It is thus possible for Faust to achieve through Helen a consummation with nature that was impossible with Gretchen. The marriage of Helen and Faust is celebrated in an idyllic forest grotto, and their child is spoke of as "a faun with no brute nature" (p. 198, Act Three, Arcadia)[2]. By reenacting his relation with Gretchen in this manner, Faust is finally freed from his need to possess nature through the feminine, and, after Helen's death, he turns to the more masculine realms of war and social action.

It is significant that for his last battle against nature Faust chooses the sea. The sea is a symbol of nature in its most indifferent and alien form, nature, that is, as Mephisto sees it. "For God separated the earth from the sea on the third day, and before that the sea was all" (Genesis 1:9-10). Man was given dominion over the fish of th sea, but never over the sea itself. In this way, the sea, as a symbol of the primal watery chaos, represents a negation of human meaning, which is dependent upon the existence of boundaries, particularly the boundaries of good and evil. Good and evil were separated from each other, and so created, through the action of the fall. In the same way God created the earth by separating it from the sea. Thus, by further separating the earth from the sea and so creating a new earth, Faust hopes finally to prove his likeness to God and so create meaning for his life.

My eyes were turned toward the open sea:
Its towering swell against the heaven it bore,
Then, shaking out its waves exultantly,
Came charging up the level stretch of shore.
This grieved me, that a haughty arrogant flood
Can cast free spirit, prizing ever right,
Through passion of the wildly kindled blood,
Into a trough of feeling's vexed despite.
...
So in a thousand channels creeps the sea,
Sterile itself, it spreads sterility.
It seethes and swells and streaming far and wide
Takes desolate regions in its rolling tide.
There wave on wave, by hidden power heaved,
Reigns and recedes, and nothing is achieved.
This thing can sadden me to desperation,
Wild elements in aimless perturbation!
To soar beyond itself aspired my soul:
Here would I strive, and this would I control.
(p. 220-221, Act Four,
Mountain Heights)

For more than fifty years Faust fights the sea, pushing it back inch by inch, creating gardens and meadows, harbors and towns, "offering men a new existence." But Faust must use Mephisto to create this paradise. By day the ditches are dug with shovels, by night the canals are built with human sacrifice. And so, just as in his relation to Gretchen, the closer Faust comes to God, the closer he is chained to the devil. This opposition between means and end confronts Faust in the personae of

Baucis and Philemon. Faust hopes to build a lookout on their land in order to view from above the new world that he has created, and so ignore the particular means that were used to create it, just as earlier he had hoped to use Gretchen to comprehend the earth spirit, while ignoring the particular fact of her seduction. Faust has come to terms with the feminine aspect of Gretchen in his marriage with Helen, but he still has not come to terms with her purely human aspect. That is the test before him now.

Faust is infuriated by Baucis and Philemon because they remind him of the entire history of his aspirations and failure. First and foremost, they remind Faust of the individual and physical aspects of the earth spirit that he has always been unable to face. They remind him also that he need not have chosen Mephisto, by showing him the peaceful life of the farmer that he had rejected before taking the potion of youth (2353-2361). The serenity of their married life reminds him of the future that he destroyed for Gretchen, and, finally, the tolling of their church bells reminds him of the Easter bells of fifty years ago and their promise of peace, a peace that he has never known. Faced with these gentle but unyielding judges, Faust reverts to his former nature, gives in to impatience, and turns to force. As before, he evades taking responsibility for his actions by asking Mephisto and his henchman to evict the old couple, and, as before, he becomes disturbed and uneasy when he is finally confronted with his destruction of life. "Commanded fast, too fast obeyed" (11382). But this time no supernatural spirits descend to Faust to heal him, and in the smoke of the fire Care appears.

Why does Care appear now to Faust, but not Guilt? Care (Sorge) is defined as sorrow, anxiety, or uneasiness. Faust spoke of her in Part One, on the night before Easter. "Deep in the heart there dwells relentless care/ And secretly infects us with despair...She always finds new masks she can employ" (644-647). Here Care masks herself as the fear of death. Guilt in itself does not inhibit action, but fear does. In this way Care can be seen as a sister to Gretchen's evil spirit in "Cathedral," and she comes in a similar role, to test Faust's strength. Faust refuses to recognize the power of Care and so wins the test, but she blinds him as the scar of the victory. When men defy gods, they cannot hope to escape unscathed. When Jacob wrestled with the angel of God, the angel, "seeing that he could not master him, struck him in the socket of his hip," and Jacob went limping from Peniel (Genesis 32:26-31). In the same way Faust is branded and so set apart. So, too, Cain was branded when he dared to defy God's judgement. Yet Faust still refuses to yield. Hearing the approach of death in the darkness, he returns to his project with a strengthened resolve.

But Care is a test of more than just Faust's strength. When Faust confronts Care and demands that she leave, she refuses. For perhaps the first time in his life, Faust curbs his impatience.

> Faust (first irate, then calmer, to himself):
> Beware and speak no word of sorcery.
> (11424)

This is a crucial turning point for Faust. Impatience has always been Faust's familiar; and magic, the mode of immediate mastery, is the ultimate tool of impatience. It was by the lure of magic that Mephisto first caught Faust, and it was by Faust's impatient pursuit of Gretchen, and his consequent use of magic as an aid in seduction, that Faust's bond to Mephisto was sealed. But, through the ruin first of Gretchen, and then of Baucis and Philemon, Faust realized the destructive force of magic, and through magic, of action itself. It was by the curse of patience that Faust rejected the earthly and heavenly worlds in the pact scene in Part One (1583-1604). Thus, having acknowledged patience and rejected magic, even if only

temporarily, these worlds become possible for him again.

Blind, and standing on the edge of this grave, Faust dreams of a new life:

> This is the highest wisdom that I own,
> The best that mankind ever knew:
> Freedom and life are earned by those alone
> Who conquer them every day anew.
> Surrounded by such danger, each one thrives,
> Childhood, manhood, and age lead active lives.
> At such a throng I would fain stare,
> With free men on free ground their freedom share.
> Then, to the moment I might say:
> Abide, you are so fair!...
> As I presage a happiness so high,
> I now enjoy the highest moment.
> (11573-11586)

Here again it is evident that Faust has changed. Earlier, Faust had theoretically sought communion with humanity, but, faced with a given situation, he invariably treated people merely as objects. This is evident not only in his treatment of Baucis and Philemon, but also in his exploitation of his patients during the plague, and in his exploitation of Gretchen. Even in his final battle against the sea, Faust was primarily concerned with himself and God, and any benefit to mankind was secondary. Here, however, Faust accepts his place within humanity as an equal among equals and so finally comprehends the earth spirit. Yet this understanding, while real, is only conditional. Faust is not yet able to accept man as he is, and his acceptance rests upon his dream of a new man, purified and hardened by a new life. Faust's ambivalence is mirrored in the language of his speech. Faust says both that he <u>now</u> enjoys the highest moment, and that "then to the moment I <u>might</u> say." In the German, Faust uses the subjunctive ("Zum Augenblicke durft ich sagen"), and thus Faust both enjoys the highest moment, and does not, and both loses the wager with Mephisto, and wins it.

Mephisto also has both lost and won. Faust has died a natural death, but the original pact is still to be fulfilled. Just as Mephisto was Faust's servant in this life, so Faust will be his in the next. And Mephisto has the "blood-signed scroll" to prove it. Legally, everything is clear. Yet what happens? An army of seductive cherubs fly down from heaven, strewing roses, and Mephisto's devils flee in terror. Caught up in lust, Mephisto does not notice until too late that the angels have carried away Faust's soul:

> A peerless treasure, stolen shamefully:
> The noble soul that pledged itself to me
> They snatched from me, and now they moralize.
> (11829-11831)

Mephisto claims that the angels have robbed him unjustly, and he seems to be right. In what sense then is Faust's salvation justified?

Let us return to Genesis. After the fall, God curses the serpent and says to him:

> I will make you enemies of each other:
> you and the woman,
> your offspring and her offspring.
> It will crush your head

And you will strike its heel
(3:15)

Compare this with the "Prologue in Heaven." There God says to Mephisto:

Man's activity can easily abate,
he soon prefers uninterrupted rest;
To give him this companion hence seems best
Who roils and must as Devil help create.
(340-343)

Evil is given to man so that man will respond to it, and so continue to act. But why is constant action so important? Striving, or incessantly searching for knowledge through action, is the highest use that man can make of the gift of reason, yet it seems merely to exile man from God, as all action in this world necessarily involves evil. Hence, the more man seeks to become like God through action, the less like Him he becomes. Yet it is the evil inherent in action that eventually brings man back to God. That is why when God exiled man, He gave him the serpent also, and that is why God does not hate Mephisto.

"Man errs as long as he will strive" (317), but "unless you err, naught can be truly known" (p. 134, Act Two, Again on the Upper Peneus). It is by the inevitable failure of his actions that man learns the restrictions of his reason. Through reason man abstracts himself from life, and posits himself as a god. Thus Faust, immured in his study, felt himself to be a god in relation to the macrocosm (439). Through the development of his reason through action, and its subsequent failure, man is then forced to confront life, and so to realize his distance from God. Thus Faust's involvement in life ultimately brought death to those around him. This failure to become like God through action alone forces man to recognize that, if he is to resemble God, he must do so by other means.

In this way, striving both separates man from God and eventually brings him back to Him. This two-fold aspect of striving explains the seeming injustice of Faust's salvation. Faust both deserves to be saved, and he does not. In other words, just as Faust's striving contains both constructive and destructive aspects, and just as, because of this, Faust both loses and wins the pact, Faust is ultimately saved both by his own actions, that is, by his striving, and by grace, that is, by the undeserved forgiveness of love.

This seemingly contradictory statement is explicitly brought out in the text. When the angels reach Heaven carrying Faust's soul they sing:

Saved is the spirit kingdom's flower
From evil and the grave:
"Who ever strives with all his power,
We are allowed to save."
And if, besides, supernal love
Responded to his plight,
The blessed host comes from above
To greet him in delight.
(11934-11941)

Here it seems that Faust was saved by his striving alone, and that the power of love merely added to his acceptance. Yet the song continues:

Loving-holy women gave
Penitent, the rose to me,

That helped win the victory,
Helped the lofty work conclude
And this precious soul to save.
(11942-11946)

Here it seems that the power of love was a decisive factor in Faust's salvation. That the army of cherubs that sweep down to battle Mephisto represents love is also evident. What else would lust represent in a devil?

This two-fold aspect of Faust's salvation reflects not only a division within Faust's life, but also within human life in general. In Part One Goethe shows us the collision of two opposed modes of life: the mode of action, represented by Faust, which is necessarily amoral, and the mode of purity, represented by Gretchen, which can only flower when isolated from the world. These two modes could also be stated as wordly vs. spiritual, or intellectual vs. emotional, or in any other similar way. When brought together, the two modes inevitably destroy one another, for involvement in the world destroys purity, and an over-scrupulous concern with a moral ideal inhibits, and so destroys, action. The opposition of these two modes is seen most clearly in the dungeon scene, and it is the pain of their mutual destruction that constitutes the tragedy of Part One.

Yet, as we have seen, these two modes are not as opposed as they originally seem. For example, Faust's relation to Gretchen is inextricably composed of both lust and love. In the same way, Faust's striving for knowledge is composed of both a lust for power and a yearning to know God. But it is a mistake to think of one of the modes as evil, and of one as good, and to think of their unification as merely the inevitable mixing of good and evil on earth due to man's imperfection. Both modes share a common origin: they seek to create, and so to express man's likeness to God. It is through this relation to God that the two modes complement one another, and it is through this relation that they are ultimately reconciled. It is the reconciliation of these two modes that Goethe shows us in Part Two. This unification is seen most clearly in Faust's salvation and in the last scene in heaven, and it is the necessary imperfection of any earthly unification that constitutes the tragedy of Part Two.

What does it mean then for these two modes to be brought together? Let us turn again to Genesis, and the story of the fall. Because of his action, and his consequent knowledge of action's correlate, evil, man is condemned to till the soil daily in pain. In this way the knowledge of evil ensures man's continuous striving. This is the first step toward man's redemption, but it is not enough. This striving is striving <u>against</u> the world. Through action man comes to know himself, but only in a negative manner. He knows, through failure, of his difference from God. And so man despairs. Feeling ashamed, he denies his actions. Thus the darkest moment of the fall is not when Eve eats the apple. It is when Adam crawls out of hiding and says to God: "It was the woman you put with me; <u>she</u> gave me the fruit" (3:12-13).

Yet through woman man is given the knowledge not only of evil, but also of good. Woman too was cursed in the fall. She was condemned to long for man, yet always to be ruled by him, and to bear him his children in pain. In this way the knowledge of good and evil brings forth love. It is only after the fall that the bond between man and woman is consummated. Through the fall man is condemned to strive, and to fail, and woman is condemned to love, and to fail, but through their union a new life is brought into being. This is the second step toward man's redemption. Through the creative marriage of action and love, man realizes his likeness to God and so is released from despair.

Thus, if there is hope for man's redemption, it must come through a synthesis of action and love. The play ends with a stanza on the Eternal-Feminine because for the last five hundred pages we have been given the story of the Eternal-Masculine. It is

the combination of the two that is important. As Aristotle states in the Ethics, man bounces from one unbalanced vice to another, continually trying to come closer to the mean.[4] In the same way the eternal balancing of action and love brings man closer to the ideal that he seeks, whether that be called God or Nature. If there is a God worthy of the name in heaven, he will not condemn man for trying, and so failing.

What is destructible
Is but a parable;
What fails ineluctably,
The undeclarable,
Here it was seen,
Here it was action;
The Eternal-Feminine
Lures to perfection.
(12104-12111)

It is no trifle to put forth in one's eighty-second year what one conceived in one's twentieth, and to clothe such an internal, living skeleton with ligaments, flesh, and skin, and on top of that to wrap a few mantle folds around the finished product that it may altogether remain an evident riddle, delight men on and on, and give them something to work on.

Goethe, letter to Zelter, 1831[5]

Oh, that at long last you had the courage for once to yield yourselves to your impressions, to let yourselves be delighted, let yourselves be moved, let yourselves be elevated, yes, to let yourselves be taught and inspired and encouraged for something great; only do not always think that everything is vain if it is not some abstract thought or ideal.

Goethe, Conversation with Eckermann, 1827[6]

Footnotes

[1]For an example of the myth of Lethe, see Plato, The Republic, Book Ten, 620e-621b, p. 303 in the Bloom tr.

[2]All quotations from the section of Part Two not translated by Kaufman are from the following edition: Philip Wayne, tr., Goethe: Faust/Part Two, Penguin Books, 1959. As this edition does not include line numbers, all citations will be referred to by page, act and scene.

[3]For an earlier version of their story see: Ovid, The Metamorphoses, Book Eight, 11.670-724, p. 234-237 in the Horace Gregory tr.

[4]Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics, Book Two, Chaps. 6-9, p. 28-34 in the Apostle tr.

[5]Kaufman, Introduction, p. 11

[6]Ibid.

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Perception and Analysis in Understanding Being

Karel Bauer

We perceive through various mechanisms of the soul which we group together under the terms "senses" and "intelligence". Through the cooperation of these mechanisms we move toward an understanding which Aristotle posits to be the perfect harmony between ourselves and our environment. This motion toward understanding manifests itself in what we call analysis. Analysis is the process through which we interpret our experiences. For instance, in order to designate a piece of our instantaneous experience as an object, we must distinguish that piece from its environment, using whatever criteria we have accepted as valid for such a process. We assign the object a symbol, that is, a name, and by so doing provide it a place in our memory. Then we can begin to consider and discuss it. It seems clear that in discussion we cannot exchange actual experiences or objects, but only our representations of them provided through words: language is the exchange of words, not objects. Since this is the case, any understandings which we arrive at through discussion depend for their accuracy upon our understanding of how the names, or words, represent the objects being discussed. Can words represent the essence of objects, or only some collection of their attributes? Can we as readers understand the essence, the Being of an object described through mere strict interpretation of the words, or must we provide some factor entirely of our own experience if we are to achieve true understanding of what is being communicated? The latter is my assertion in this paper. I maintain that in naming and discussing an object we cannot represent the essence of its Being to ourselves, but only a collection of attributes representing facets of its Being, leaving some other part of us to provide the sense of the Being's essence. This may be the problem of analytical understanding of which I am aware when I read Aristotle. This disparity between our experience of Being and our ability to discuss Being is the subject of this paper.

That there are problems in trying to discuss Being is evident at the outset. As Aristotle puts it in the Metaphysics:

> And so it remains something to be looked for,
> from of old and now and forever, and thus
> something that offers no way out: What is Being?[1]

The problem of defining Being is the longest standing and deepest concern of philosophy. The problem, as I see it, is centered around the fact that our processes for developing understanding are built upon logic which is an analytical process of examination. Analysis is defined as: a separating or breaking up of any whole into its parts, especially with an examination of these parts to find out their nature, proportion, function, and interrelationship.[2] The breaking or separating of the whole, analysis, necessitates the loss of the whole as a whole in our minds, and this loss is the key to the problem of defining Being. When we discuss Being, or read Plato or Aristotle discussing Being, we are dealing with explanations of parts, or attributes of Being, not with the whole that is Being. But Being is somehow more than the collection of its attributes, it seems, in fact, to be beyond definition.

Aristotle acknowledges that some subjects are beyond definition in this quote from The Physics,

> As far as trying to prove that Nature exists, this would be ridiculous, for it is evident that there are many such things; and to try to prove what is evident through what is not evident is the mark of a man who cannot judge what is known through itself from what is known not through itself.[3]

How, then, are we to understand the attempts of philosophy to define Being? If breaking up a subject into parts is the only method we have for developing understanding of it, what is it that allows us to achieve an understanding of the subject as a whole? Or can we ever achieve such an understanding?

The recognition of Being simply as an unqualified, universal continuum does not appear to be the understanding that Plato and Aristotle are trying to communicate. Being is completely universal--the most pervasive, underlying fact of our universe and of any experience. As one author put it, "The [any] thing is, and it is, merely because it is."[4] Anything that we can call a thing partakes of Being, and partakes of Being to the same degree that any other thing does. All things that are, are equally. It is not the Being of an object that defines that object. In order to recognize an object as an object, we must see more than just Being, for everything in our field of perception is equally. In order to recognize a rock, for instance, we must provide some kind of definition which will allow us to differentiate its Being from the whole, continuous Being of our perception. If we do not make this differentiation, if we simply experience the whole of our perception without interpretation, we are experiencing something very basic, perhaps even eternal. But to what end is this apparently unsophisticated experience? The aim of Western attempts to define Being does not seem to be merely saying, "this is a universal experience", but brings the universal experience, somehow, into the realm of rational understanding. Thus to say, "Being is the primary factor that underlies all experience," is, in a sense, useless. As Aristotle says at the beginning of the Physics,

> For if Being is only one and is one in this manner, no principle exists at all, seeing that a principle is a principle of some thing or things. Indeed, to inquire whether Being is one in this manner is like arguing against any other paradox maintained for the sake of argument...[5]

The paradox that Aristotle speaks of is this: to state that Being is one and only one, immovable and universal, presupposes any analysis, and leaves the inquiry with nowhere to go. For Aristotle, understanding is equated with knowing the first principles of a thing; if we posit that Being to be so encompassing that it in effect has no principles, we've made it unknowable (this does not contradict the paper's position, which is, that though Being is the universal experience, it also possesses many aspects). We already are aware of Being in the sense of its universality. We acknowledge that universality every time we say that something is, which we do regularly. Our pursuit is not to recognize that everything is, but to understand something about that isness.

This is why analysis comes into the picture. In order to try to understand what Being is and in order to be able to talk about it, we break our experience of Being into parts, or attributes of Being. Perhaps the first act of analysis we perform is to select an object so that we can limit our experience of Being and consider an object as a whole having or representing Being, rather than Being enveloping us, for we have already seen that to unqualifiedly experience Being as an enveloping force is not understanding as we are here concerned with it. We qualify our perception in order to be able to think about it. We define it somewhat, by representing it

through an object. This allows us to consider it as something distinct from ourselves and from our environment as a whole; a necessary step if we are to be able to maneuver it as a conceptual object, and the first step of our analysis. From this point analysis continues, and we assign more definitions and create more distinctions as our attempt to understand or communicate increasingly specific ideas or aspects grows. We have acted upon our ability to separate and examine specific aspects, yielding specific understandings, but in so doing, we have lost a sense of the initial experience which prompted the whole reaction (analysis). This loss is inevitable: the experience itself was an instantaneous event. What we are dealing with afterwards is our attempt to represent and interpret the experience; to apply some kind of reason to it.

In his discussion of the "qualities by which truth is attained", Aristotle describes five distinct functions or regions of the mind, each responsible for separate kinds of understanding. They are: Pure Science, Art, Practical Wisdom, Theoretical Wisdom, and Intelligence. Four of these involve rational processes. The fifth, Intelligence, is a non-rational function and an element necessary to each of the other four; it is the function which apprehends the principles fundamental to reason, and is the function responsible for our perception. Of the role of Intelligence in our understanding, Aristotle says,

> It is intelligence, not reasoning, that has as its objects primary terms and definitions as well as ultimate particulars...For it is particular facts that form the starting points or principles for the goal of action...Hence one must have perception of particular facts, and this perception is intelligence. Intelligence, therefore, is both starting point and end; for demonstrations start with ultimate terms, and have ultimate facts as their ends.[7]

I interpret this to mean that it is Intelligence that is responsible for our experience of (perception of) an object or of Being. The quality of our Intelligence determines the quality of our understanding in experience; however, analysis of experience is a process of reason, not of Intelligence. Therefore our ability to connect these functions so that they may influence each other is crucial to the development of our understanding. If we are to grow in our understanding, we must integrate the information from our reasoning faculties into the function responsible for perception, our Intelligence.

We have seen that to bring Being from the point of pure experience to the realm of reason requires analysis. We have, in effect, dismantled our experience and examined its various parts seeking a greater understanding, a deeper view, than our initial experience provided us with. But what we're now left with is a pile of parts and our respective understanding of them. This is not the understanding of the whole that we were striving for. The endeavor is to achieve perception with understanding, not to perceive, then shatter our perception into a swarm of individual understandings. In order to do this we must develop the function responsible for our perception, Intelligence. Somehow we must effect a resynthesis of the fragments of our perception that will allow us to re-experience Being with deeper understanding of its nature.

A simple reversal of the process that allowed us to dismantle our experience and examine each of its parts is not sufficient to provide a recombination truly descriptive of Being. We must also provide the sense of immediacy that was lost when we represented our experience of Being as an object, in order to analyze it. As a simple demonstration of this necessity, let us consider the analysis of a fragment of a poem by E. E. Cummings:

> O sweet spontaneous
> earth how often have
> the doting fingers of
> purient philosophers pinched
> and poked thee...[8]

We may count its words (17). We may try to discern its meter, the individual meanings of its words, the significance of any misspelled words, its spacing--there are any number of criteria that we can apply in the attempt to reach a deeper understanding of the poem--and doubtlessly they all can contribute to understanding. But we cannot assemble the bits of information determined through our analysis into a group and claim that this assembly constitutes our deeper understanding of the poem. Reading a list of facts, however pertinent, will not give us the feeling that we understand the poem, and we obviously do not expect this. Instead, having analyzed, we reread the poem, and our new perception which results is a step towards the understanding that we seek.

This new perspective is not the culmination of our endeavor--the process of understanding is an ongoing one (for we say that no person knows all about anything). This is however a peak in the process; it is a return to the starting point, but at a higher level. The process here described can be imagined as a spiral path; in order for our understanding to grow, rather than remain at a certain level, we must reanalyze our newly-gotten perception, and the process continues, at times, very quickly.

This flux of our understanding is, I think, what makes attempts to define Being, and to understand attempts to define Being, so difficult. Written communication allows us to consider many attributes of Being, but minimizes the possibility of dealing with Being as a whole. At the beginning of the Metaphysics Aristotle says,

> The investigation of truth is in one sense difficult, in another easy. A sign of this is the fact that neither can one attain it adequately, nor do all fail, but each says something about the nature of things; and while each of us contributes nothing or little to the truth, a considerable amount of it results from all of our contributions...to have some of the whole truth, and not be able to attain the part that we are aiming at, this indicates that it is difficult. Perhaps the cause of this difficulty, which may exist in two ways, is in us, and not in the facts. For as the eyes of bats are to the light of day, so is the intellect of the soul to the objects which in their nature are most evident of all.[9]

The investigation of truth that Aristotle addresses here, he later in the same passage equates with the investigation of Being:

> Accordingly, as each thing is related to its existence, so is it related to its truth.

Aristotle's awareness of this difficulty of defining Being, coupled with his perspective on the functions of the soul described earlier, seems to be responsible for the structure of the Physics. The method of this book is described in its first chapter, and is equivalent to the process of analysis discussed in the first part of this paper. In Aristotle's words,

> The natural way to proceed is from what is more known and clearer to us to what is by nature clearer and more known...So we should proceed in this manner, namely, from what is less clear by nature, though clearer to us, to what is by its nature clearer and more known.[10]

Through this process we are able to examine aspects of Being, in the case of Physics, the Being of objects, without immediately having to deal with the overwhelming fact of their nature, the Being itself. An understanding of Being is what we are working towards and what, for Aristotle, is "By its nature clearer and more known." In order to achieve this understanding, we must analyze and, as we have seen, we must integrate the results of our analysis with our perception. This is an essential step in our understanding, and it is here that I see one of the major roles of the Prime Mover. As quoted earlier in this paper, Aristotle considers it useless to attempt to prove "what is known through itself through what is known not through itself" (this is not a contradiction of the process of analysis described above, in which the movement is from the superficially evident to the self-evident). It seems clear that this quote applies especially to Being, which is by its nature most known through itself. Hence Aristotle posits the Prime Mover as an attempt to represent this self-evident factor, Being. The Prime Mover is actually actualized, the purest form of Being expressible in words or the idealized experience of Being. Perhaps positing the Prime Mover allows Aristotle to keep a representation of the essence of Being as nearly available as possible while discussing attributes of Being. This proximity is definitely desirable when we remember that, in order to complete each cycle of our developing understanding, we must re-experience that which we wish to understand. The position of the Prime Mover at the end of the Physics is a strong one, for in a sense, trying to conceive of the Prime Mover induces us to re-experience. We can, it is true, attempt to create a sense of Prime Mover in our imagination, but this sense will not be effective in creating an understanding which will be in agreement with the world to which it is applied. For, says Aristotle,

> Imagining lies within our power whenever we wish, but in forming opinions [and understandings] we are not free: we cannot escape the alternative of falsehood or truth.[11]

We cannot escape having to apply our understandings to the world--this is what they are for. The Prime Mover is real experience, idealized. The only way we can really grasp it is to experience. We can go no further in analyzing Being from our old starting point.

Our capacity for analysis is what allows us to develop understanding; indeed, this capacity is considered to be the quality that separates man from the animals. The goal of any analysis we perform is the growth of our understanding, which growth depends on our ability to integrate the results of analyses with our experience. This remarkable process in which we are engaged, constantly experiencing, analyzing, integrating, and re-experiencing, is highly active (earlier I likened it to an upward spiral). It is possible that in my attempts to discuss this process, I have made it appear more static than I conceive it to be. This stasis is, in part, an inherent problem in written communication: a problem I hope to have elicited in this paper. As stasis is the antithesis of active understanding, writers of philosophy must be especially aware of this difficulty of creating experience through words. In order to understand what is written, a reader must bring to the reading something beyond what the writer can provide. As readers we must bring our own experience in such a way that is consciously applied to the reading. Only then can the synthesis of active understanding occur.

In the final part of this paper I would like to explore some implications of this active understanding as Aristotle has written about it in De Anima.

> Thinking, both speculative and practical, is regarded as akin to a form of perceiving; for in one case as well as the other the soul discriminates and is cognizant of something which is.[12]

As our understanding develops, we become aware of increasingly fine delineations between objects and experiences. Our awareness of the texture and detail of our environment grows. Initially, perhaps, we become aware of objects. Next, ourselves. Then our attentions shift to the relationships which exist between ourselves and the objects. As we become increasingly aware of the complexities of these relationships, the distinctions we are able to draw between self and object become subtler. It becomes difficult to say where "I" ends and where "it" begins.

> The thinking part of the soul must therefore be, while impassable, capable of receiving the form of an object; that is, must be potentially identical in character with its object without being the object.[13]

With the continuing growth of our understanding this potential identity of character is becoming actual identity. From relationships initially vague due to poor delineation, objects which appeared to become recognizable as distinct entities are again becoming less distinct because of the difficulty of distinguishing between mind and object. The process of analysis that initially seemed to be happening in our minds about their objects, now seems to actively involve both our minds and their objects equally. What seemed to be an interval between mind and object, we now begin to see as our experience of thinking.

> Mind is itself thinkable in exactly the same way as its objects are. For in the case of objects which involve no matter, what thinks and what is thought are identical; for speculative knowledge and its object are identical...In the case of these which contain matter each of the objects of thought is only potentially present. It follows that while they will not have mind in them, mind may yet be thinkable.[14]

We are drawing ever closer to a complete experience of understanding, an experience so total that we are aware of the whole of our perception. When this occurs completely we are aware of every facet of the object of our perception and of our relationship to it. There is nothing that remains outside of our awareness. Analysis has become synthesis. We have embraced, or been embraced, by all. At this point our thought becomes its object, the two merge, and understanding occurs in the truest sense. The object and understanding have become one, and as such, the understanding defines the object entirely. This, for Aristotle, is the culminating point of the mind for which we have been striving; this is Actual Knowledge. As he says,

> In every case the mind which is actively thinking is the object of which it thinks.[15]

Mind, thinking itself in the state of true understanding, has become equatable with the Prime Mover,

> When mind is set free from its present conditions it appears as just what it is and nothing more: this alone is immortal and eternal...and without it nothing thinks.[16]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Aristotle's Metaphysics, The Peripatetic Press, Grinell, Iowa; 1969 Trans. Hippocrates G. Apostle

[2]The Webster's New World Dictionary; 1972

[3]Aristotle's Physics, The Peripatetic Press, Grinell, Iowa; 1969 Trans. Hippocrates G. Apostle 193a3

[4]The Phenomenology of the Spirit, G. Hegel

[5]Physics, 185a5

[6]Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, Bobbs-Merrill Publishing, Indianapolis; 1962 Trans. Martin Oswald 1139b15

[7]Ibid, 1143b

[8]100 Selected Poems, E. E. Cummings, Grove Press, Inc., New York; 1923 #5

[9]Metaphysics, 993b

[10]Physics, 194a16

[11]Aristotle's De Anima, Random House, New York; 1941 Trans. Richard McKeon 427b18

[12]Ibid, 427a18

[13]Ibid, 429a14

[14]Ibid, 430a3

[15]Ibid, 431b17

[16]Ibid, 430a23

A Translation of a Chorus from Aristophanes' *The Frogs*

Mark Manry

Go now, all men! (str.
Into the blooming bosom of the meadow,
Dancing, mocking, playing, and jeering;
For there has been enough partaking.

Step forward! (ant.
See that you exalt, singing with noble voice,
The Savior Goddess,
Avowed protector of our city now and forever,
Even if Thorykion does not wish it.

Come now! Sing anew in praise to the harvest queen, the goddess Demeter; honor her with sacred songs.

Demeter, queen of holy, secret rites, (str.
Stand by to assist us;
Preserve your band of singers and dancers.
Grant me safe playing and dancing
The whole day.

Let me proffer myriad jests, (ant.
And many weighty sayings, too,
Sporting and mocking worthily for your festival,
And victoriously, to be crowned with the wreath
Of the victor.

Now invite the fair god here with hymns,
This chorus' fellow traveler.

Highly honored Iacchos, (a.
Most pleasant member found at the festival,
Accompany the goddess here.
And show that you have completed the great course
Without weariness.
Iacchos, friend of dancers,
Guide me!

For you have torn this my sandal (b.
And my ragged garment
To make me silly and shabby.
And you have contrived this
So that we may play and dance
Without loss?
Iacchos, friend of dancers,
Guide me!

On Poetic Recognition

David Amirthanayagam

The essential moment in poetic experience--both for poet and listener, though I will have to speak for the latter until I am a poet--is a moment of recognition.

Poetic recognition begins in a simple way. Aristotle, in the Poetics, explains that:

> The experience of learning things is highly enjoyable, not only for philosophers but for other people as well, only their share in it is limited; when they enjoy seeing images, therefore, it is because as they look at them they have the experience of learning and reasoning out what each thing represents, concluding, for example, that "this figure is so and so"; for if the image depicts something one has not seen before, the pleasure it gives will not be that of an imitation but will come from its workmanship or colouring or some other such source. (1448b4)[1]

We like to recognize what things represent. But these words are not as simple as they might seem: works of art, whether made with colours, tones, movements, words, sticks and stones or anything else, re-present objects or experiences to us. As such we can re-cognize them--that is, rethink them, apprehend them afresh, so that in some sense we see them for the first time. At least we never see them in the same way again. A professor once led me through the original Italian of a single tercet in the second canto of Dante's Inferno, at the place where Virgil has revived the pilgrim's wilted spirit with a story of three gracious ladies in heaven. Here translated, gamely but miserably, into English, Dante writes that he recovers:

> As little flowers, which in a frosty night
> Droop and shut tight, when the sun shines on them
> Stretch and look up, erect upon their stalks. (II 127-9)

I have many times seen flowers open up at dawn, but never again in the same way after hearing the music of Dante's Italian. Similarly, during Maryland's splendid summer lightning storms, I find it second nature--literally--that some of King Lear's tempestuous invectives, or perhaps Homeric epithets from Fitzgerald's Iliad ("Zeus who delights in thunder") weave their way into the sea bolts, seen and heard.

I shall illustrate the case where the "image depicts something one has not seen before," by invoking Homer and his olive trees.

At the beginning of Book XVII of the Iliad, young Euphorbos, son of Panthoos, the first to hit Patroklos though Hektor won the glory, comes forward to challenge Menelaos, who is now defending the body of Akhilleus' beloved. They exchange the spine-chilling taunts that so personalize the encounters in the Iliad--the elder angered by the younger's vanity and animal audacity, the younger made bold by thoughts of revenge for his brother, killed by Menelaos in the bloom of his manhood and marriage. But there is never any doubt as to the outcome; only listen to Homer's simile, as Atreidęs' spear hits home:

> He thudded down, his gear clanged on his body,
> and blood bathed his long hair, fair as the Graces',
> braided, pinched by twists of silver and gold.
> Think how a man might tend a comely shoot
> of olive in a lonely place, well-watered,
> so that it flourished, being blown upon
> by all winds, putting out silvery green leaves,
> till suddenly a great wind in a storm
> uprooted it and cast it down: so beautiful
> had been the son of Panthoos, Euphorbos,
> when Menelaos killed him and bent over
> to take his gear.
>
> (50-60)

Bernard Knox quoted this passage in his lecture The Iliad: A War Poem, and there pointed out that if one had ever seen olive trees in Greece, which only reveal the silver-gold underside of their leaves when swayed by wind, one would realize how apt is Homer's image, how subtle its pathos.

At the finely crafted close to the finely crafted fifth book of The Odyssey, we find Odysseus the great tactician on shore in Phaiakia, half-drowned, having long since shed the tangled sea-cloak of Kalypso and forsaken his raft, and having loosed Ino's veil; he deliberates on his course of action, how to find shelter from the cold and the wild beasts. Presently,

> He made his way to a grove above the water
> on open ground, and crept under twin bushes
> grown from the same spot--olive and wild olive--
> a thicket proof against the stinging wind
> or Sun's blaze, fine soever the needling sunlight;
> nor could a downpour wet it through, so dense
> those plants were interwoven. Here Odysseus
> tunnelled, and raked together with his hands
> a wide bed--for a fall of leaves was there;
>
> Odysseus' heart laughed when he saw his leaf-bed,
> and down he lay, heaping more leaves above him.
> A man in a distant field, no hearthfires near,
> will hide a fresh brand in his bed of embers
> to keep a spark alive for the next day;
> so in the leaves Odysseus hid himself.

The last line translates φύλουσι καλύψατο : so in one graceful stroke, we see what the nine years have been for him with Kalypso, at once a protective covering from danger but at the same time a shroud that hid his inner fire. And now, as ever, above and around him, the intertwined boughs of a deeper love constitute his true home and safety, and are ready at last to reappear: olive and wild olive, Penelope and Odysseus.

When he is finally carried in asleep to Ithaka, he is met on the beach by Athena in the guise of a shepherd, who later prepares him amongst her caresses for his upcoming ordeal with the suitors. The place where he lands is described in this somehow recognizable way:

> Phorkys, the old sea baron, has a cove
> here in the realm of Ithaka; two points

of high rock, breaking sharply, hunch around it,
making a haven from the plunging surf
that gales at sea roll shoreward. Deep inside,
at mooring range, good ships can ride unmoored.
There, on the inmost shore, an olive tree
throws its wide boughs over the bay... (XIII 96-103)

Two high points of rock encircle and protect a bay from the sea, so that ships can go unmoored within their arms; on the beach, an olive tree spreads its protective boughs. Is this an image of Ithaka as it ought to be, with its lord and lady present?

And then they meet, after the suitors have been disposed of. The decisive--but not the first--act of recognition between them involves a certain bed Odysseus made, and Penelope claims to have moved, much to Odysseus' surprise and anger. He himself describes how he made it out of a certain kind of tree:

An old trunk of olive
grew like a pillar on the building plot,
and I laid out our bedroom round that tree,
lined up the stone walls, built the walls and roof,
gave it a doorway and smooth-fitting doors.
Then I lopped off the silvery leaves and branches,
hewed and shaped that stump from the roots up
into a bedpost, drilled it, let it serve
as model for the rest. I planed them all,
inlaid them all with silver, gold and ivory,
and stretched a bed between--a pliant web
of oxhide thongs dyed crimson.
There's our sign!
I know no more. Could someone else's hand
have sawn that trunk and dragged the frame away?
(XXIII 190-204)

Perhaps we understand why, though exhausted, Odysseus' heart laughed at the sight of those two olive shrubs and his bed of leaves on Phaiakia. Their secret revealed, Penelope and Odysseus embrace, and re-knit their worn hearts' web, telling tales and making sweet love through Athena's magic length of night.

Now I have never seen an olive tree--or at least never recognized one. When I am at last introduced to one, I doubt I shall be at a loss for words.

Let us now consider a different, deeper kind of poetic recognition, not simply that "this figure is so and so". I began by speaking of a "moment", because I think this kind of recognition takes place in a moment. We remember, though, that moments are living, supple, hard to measure quanta of time: the literal moment it takes for Odysseus' foot to splash in Eurykleia's basin in Book XIX of The Odyssey involves many many lines of poetry, including a digression about a hunting trip, while very few lines--a moment of poetry--relate nine years of Odysseus' detainment on Ogygia.

To aid in this discussion let us enlist Aristotle again, this time from the Metaphysics. Here he says:

τῶν μὲν γὰρ ποιητῶν ἐν τῷ ποιοῦντι
ἡ ἀρχή, ἢ νοῦς ἢ τέχνη ἢ δύναμίς τις
(1025b22-3)

This is the Loeb translation, with my alternate readings in brackets: "For in the

case of things produced [poems] the principle of motion [first cause, origin] (either mind or art [skill, cunning] or some kind of potency [power, strength, force, meaning]) is in the producer [poet]." I could describe the moment of poetic recognition as coextensive with the apprehension of these ἀρχαί, whether νοῦς, τέχνη, or δύναμις, within the poem.

There are several reasons why I shall not. These three are well-chosen terms--I can't imagine three better--but I do not in principle find a categorical approach satisfactory. One good reason is that I am talking about the essential moment in poetic experience, and a reader never experiences one of these principles without one of the others. If one finds νοῦς or mind in a work, for example, perhaps in the form of an argument or a philosophy, this necessarily implies craft. After all, if a poet had something to say in the form of an argument, he would (or should) have said it, and not written a poem. Readers of Plato's Dialogues can spend a lifetime discussing the relationship between philosophy and art as expressed by these very dialogues, a form of writing which Aristotle mentions in the Poetics among kinds of mimes that have not acquired a common name (a447b8-9). Further, if a reader thrills to the power of force of meaning (δύναμις) enmeshed in a poet's words, he never fails to admire as well the poet's skill at his craft.

Finally, if one comes to know a work of art through the mind, craft and power within it--whatever their ultimate source--one has come to know something in much the same way that one comes to know a person. And if one does not subject people one knows to such a categorical analysis, why should poems one loves be so deserving? Think of Odysseus, for example: to know him in terms of νοῦς, τέχνη, and δύναμις is to know him well, but they are not in him as distinct characteristics rather he is a living, acting mixture of these elements, together with traces of other ingredients that will forever wreck our best-laid schemes.

Getting to know someone, well enough to recognize him or his handiwork, clearly involves getting to know oneself, because of the similarity in natures. The same can be true of a poem. The deeper kind of poetic recognition I am addressing often involves seeing oneself, or an element of one's thought or experience, reflected in the work or its author. The poem becomes a mirror; as such, it allows us to see ourselves, in great detail or perhaps in a glass darkly. And when it becomes a mirror, a poem can show us new things, possibilities hidden beyond our minds' corners, as a glass held to an open door can reveal great secrets. But the sun's unexpected reflection may blind us.

We should also note that the relationship between poem and listener is not one sided, for the poem needs us, in our attentiveness and love, to give it life. We understand why identifying with a poem, or with a character or with its author, is such a wonderful way into the poem's landscape, because one then becomes part of the poem itself--literally one of its own metaphors.

Dante brings this discussion to bear in unique ways on canto XXVI of the Paradiso. Here the pilgrim meets Adam, described metaphorically as an "animal under cover" (97). The first father begins their meeting by saying he can:

discern what you wish better
Than you can the things you see most clearly;

Because I see it in the true mirror
Which makes itself the image of other things
While nothing makes itself the image of him. (104-8)

Adam is usually taken to be referring to God as this true mirror. He then goes on to list the pilgrim's questions and then answer them in the wrong order. Now two of these answers have no Biblical authority; when asked how long it had been since he

was exiled from the Garden, he responds first by saying how long he remained in Hell:

> From that place whence your lady brought Virgil,
> I longed for this assembly while the sun
> Revolved four thousand three hundred and two years; (118-20)

and then when answering how long he had actually lived in the Garden, he relates:

> On the mountain which rises highest above the waves,
> I was, counting my pure life and the other,
> From the first hour until the hour which follows
>
> The sixth hour, when the sun passes meridian. (139-42)

Strangely enough, after Dante reaches limbo, "that place whence your lady brought Virgil," he spends the rest of the Inferno, save four lines at the end, in Hell; in other words, four thousand three hundred and six lines minus four, or four thousand three hundred and two. And the time Dante spends in the Earthly Paradise is from dawn until the sun reaches the meridian, or six hours.[3] Clearly, Dante (poet and pilgrim) is identifying himself with Adam in some way, and if he represents Everyman, so do we. The question forms, is this (heretical) identification meant to be hidden, except from the eyes of those who care to untangle his numerical knots? And who is a better candidate for being that "true mirror" than Dante himself, that cagey poet?

We must look further for a way of elucidating poetic recognition. If not Aristotle, then to whom do we have recourse in our still dark forest, where the "sun is speechless"?[4] Fortunately, we have a wonderful and neglected resource, provided by people who claim the most intimate relationship in all poetry. These people are translators of poetry, from verse in one language to verse in another, and our resource is their experience, as related in Translator's Introductions. I shall let them speak for themselves; see how my "moment of poetic recognition" comes to life.

C. H. Sisson, a recent British translator of Dante, describes an early encounter:

> the first sight of Dante, for one who catches a glimpse from afar, is of a tailor narrowing his eyes to thread a needle, or a gaggle of cranes stretched across the sky. That does not give you a style to imitate; it gives you a perception of the maximum which can be done, in a few words, to evoke a physical presence. The lesson from this is, silence: there is certainly no encouragement to produce a few more pages of verse for the next reading, or the next poetry prize.[5]

Later, we hear that

> In my experience, there is an identifiable moment when the translator can first say: I can translate a particular poet. Until that moment, all is uncertain...What might be called the subjective authorization to translate Lucretius came to me on the bus between Avignon and Tarascon...The phenomenon is as definite as that of writing a poem: more consciously prepared, perhaps, but finally as spontaneous. After that, the course of the labour before one is clear. Through whatever morass of linguistic and other scholarship you may pass before it is finished you know that, as the meaning clarifies itself line by line and page by page, it will take on itself that newly discovered form to which no further reflection can be given.[6]

These extracts follow in his conclusion:

> [The translator's] task, minute by minute and hour by hour, is not the invention of a beautiful imitation--and did not Remy de Gourmont say that the imitation of a beautiful thing is always ugly?--but the effacement of himself, so far as may be, before the text...The translator's mind is an empty room in which the verses float before him, surrounded as it were by what he has extracted, as possibly relevant, from the half-irrelevancies of dictionaries and the confusing propositions of commentators. The moment comes--sooner rather than later, later rather than sooner, according to the difficulty (for him) of the passage--when he sees through the original to the matter--the actual objects--of the original. It is at that moment that his own words form, and he has to take what he is given and to say what he sees.[7]

I feel that not only translators are privileged with this kind of experience. All good listeners strive for the same kind of intimacy of awareness and recognition that Sisson describes.

Allen Mandelbaum, in the introduction to his rendering of Virgil's Aeneid, speaks of a journey through his past associations with Virgil, and the influence on him of two other poets, Giuseppe Ungaretti and Dante himself, until he finds "the path that opens when the guides, for whom one has been grateful, fall away or say: 'I crown and mitre you over yourself.'"[8]

Robert Fitzgerald doesn't seem to write Translator's Introductions. I like to think that this is because he sees a translation of his as itself an introduction--literally a leading within.

It might be instructive to look at two translations. The passage I have selected is the closing eight Latin lines of the Aeneid. Aeneas has just recognized Pallas' armour on warlike Turnus, supplicant at his feet; here follow Allen Mandelbaum's lines:

> And when his eyes drank in this plunder, this memorial of brutal grief, Aeneas, aflame with rage--his wrath was terrible--cried: "How can you who wear the spoils of my dear comrade now escape me? It is Pallas who strikes, who sacrifices you, who takes this payment from your shameless blood." Relentless, he sinks his sword into the chest of Turnus. His limbs fell slack with chill; and with a moan his life, resentful, fled to Shades below.

Notice that Mandelbaum reproduces Virgil's sudden change of tense in the middle of the narrative ("relentless, he sinks his sword...). The present tense makes the scene and the thrusting act strangely present to us, but it never fails to surprise us as part of the narrative. We remember that in Homer, when used in the narrative, it is employed strictly in the service of analogy:

> collecting all his might the way an eagle narrows himself to dive through shady cloud and strike a lamb or cowering hare: so Hektor lanced ahead and swung his whetted blade; (Illiad XXII 307-11)

and:

> Conspicuous as the evening star that comes, amid the first in heaven, at full of night, and stands most lovely in the west, so shone in sunlight the fine-pointed spear Akhilleus poised in his right hand. (317-20)

My thoughts on the subject are not as mature as I would like, but this is how the question forms: by introducing the present tense into the narrative, does Virgil intentionally place his story, and send his heroes, into the world of analogy and simile, that translucent, shimmering shadow land? Here the spirits of the poet could remain undefiled, escaping the relentless run of time and history, which even got Rome in the end.

I agree this is fanciful; Allen Mandelbaum simply says "there is no uniform explanation for these shifts [of tense] in Virgil; but each instance counts in its place and is motivated there."[9]

Mr. Mandelbaum himself says the project of translating Virgil came out of his greater, overarching concern with translating Dante. Here now is a version of the above lines rendered by a translator who travelled Virgil's own route--through Homer:

> For when the sigh came home to him,
> Aeneas raged at the relic of his anguish
> Worn by this man as trophy. Blazing up
> And terrible in his anger, he called out:
> "You in your plunder, torn from one of mine,
> Shall I be robbed of you? This wound will come
> From Pallas: Pallas makes this offering
> And from your criminal blood exacts his due."
> He sank his blade in fury in Turnus's chest.
> Then all the body slackened in death's chill,
> And with a groan for that indignity
> His spirit fled into the gloom below.[10]

Fitzgerald eschews the narrative present tense in this case and appears to follow his own rules with regard to its translation throughout his version. One doesn't know what to think of this; should we recognize the special authority he claims, as a poet viewing a poet, to the point where it is up to him whether he translate verb for verb?

I have a final observation to make here, a confusing recognition, if you will. These lines are spoken to Hektor by Akhilleus in Book XXII of The Iliad, after Troy's hero, beguiled by Athena, has stopped his running and turned to face his pursuer. He asks for a guarantee that the loser's body be returned to his respective side. Akhilleus responds:

> "Hektor, I'll have no talk of pacts with you, forever unforgiven as you are. As between men and lions there are none, no concord between wolves and sheep, but all hold one another hateful through and through, so there can be no courtesy between us, no sworn truce, till one of us is down and glutting with his blood the wargod Ares...
>
> Now there is no way out. Pallas Athena will have the upper hand of you. The weapon belongs to me. You'll pay the reckoning in full for all the pain my men have borne, who met death by your spear." (261-72)

I hear an unmistakable echo of this speech in Virgil's final lines. Both Akhilleus and Aeneas speak of acting on behalf of their own, and--inexplicably--refer to themselves as instruments of Pallas, though one meant the daughter of Zeus, and the other the son of Evander.

So Aeneas is identified with Akhilleus in this final gruesome moment (at least in The Iliad we end with the funeral, not the death), and indeed he can be seen as a ruthless invader; Turnus is identified with Hektor, a native defending his

fatherland. But this only points up the incongruity that earlier in the poem, Aeneas was painted as a kind of Odysseus, returning, in fact, to his true destined home with a long exiled people, while Turnus, the frustrated suitor, when he enters alone into the Teucrian camp--"a tiger mingling with cowed cattle"[12]--calls himself "Achilles" by name.

My preliminary conclusion from this is that Virgil's relationship with Homer, poet to poet, is an essential part of his poem, but remains the hardest depth to fathom in The Aeneid's Roman music.

Some poems have it central to their experience that they be interpreted. I find interpreting the whole Iliad something like interpreting the Ocean Stream; Dante's Commedia, however, is overtly allegorical, and hence demands this kind of response. Interpretation is not recognition; if it is good, it follows from and is inspired by the moments of recognition and insight we experience. At its best, it is an attempt to find meaning and order, within and without, in the many visions a poem grants us; a nourishing activity for the mind which helps keep a listener's relationship with a poem--or another listener--fresh. Bad interpretation abounds, however; this can result through the imposition of an external order on the poem, or the too hasty spinning out of theories from a too limited vision of the object. The great sin of assigned analytical papers in literature classes is that they encourage both these latter.

Dante Alighieri of all poets has suffered most at the hands of his interpreters. He is only to blame in that he makes it clear his lines have two meanings, a literal one and an allegorical one. But this does not license an editor to flood an edition of the Commedia with commentaries, so as to make the poem inaccessible. Obviously. Some modern editions in English come with companion volumes of commentary, twice as long as the poem. At least three editions preface each canto with a detailed summary and follow it up with more notes than there was poetry. The poem has to be read like a magazine article (turn to page 16C for the next installment)! One gets the impression that Dante must be a "solved" writer, a poet destined to be "all figured out" by modern scholarship.

For this reason, Ernest Fortin's lecture, How To Read Dante's Comedy, was refreshing. He showed how Dante eludes his interpreters, how he hides himself, above, underneath, inside his own comedy. As many mirrors confuse the eye, so with Dante's Commedia; one doesn't know what to think, even about the poet's religious faith. Fortin cited many examples, including the secret identification with Adam I have mentioned. He also pointed out a scheme that explains the role of Statius, one of the pilgrim's three poet-guides, for whom Dante invents a life history: before he purportedly discovered Christian faith, Statius wrote two pagan epics (that is, he said the wrong thing and too much); afterwards, Statius hid his Christianity, he didn't say enough--he was a poetic miser. Virgil, the first poet-guide, was a non-Christian poet who wrote a non-Christian epic; Statius was a Christian poet who wrote a non-Christian epic; Dante, last in the trio and his own poet-guide, "crowned and mitred over himself", is supposedly the Christian poet who writes a Christian epic. But this setup leaves open a tantalizing possibility: the non-Christian poet who writes a Christian epic. "Who dat?" asks Mr. Fortin. He closed by revealing how in the last canto of the Paradiso, the anticipated allegorical level actually masks the literal meaning; the supposed Beatific vision, a description of the Trinity, fits as well, if not better, with the object which literally consumed Dante's eye sight: his own poem.[13]

I have my own response to these matters. What follows is my guided trip through canto XVII of the Paradiso, where Dante meets his ancestor Cacciaguida. I think something of Dante's experience came home to me as I read this canto. Perhaps I delude myself; I cannot be the judge.

If Homer's Odyssey is a poem of return, and The Aeneid is a poem about carrying in one's household gods, Dante's poem is a poem of exile, in all its salt anguish and longing.

In two previous cantos, in the sphere of Mars, Cacciaguida has chronicled the golden age and then the decline of Florence. Now, in the opening tercet of the central canto of the Paradiso, Dante approaches Cacciaguida, his ancestral father,

> As there once came to Clymene, to ascertain
> The truth of what he had heard said against himself,
> The young man who is still a caution to fathers. (1-3)

The young man is Phaeton, who came to his mother to find out for sure who his father was. It turns out this was Phoebus, the sun god; to prove it to him, as one version of the myth goes, Phoebus offered Phaeton any favour he wished. The son rashly chose to drive his father's chariot, which he couldn't control, burning earth, mountain and sky, before Zeus killed him with a thunderbolt. Dante's analogy is cryptic at best.

The poet asks Cacciaguida to explain the many prophecies he has heard while:

> climbing up the mountain which cures souls
> And going down into the dead world, (20-21)

and he responds:

> Without the circumlocutions in which people
> Were swallowed up before the slaughter of
> The lamb of God who takes away sins...
>
> But in clear words and plain exact speech ...
>
> Hidden but appearing in his smile. (31-36)

This clarity of speech represents the way in which the Christian λόγος transformed, fulfilled, and retroactively clarified Old Testament prophecy.

Cacciaguida tells Dante of his upcoming exile from Florence. He prefaces the hard words with this explanation:

> Contingency, which does not stretch beyond
> The limits of your material world,
> Is all set out before the sight of God:
>
> But does not on that account become necessity
> Any more than a ship which is drifting downstream
> Drifts as it does because a man sees it. (37-42)

The image of a man watching a ship drifting would be simpler if Dante had not described his own poem as a vessel, as at the opening of the Purgatorio; if we had not[14] been audience to the profoundly moving story of Ulysses' Promethean ship voyage; if he had not used Jason and the Argonauts as a recurring theme, which even finds its way into the final canto of his poem.[15] For the first time, the man and the ship are separated, if we think of the man as longing to be on board that drifting ship, for whatever reason--perhaps he is marooned and longs in vain for family and friends; perhaps it ought to be steered upstream--we see the power and subtlety of this image, as it bears on Dante's exile. The helplessness one feels when one is not allowed to participate is, I think, central to Dante's experience of exile. We remember the place Dante gives to those people and angels who, by their own choice, refused to participate:

> Heaven chased them out, so as not to become less beautiful,
> And the depths of hell also rejected them,
> Lest the evil might find occasion to glory over them. (Inf. III 40-2)

Cacciaguida tells Dante that he:

> will learn how salt is the taste
> Of other people's bread, how hard the way
> Going up and down other people's stairs. (58-60)

These words speak for themselves. I might only suggest that as Beatrice, a girl our poet once knew, came to represent more and more to Dante, until she became Divine Love or Revealed Wisdom, so perhaps did his exile from Florence take on deeper meanings for him; perhaps Dante saw in it the germ of that greater longing, the longing caused by man's exile from the Kingdom of God. We are less mystified, then, by his later identifying with Adam, the first exile from that Kingdom.

Dante goes on to hear many more things, things "incredible to those who will live through them" (93). Then he makes a fresh start; fearing that his poems might alienate him, not just from Florentines, but from all others as well, he explains to Cacciaguida that in his journey,

> I have learned things which, if I repeat them,
> Will have a bitter taste for many people;
> And if I am a timid friend to truth,
> I fear to lose the life I have among those
> Who will call the present time, ancient times. (116-20)

Should he hold back his bitter words, for practicality's sake, or reveal all for posterity? Of course we know what he chooses; Brunetto Latini, the rhetorician who "instructed...how man may be eternal,"[16] is eternally running around the burning sands of Dante's Hell. Cacciaguida says:

> let them scratch wherever they may itch.
>
> For if your words are objectionable
> At the first taste, they will yield nourishment
> Afterwards, once they have been digested.
>
> This cry of yours will do as the wind does,
> Strike hardest on the summits which are highest. (129-34)

We are reminded again of Phaeton, swooping low in his borrowed chariot. But if Dante is playing God for a day, he is only the charioteer; it is the sun that burns, not the poet.

Cacciaguida ends the canto by explaining that Dante has been shown

> Only the souls of those who are known to fame;
>
> For the listener's mind will not find its rest
> Nor fix its faith unless it finds examples
> Of which the root is known and not hidden,
>
> And arguments which are plain as day. (138-42)

In light of Mr. Fortin's arguments, this is clearly ironic. Dante himself, save for the unmistakable longing that is the root of his words' beauty, remains, as ever, far

from plain view.

We have yet to acknowledge the most dramatic of all moments of recognition, the one Aristotle mentions by name. These are experienced by characters; two standard examples are the "recognition scene" between Elektra and Orestes in Aeschylus' Libation Bearers (Sophocles' Elektra has a fascinating version of the same scene, and Euripides' Elektra provides a hilarious parody), and the moment Oedipus discovers the truth about himself in Oedipus Rex. Aristotle explains:

> Recognition(ἀναγνώρισις), as the word itself indicates, is a change from ignorance to knowledge, leading either to friendship or to hostility on the part of those persons who are marked for good fortune or bad.[17]

It is the second of three elements in a tragic plot, the others being suffering (πάθος) and reversal (περιπέτεια) ("a change from one state of affairs to its exact opposite...in conformance with probability or necessity."[18]). Though there are many types of ἀναγνώρισις--and we have seen two in Penelope and Odysseus and Aeneas and Turnus--Aristotle says, "The best form of recognition is that which is accompanied by a reversal, as in the example from Oedipus."[19]

Surely one of the most sublime of all recognition scenes in dramatic poetry is Act IV Scene 6 of Shakespeare's King Lear. The recognition takes place between Lear and Gloucester. There is no reversal; Gloucester's earlier blinding is a classic example from this play of recognition combined with reversal, for as he is blinded, he discovers the wrong he has done Edgar. To include this later scene in his Poetics, Aristotle would have to coin a new term: recognition through suffering.

We have been through the banishments and the slow descent; we have witnessed Lear and his poor naked train on the heath; we have seen the unimaginable in Gloucester's blinding. The schemes of the play's five fiends--Edmund, Regan, Goneril, Cornwall, and Oswald--are working themselves to fruition. And we have seen justice responding in a few noble souls: service in Kent and Gloucester, kingliness in France, conscience in Albany and valour in Cornwall's slaves. The scene is set for the final meeting between the two suffering old men.

The scene as a whole explores the power of the imagination. It is in part a man's imagination that determines his world.

We open with Gloucester's attempted suicide, from a cliff that is not there. I think it well to note that on Shakespeare's unadorned stage, there is no reason to believe the audience will not be deceived along with Gloucester. Edgar's speech about the cliff is superb descriptive poetry; until his explanation:

> Why I do trifle thus with his despair
> Is done to cure it, (32-3)

we, in our heightened imagination, are on the edge of that cliff, careful that we do not "topple down headlong" (24). The deception prepares us to question our own imagination and conception of what is real; if a detailed account of cliff-side sensations is all we need to believe the men before us are standing on a cliff, in what other ways do we fool ourselves? (The men are standing on a stage, incidentally.)

When his father falls, Edgar worries because he

> know[s] not how conceit may rob
> The treasury of life when life itself
> Yields to the theft. (42-4)

But Gloucester recovers, to be convinced again by Edgar's story, this time of a miraculous fall and the fiend whom he left on top of the cliff. The message here is

strong, however we feel about Edgar's purposes, and bears on all the speeches about the gods and fiends we hear in this play. Whether the gods are kind and just, or whether the world is full of fiends and beasts, can only be revealed through our own actions, just or unjust. We must take the world as what it appears to be, but at the same time it is our world to make; often it appears to others only as we present it to them.

Enter the king himself. He invades our discussion by living in his own world, gliding down from unseen heights, to dwell, for a moment, eye to eye with Gloucester. In his first speech, he is apparently hallucinating. George Kittredge explains it this way:

> In his delirium he sees constables who try to arrest him as a coiner of counterfeit money. The next moment he is a captain engaged in the enlistment of drafted men and in testing the recruits. Suddenly he catches sight of an imaginary mouse...Then he is a champion defying all opponents; then a captain once more; then a spectator at an archery contest; then, catching sight of Edgar, he becomes a sentry and challenges him: "Give the word."[20]

Lear plays six roles in seven lines. Yet he remains completely genuine: as natural as a thunderbolt, or a bastard son.

Gloucester says,"I know that voice" (95). Even without seeing him, he recognizes the authority which so masters Kent. "Ha! Goneril with a white beard?" (96) responds Lear. We are used to Lear's imbuing the world with his own pains and concerns; if Poor Tom has been reduced to a naked wretch, it must be because he, too, had ungrateful daughters.[21] But Lear continues:

> When the rain came to wet me once, and the wind to make me chatter; when the thunder would not peace at my bidding; there I found 'em, there I smelt 'em out. Go to, they are not men o' their words! They told me I was everything. 'Tis a lie--I am not ague-proof. (100-05)

Apparently we can be greatly deceived by others, even about ourselves.

But Gloucester is sure of what he has heard. Though the words make no sense,

> Glou. The trick of that voice I do well remember.
> Is't not the king?
>
> Lear. Ay, every inch a king!
> When I do stare, see how the subject quakes. (106-08)

Lear works himself up to a fever pitch of fury and revulsion; the world around him seems populated by demi-human beasts. "Give me an ounce of civet, good apothecary," he says, "to sweeten my imagination." (130-1)

If we must mark the instant, Lear's recognition begins with Gloucester's plea, "O, let me kiss that hand!". (132) Here is the first heartfelt attempt to make contact with Lear, to touch him, show a sign of love. And Lear hears it. "Let me wipe it first," he says, "it smells of mortality." It seems that Gloucester's loving gesture has united the two, so that they can recognize each other as fellow sufferers; as such they live in the same world. Lear tunes in and out--he calls Gloucester "blind Cupid" (137)--but the bond is still there:

> Lear. O, ho, are you there with me? No eyes in your head, nor no money in your purse? Your eyes are in a heavy case, your purse in a light.

Yet you see how this world goes.

Glou. I see it feelingly. (144-8)

Lear then begins a tirade against the two-faced justice and corrupted authority that plague the world. Again, the outward appearances deceive:

> Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,
> And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks;
> Arm it in rags, a pygmy's straw does pierce it.
> None does offend, none--I say none! I'll able 'em. (164-7)

Christian Holland, in reference to this speech, makes this revealing comparison:

> In the story of the stoning of the adulteress Jesus shows that he knows that no man is without sin. He therefore urges all of us to take our own sinfulness to heart when we judge the wrongdoings of our fellows. Jesus pardons, forgives the adulteress, and commands her to go and sin no more. Lear enables the adulteress to go on sinning. Since human beings are no more than beasts, and beasts cannot be said to be sinners, Lear refuses to acknowledge any wrongdoing on her part. Sin is nothing.[22]

Finally, Lear knows his friend and servant by name:

> If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.
> I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloucester.
> Thou must be patient. We came crying hither;
> Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air
> We wawl and cry. (175-9)

We have witnessed a grand but simple encounter. The world can deceive; to some degree, we all live in our own imaginings. But these two, Lear and Gloucester, though one is blind and the other mad, have recognized each other. By weeping each other's fortunes, having acknowledged their sins, they have managed, for a moment, to share the world.

But the gods must have their sacrifice. We must offer our best. Cordelia and Lear have learned the art of self-sacrifice, the one by nature, the other through suffering. They are nature's masterpieces. And what goddess demands this ritual, other than Nature herself--the goddess of this play--terrible in her magnificence?

The closer one gets to King Lear, or any work of art, the harder it gets to keep oneself clear, as to where the poem's world ends and the real world begins. From my experience with Lear, getting close to the play involves hearing it all inside oneself, becoming all the parts--hero and villain, king and subject, philosopher and natural fool. As the lines re-echo, the play begins to sound more and more like a piece of music, with its own inner meaning that defies interpretation. And the music of King Lear needs no translation. One simply listens, and returns to the world, full of words to experience it with.

We begin to see the dialogue that poetry fosters: great poems, like these I have discussed, are creations in words that reflect and reshape our experience; but their words in turn become part of us, the matter with which we ourselves remake and ennoble our lives. We remember these words of Aristotle, from his treatise On The Soul:

> Mind in the passive sense is such because it becomes all things, but mind has another aspect in that it makes all things[ποιεῖν]; this is a kind of positive state like light.[23]

My theme has been poetic recognition, and this is its highest form: recognition of oneself as poet and listener, maker of one's life and world, yet also audience to their creation, in the moments when we live.

Footnotes

1. Aristotle, Poetics, trans. James Hutton
2. The verb is καλύπτω, meaning to cover up or envelop for protection, preservation, or concealment (Cunliffe). I owe this passage to Jerome Downey, whose insight is at times as big as the rest of him.
3. Ernest Fortin, How To Read Dante's Comedy, lecture given Spring 1984.
4. Dante Alighieri, Commedia: Inferno, I. 60
5. Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy, trans. C. H. Sisson, Regnery Gateway, pg. 37
6. Ibid., pg. 39
7. Ibid., pg. 42-3
8. Allen Mandelbaum, The Aeneid of Virgil, University of California Press, pg. 336
9. Ibid., pg. X
10. Ibid.
11. Virgil, The Aeneid, trans. Robert Fitzgerald, Random House, pg. 402
12. Ibid., pg. 286
13. Fortin, paraphrased from memory
14. Alighieri, Commedia: Inferno, XXVI
15. Ibid., Paradiso XXXIII. 94-6
16. Ibid., Inferno, XV. 85
17. Aristotle, 1452a
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. William Shakespeare, King Lear, ed. George Kittredge, pg. 114 (note to 11. 83-92)
21. Shakespeare, III. 4. 47
22. Christian Holland, Edgar's Growth in King Lear, Energeia, Winter 1984, pg. 77
23. Aristotle, On The Soul, Loeb, 430a14-16

All quoted passages of Dante's Commedia were translated by C. H. Sisson; all the passages from Homer were translated by Robert Fitzgerald.

The Search for What the Memory Holds: Memory, Identity and the Uses of Things

Liz Waldner

OF BRIGHT AND BLUEBIRDS AND THE GALA SUN

Some things, nino, some things are like this,
That instantly and in themselves they are say
And you and I are such things, O most miserable...

For a moment they are say and are a part
Of an element, the exactest element for us,
In which we pronounce joy like a word of our own.

It is there, being imperfect, and with these things
And erudite in happiness, with nothing learned,
That we are joyously ourselves and we think

Without the labor of thought in that element,
And we feel, in a way apart, for a moment, as if
There was a bright scienza outside of ourselves,

A saiety that is being, not merely knowing,
The will to be and to be total in belief,
Provoking a laughter, an agreement, by surprise.

- Wallace Stevens

In book X of his Confessions, Augustine endeavors to say what he now is, not, as before, what he has been. His love for God kindles in him the desire to know his God; therefore he hopes, by confessing what he knows and what he does not know of himself, to make his soul a fit dwelling for that God who loves the truth. The attempt to say what he is comes as response to his longing for knowledge of God and

builds on his conviction that what he is and perhaps who he is may be discovered in light of his love for God. In general, knowing what someone loves may help us to understand who she is; believing we are made to love and serve God, Augustine expects to know his own nature better as he delves into God's. Thus Augustine makes a beginning by asking what it is that he loves when he loves his God:

> But what do I love when I love Thee? Not the beauty of bodies, nor the fair harmony of time, nor the brightness of the light, so gladsome to our eyes, nor sweet melodies of varied songs, nor the fragrant smell of flowers and ointments and spices, not manna and honey, not limbs acceptable to embracements of flesh. None of these I love, when I love my God; and yet I love a kind of light and melody and fragrance and meat and embracement of my inner man: where there shineth unto my soul what space cannot contain and there soundeth what time beareth not away and there smelleth what breathing disperses not and there tasteth what eating diminisheth not and there cleanseth what satiety divorces not. This is it which I love when I love my God. And what is this? [I asked...] (p. 208)

The pleasures which the senses make available are not those loved in loving God, but they are like them; they remind one of the thing sought for. The beauties of this world, subject to diminishment, dispersal and ravishment by time are pale in comparison to God who made them. Against the view that the joy we take in air and light, in having a body is full and final, Augustine levels the testimony of the pleasure-givers themselves: heaven and earth and everything in them bid Augustine love God and declare, "I am not He, but He made me." The pleasures of the changeable world are understood to be harbingers of an unimaginable goodness of which they bear tidings.

From the world around him, Augustine "turns himself to himself," demanding "Who are you?" Soul and body represent themselves to him upon his answering, "A man." It is the inner man, "I, the mind" allied with soul who, questioning the things of the world, is able to discern in their form of beauty the report of the outer man: not I, but He made me. For Augustine, it is this inner man who wonders at himself, pondering his memory, its force "excessive great" a power of his through which and in which he seeks his God.

As reason is set over the senses to judge of their reports, so God is "above the head of the soul". Reason enables Augustine to read in the loveliness of the creation--between its lines, as it were--testimony illegible to beasts and undiscerned by those mastered by the outer man, testimony to the existence of "one greater than I". Because he has avoided mistaking the thing made for the maker, Augustine's world, like a choirmaster, directs him in a rehearsal of the inquisitive mode: if not you, then whom do I love? Thus, allegiance to the inner man is requisite to the "rising by degrees" which is his pilgrim's progress toward God's metaphorically mixed locus "above the head of my soul;" otherwise he would have loitered unawares and discomfited among way-markers, signs, and images. By means of his soul, Augustine finds the right way; on this he finds the fields and palaces of his memory.

Every opportunity is taken to emphasize the expanse and amazing character of this treasure-trove found in the head of the soul. The search for God has led from admiration and inquiry "of the seas and the deeps, the whole air with its inhabitants, sun, moon, and stars and all that encompass the door of his flesh," to that door itself which, opened in answer to his knock discloses images of all he has admired, his admiration, and, wonder of wonders, himself. The stages of his journey, early and late, and souvenirs thereof, even up to his entry just made, are caught up and held for him--inside of himself. As Augustine somewhat defensively opines, it is as if the memory were the belly of the soul; the outside is taken in and stored

there. The more spacious the palace, the more numerous the mansions of this house, the more inexpressible its windings, unfathomable its depths, various its cupboards and pantries, the more wonderful the fact that anything therein should ever be recalled, the more awesome the realization that this great and strange power of remembrance is ours, part of our nature, a thing to be spoken of when saying "what I am." Since this power also bears witness to the yet greater glory of God who made it, the source and object (in true genitive fashion) of Augustine's search, fear, love and reverence for God increase accordingly. Awe in the presence of God and the search for him are at least furthered if not begun by wonder at his works, which include oneself.

In the wondrous cabinets of memory, then, we find two sorts of things: those which the senses bring into it from all sorts of perception, to be stored according to kind; and those "whereof we imbibe not the images by our senses," but have in memory the things themselves. The latter are perceived within, by the mind's experience of its own passions. Numbers and geometry's fissures are among these, as is "all, learnt of the liberal sciences and as yet unforgotten." They are "removed as it were to some inner place, which is yet no place." These lie unknown, scattered and neglected until received and ordered through recollection.

The images transported by sense are preserved distinctly; when one is remembering the look of an adobe wall on a winter's evening, the smell of the second floor bedroom at one's grandparents house in 1962 neither intrudes nor commingles. Despite occasional contretemps--a bevy of eager memories present themselves when only one is called for (requiring their dispersal from "the face of remembrance" with "the hand of the heart"); or the would-be rememberer is made to wait unduly long for the desired article while encountering various unexpected, inexplicable others--Augustine suggests that things go on here in an orderly way. One enters his storehouse, requests what he will, and it is fetched, with more or less dispatch as its cubby-hole is far or near, more or less swallowed by forgetfulness. The latter resembles a species of snow which accumulates with time, through every weather; gentle and diligent, it obscures and at last buries what it falls on.

The woman of the parable, having lost her groat, sought it with a lamp; one might say that lit lamp is memory: unless she had remembered it, she would never have found what she sought. Memory then, acts as a place holder, albeit a fickle one--a somewhat inconstant zero. Something there is which is not here, it reminds us, feeling "that it did not carry on together all which it was wont, and maimed, as it were, by the curtailment of its ancient habit, demanded the restoration of what it missed." (p. 221) Unfortunately for all who would be reminded, it can't be counted on to persist in its demand. Some count this a blessing. The tutor remembered Monday's meeting with his advisee until Friday; on Monday he found himself with the unwonted luxury of an hour before his next class, an hour which he thoroughly enjoyed, disturbed only once, as he stirred his coffee, by the familiar feeling of memory's suffering its curtailment: he was forgetting something. He decided it was sugar for his coffee, which he got. At 6:30 the next morning the sugar packet, transubstantiated, revealed itself to have been an appointment. Bad conscience or gratitude rose, thereupon, like a signal effluence of character. Thus we see the toll taken by the passage of time (which time ought to be paying, since it is doing the moving, making inroads on memory; memory might do well to add this claim to its suit, as long as it is demanding restorations) upon the figure cut in his memory by the tutor's appointment; it retained a recognizable face for several days, whereupon weathering so eroded its form that it was mistaken for a condiment.

It is possible, however, for memory to serve as an enduring standard for the lost, a flag waving Provenance, not lowered until the object of the search at last arrives and identifies itself as prodigal but true-born inheritor of that standard's device-whereupon that device is discerned. When something has slipped one's

mind--what, for instance, was that large-eyed woman-waif's name in Fellini's "La Strada"?--one makes attempts to bring before memory's throne the syllables sought. This can be something like memory's holding Cinderella's glass slipper and our proffering multifarious objects, only discovering it was a foot we were looking for when memory exclaims, Aha! It fits! (Lest we be seized rather by exasperation than by Augustine's admiration at such antics on memory's part, we may remark these slippers of memory's are sometimes very transparent.)

Sometimes, however, we have a little more to go on, a feeling for the rhythm of the name or for the sound of its vowels. Then it is like seeing that a foot is wanted, and stage-mothering our best friends, mothers, aunts, cousins and lovers into trying out for the part--go on, you're a shoe-in. Thus I bring before memory such essays as Dulcinea? Giusetta? Jucipetta? until I say, Aha! or give up. (Happily, memory is not like those kings who behead their daughter's unsuccessful suitors.)

The woman seeking her groat persisted until she said Aha, kept mindful of her loss and ready to identify the speck when found, meanwhile dismissing pretenders and imposters, by power of her now steadfast and scrupulous, not out-to-lunch memory.

One of the memory's more dependable characteristics, and perhaps most wondrous of all, is its capacity to serve as a chamber wherein one may hold court with oneself. The court, at least, will be there. In it, Augustine finds, he can confer with himself as he now is, or ponder himself in the various guises with their concomitant settings of the "Ancestor Augustines" that he has been. (Of these latter, those in favor, or disfavor--of especial note to the visiting royalty--are most likely to accept invitations; others incline to the impromptu. Still others may decline an interview altogether.) "A large and boundless chamber! Whoever sounded the bottom thereof?" Visiting there, Augustine knows he is surrounded by myriad slumbering things of which he is unaware (and some of which are he) whose awakening is the exercise of a power that he, its owner, does not comprehend. Hence that dictum remarkable in its somber and devoted astonishment: "Therefore is the mind too strait to contain itself."

The vast lumber room of memory, the head of the soul, recalls God's mindfulness of His creation, His attending to sparrows and numbering the hairs of the head. Heaven and earth and all that one could think thereon, besides what one has forgotten, are there to serve him who sits in the seat of the mind as the material of inference, hope, judgment, discretion, surprise, counsel, resolve, laughter and regret--a large and boundless chamber, indeed. A wonderful admiration surprises and amazement seizes Augustine:

> For we are not now searching out the regions of heaven, or measuring the distances of the stars, or enquiring the balancings of the earth. It is I myself who remember, I, the mind. It is not so wonderful if what I myself am not, be far from me. But what is nearer to me than myself? And lo, the force of my own memory is not understood by me. (p. 218)

This bewilderment--how is it that I, the mind, find myself in memory?--leads to another: how is it that I find God who is not in my memory? An examination of the difference between recollection and "learning God" leads to Augustine's conclusion that the search for what the memory holds is itself a sign pointing beyond the memory. At that point the importance of the remarkable array of memory' aspects and abilities is addressed.

As we have seen, recollection is that sort of remembrance which is not an image, but consists in the presence in the mind of the thing remembered. How do we come by reasons and laws, concepts like eloquence? We recollect them. Although Augustine does not, his explication and etymology do call Meno and Socrates to mind. "The mind has appropriated to itself this word cogitation, so that what is recollected, i.e.,

brought together in the mind is properly said to be thought upon." (p. 215) Refusal to have any truck with re-incarnation and a virtue that is the gift of a panoply of Gods may be reasons for his failure to remind us of the fair Meno and his would-be slave, the torpedo fish, who will again stir the memory when Augustine takes up the question so like Meno's: whence have we the idea of a happy life, which all desire, without ever having known it? Virtue, we remember, is not acquired through recollection; nor, we shall see, is the knowledge of God which is granted in the moment of learning" him. Let us then scrutinize some sort of happiness that can be learned. Prudence will stand us in good stead.

Like the numbers wherewith we number, prudence is recollected and dwells in memory before and after the event, inchoate in its deepest recesses before, near at hand after. We are ignorant of prudence until by conception we order and arrange its scattered components, thus marking or recognizing it for what it is. It is somewhat disconcerting to allow for the presence in memory of unidentified snips and tatters of an idea, languishing until the treacherous spark of conception animates it, only to relegate this creation to memory's caves. Yet the concept does not enter the mind--as a thoughtful effluence, say, commensurate with some "sense" of the inner man; its elect bric-a-brac are there already waiting. Apparently, it is galvanized, a sort of elective affinity provoking the arrangement of constituent bits into agreement with Prudence encountered in the flesh. We come into its presence and, Aha! Behold! That's Prudence, we exclaim.

Socrates, investigating this phenomenon, consulted "certain wise men and women, priests and priestesses" who sought "to give a reason of their profession," and poets who spoke by divine inspiration. By their account,

> the soul is immortal, born into the world and leaving it in death many times. Hence the soul has learned all things, and there is no difficulty in her eliciting, or as men say, learning, out of a single recollection, all the rest, if one is strenuous and does not faint, for all inquiry and all learning is but recollection. (81C-D)

As for the catalyst, the impulse toward recollection seems to be the encountering of difficulties.

Why is this so? It would seem that a full knowledge, or fullness of being, is primary, and ignorance like so many clouds before its sun. The soul "wants" to unfold, wholly to recollect the things it holds, thus renewing its acquaintance with the whole of the intelligible world--returning to pay a visit to The Forms. Difficulties keep it from its native place, prolonging its exile; hence they kindle its desire to see its homecoming. Thus, the slave boy possessed of a perplexity, divested of confidence because cognizant of his ignorance, is a slave boy possessed by desire to know. That favorite among the Emperor's New Clothes, that fashion time never renders passe, which moth hardly corrupts and no one need steal, namely, the fancy that one knows what one does not, in fact, know (which is reversible and may be worn as well as complacency: there is no knowing and no use trying to) is shrugged off in exchange for a Deianira's cloak of desire.

The truth of all things, then, has always existed in the soul, awakened into knowledge by the putting of questions to it. Questions are put to the soul when the head of the soul is perplexed. One's loss, one's ignorance is recognized. Knowledge is sought after and spontaneously recovered in recollection. The torpedo fish's sting effects a confusion, a torpor like that bothersome feeling that one has forgotten something. We sense a disturbance, a throbbing in the back of the mind, a repeated inkling. The brow wrinkles: what is this? The soul returned greets the world: Aha, aha, aha! I remember you. Furrowed forehead: on the trail. Recollection's nod: the lost is found. A laughter is provoked, "an agreement, by surprise."

Having pondered the ways in which lost things are found and considered recollection's recovery of knowledge, Augustine returns to his question, What do I love when I love Thee? His answer divulges that his love has been suffered as search, as desire: "When I seek Thee, my God, I seek a happy life." (p. 222) It also reveals his recognition that its converse is false, which is apparent only to those who "learn God," as it turns out.

At this point in his inquiry, Augustine echoes Meno: "How then do I seek a happy life, seeing I have it not, until I can say where I ought to say, It is enough? As though I had forgotten it, remembering I had forgotten it? Or desiring to learn it as a thing unknown?" (p. 222) The answer lies somewhere in between or above, encompassing and superseding remembering the forgotten and recollection. To arrive at the answer the inner man pursues that path which reason discerned and desire traced among the reports of the senses upon the things of the world. He who has ears to hear perceives that "when I seek God I seek a happy life" lies in the direction indicated by the earlier answer, "we are not he whom you seek, but he made us." It, too, points the way. The inner man "solves" the equation "seek God = happy life" when he comprehends that the concept of a happy life itself points to something beyond it.

As we remember, virtue was said by Socrates and Meno to be recognized but not acquired by means of recollection. The problem with seeking God is that he can't be recollected, much less acquired thereby. To be learned as a thing unknown, like prudence, he would somehow have to be present in memory, unrecognizable in the rags and tatters of the idea of himself. Although he does prove to have been with Augustine all along and in a sort of disguise, God himself is not present in the memory until learned. Nor yet, Augustine continues, is he among the images of corporeal things stored there, nor in the affections of the mind; nor is he the mind itself, being rather its lord.

The problem with seeking a happy life is that everyone remembers, loves and longs for it without having known it: "All will the happy life; no one altogether wills it not. This could not be unless the thing whereof it is the name is in memory." (p. 223)

The problem to end all problems is that seeking God is seeking a happy life: therefore the thing sought must be at once in and not in the memory. With the help of the inner man's audio acuity Augustine reduces this absurdity to a state of impending grace, to be inaugurated by an act of grace, the bursting of the surd, his deafness.

All indeed desire to attain the same end, but many fall short, deceived and distracted by semblances of joy. These semblances, lesser happinesses, are present in memory, are recollectable--and hence mistakable for him who made them. Just as Socrates and Meno agree that some desire what they suppose to be goods, although they are really evil, so Augustine maintains that those who seek a happy life in anything but loving God for his own sake--rejoicing "to, of and for Him"--rejoice in falsehoods. We may seek a happy life without seeking God but the desire that urges one is the mark of God's call. Neither the attainment of the thing in which "false" joy was sought, nor the presence of the thing itself in memory, end the search for a happy life; and this argues that we have not yet found what is wanting. Loving God for his own sake requires, first, learning him and this, as Augustine confesses, can prove a lengthy and painful process. Seeking a happy life necessitates willing it entirely; only then is it possible to learn God. Satisfaction with semblances of joy is a sign of partial willing.

Although one must recollect the meaning of the testimony of the senses before God can be learned, no accumulation of such knowledge will amount to or spontaneously convert to knowledge of God. The moment in which he is learned is God's gift. As it was possible for Meno to inquire into the nature of any of virtue's swarm by means of

recollection, so Augustine queries and ponders the created world while seeking its creator. In each case the seeker has a vague idea of the thing sought. Socrates explains this with his tale of the soul's previous visits to mortality. Augustine offers us the idea of a happy life which is a placeholder. Recollectable and desired, the idea whets the appetite for The True Happy Life since each desire satisfied only inflames a brighter successor.

In this way the happy life we seek in the senses' pleasures is sought like a thing forgotten: we are restless, something is wanting; we know to look for it in its absence and judge of the satisfactions found. However, nothing the senses or the mind offer will satisfy memory, the desires' keeper, for the thing sought, the truly happy life, discloses itself only to a humbled heart whose provenance is the unified will. Toward this disclosure the head of the soul guides us through false joys by means of the desire it tends, accepting no substitutes, unassuaged by the offerings of the outer man.

Information gleaned about God from the world induces an ordering of ourselves, a collecting of our wits and wills in preparation for seeing what no ready willingness on our part can make appear. The search is a prelude, initiatory. Augustine's is a God who hides himself; the seeker must wait for revelation of the face behind the veil of the idea of the happy life in his memory. When recognition occurs it is recognized as a gift, as grace. Muscular exertions of will are of no avail, necessary but insufficient exercises. Socrates declared virtue to be the gods' gift to the virtuous; learning God is God's gift to those who deem knowledge of him sweeter than honey.

What does Augustine tell us about the experience of learning God? God called, shouted, and burst his deafness. He flashed, shone, and scattered his blindness. Afterwards, he sees "Thou wert within and I abroad. Thou wert with me but I was not with Thee." God was present but unknown. Where did Augustine find him? "Place there is none." The no place in which God is learned is like the some place in which God was with Augustine all along: the will shapes it.

This place is created in a moment during which the previously incomplete will is aligned by a whole-hearted desire to know God. Then God makes his presence known, enables Augustine to note in retrospect God's abiding with him. He understands that the unresolved image from unresolved will had obscured his vision. Whereas the "miserable and ill-fated" of the Meno become so through ignorance of the nature of the good, for Augustine knowing is not enough: one must wholly will the good. Unfortunately it is as Pogo announced: we have met the enemy and they are us. "The mind commands the mind, its own self, to will and yet it does not." (p. 165) This, says Augustine, who knows whereof he speaks, is monstrousness. A healing of this split, however momentary, is accomplished in the moment of learning God.

Having learned God, Augustine, like the slave-boy of the Meno, is humbled, recognizing the extent of what he does not know, and smitten with desire to know more. Augustine's passion is greater than when he sought surcease of desire plunging amid fair forms; touched by God, he burns for his peace.

The two-ness of the mind, its ability to resist its own command, its guardianship of a lost thing which can't be found, thus leading the head of the soul on to the true object of its search, all recall and deepen Augustine's amazement at the varied identities and uses of memory. I-the-mind, the inner man, head of the soul, image in memory, rememberer, chamber wherein image meets rememberer and thoughts upon that meeting--and upon all else that has crossed his mind: this is memory.

To what end is memory made multifaceted? How are what conceives and what marks that conception related? It is possible to dismiss Augustine's perplexity as the effusiveness of a hobbyist or scholasticism. On the other hand, we may avail ourselves of an opportunity to recollect, bidding our souls god-speed. Thus to give

Augustine's peculiar and alarming metaphors their due--which is to say, consider them rather than remark on them as distasteful conceits, startling but essentially decorative figures--may yield some insight into his attempt to reduce a conundrum to a figure of accessible wonder.

If Christ were understood to be head of the mystical body all share, whose body all comprise; and if, in order so to share, one must crown the inner man king and declare him judge; and if that inner man were understood to have a spiritual body like Christ's, comprising and made in his image (once removed or twice projected, as you will), then it is not surprising that the soul, identified as the inner man, should have a head, that memory should be at its head, nor that the scattered materials of concepts-to-be should be found in a lodging suitable for One whose concepts, in fact, are being. As Christ is mankind's connection to God, so is memory the inner man's: in an upper room God "has builded a sanctuary", designing to take a room in our spacious palace for his residence. Thus memory is, for the inner-man-which-is-I-the-mind, the head of that mind--the mind's mind, as it were, a truly inner sanctum, a room with a view to an end: love of God.

This purposiveness of memory's activities taken as a whole, its final cause, is a paradigm for the curious teleological character of that constituent function, conception. Memory's semblance to packrat's den would puzzle the admirer of nature's famous economy were it not understood that its vast inventory is potentiality earmarked for its bearer's actuality, for Augustine's benefit in his search for The Happy Life. God will use all heaven and earth outside and all of that within memory to turn the inner man toward him, to incline his ear--in other words, to push him to make that effort to unify inner and outer man (also known as mortifying the flesh)--in preparation for God's bursting that ear's deafness. That we have memory is a sign that this hearing, learning God, is the true nature and end of human life, just as perplexity indicated obstruction of the recollecting soul's complete knowledge. Therefore, Memory as the stuff of self, than which nothing is nearer to us, without which we cannot so much as name ourselves, is the stuff of epiphany. Our sense of self, of character, personality, identity is developed gradually during the search for God, who reveals himself to whomever he will. Augustine says what he is and speaks truly in the light of God's self-disclosures, whether they be impending or accomplished. Memory is manifestation's medium.

As certain hitherto unnoticed odds and ends in the memory, unmarked except by their destiny (which in this context is to say except by God) are fore-ordained to concept-hood, so the entire inventory is dedicated to fostering self-hood without which the inner man has no ear to hear. By means of this slug's trail of personal experience and private history, an on-going collection of accumulated perception, thought, and emotion, we choose our next direction, next move. Decision, such as that to be free from the law of sin, is bound up with the will, with sense of self: with the understanding of identity in the context of human nature. This sense is developed in the interaction of a personal past and the present moment, which is made our own by virtue of our past's presence in it, in memory. Memory interprets "now" for us; dangling the carrot of our desire, it suffuses the present with our hope for the future. It's as if the slug's silver trail were each moment's expression of self, which, in memory's overview, marks a path with evidence visible only to the individual, a more intimate earnest of "things unseen" than the testimony of heaven and earth. In fact, it is just this string of memories that makes their testimony audible; by means of it we have intercourse with the world. Interpenetration of past and present in memory's chamber is the process of making sense of what we encounter, whose eventuality is the generation of self-identity and whose end is the encounter with God. As we make our way, each moment, the self is sloughed, its abrasion by the present countered in its conversion into trail, to memory's entailment.

Memory is both marker of the way chosen and source of the trail, urging the pilgrim along toward an end obscure to him. This trail-blazing has the feel of a thing half-forgotten, vaguely familiar, almost recognized: wending our way toward that which we desire, we travel a path whose origin is with us, in memory. Thus, its end moves as we do; arriving at the place of the desired we hear its call beyond us. We have displaced it. Hearing God's call to the soul, memory serves as a lamp unto the path, marking the last step and lighting the way for the next. Despite its attendant images of dim attic, dusty cabinet, dark cave and subterranean winding, memory is the light of the mind, for by it we are enabled to see what we have been, and thus to say what we are.

By analogy to Christ's position as head of the mystical body and as the way to God, the "head of the soul" seeks to make straight the way to knowledge of God. Memory, like Christ, stands as an interpreter, mediating between our experience in the world and the meaning of that experience. As an intercessor, memory seeks to bring these to an accord: the happy life is the life desired; the life desired is love of God. The soul is restless until rest is found in him. In this way memory serves as an augury of journey's end and a sign of kinship to God, to whom Augustine prayed at the outset of his undertaking, "Let me know thee as I am known."

What might such knowledge be like? It would be comforting to believe that God's knowledge of us included a mindfulness of our memories. Melancholy it is to feel that when I die, my dear memories will be no more. No one else remembers them as I do, no one else has them, no one else can know them, no one else will be me when I am dead. The attitude toward death of the solicitous self is a peculiar poignancy, a protective regret that these memories--so long and hard in the making, so rich and complex and, now one thinks of it, quite wonderful--shouldn't be allowed to go on absorbing and furnishing the world. The indignation is King Lear's at Cordelia's death: what! a horse, a dog have breath, but my poor fool have none? We are attached to it, fond; we shall miss it, this memory of ours.

But if God knows me, he must know my memories. Thus sorrow over their frail dependence on mortal us is changed in an inkling to joyful hope: all that I remember is with God, already is in God. Home is where the heart is; I am at home in my memories; my memories are remembered by God. My heart, my self, is kept a place in God's memory, a home in the house of many mansions. Nothing is lost. The world will be made whole. My memories are waiting there for my arrival, for me to claim them and be claimed by them at the joyful end of the race well run, with much exclamation and delighted reminiscence, mutual congratulation and grateful amusement: remember how I almost missed you? all become one voice--mine, identical with their sum total at last. Source of restless wanderings and covenant like the rainbow bridging "head of the soul" and Godhead, portent of and guide to rest for the weary, memory is a beacon, calling soul home.

What does it mean to experience one's life as a seeking in response to a call? Augustine peers back through time at himself, at his life, and pronounces, "I was ever restless until I found my rest in Thee." His conversion interpreted the meaning of memory's content. Stolen pear, Manichaeanism, Monica, Alypius, Ambrose--all are imbued in retrospect with the appearance of trial and error, with the urgency of search. A moment has occurred in which meaning became apparent. Like a golden thread shot through a dark fabric, it traced a pattern, in-woven, of revelation's design. Its glint is recognized now in the remembered and recast darkness of which it was part. Conversion's hindsight sheds revealing light on events which now by reflection declare themselves: see? We, too, were with you all along. Previously unnoticed in the context of the present, because discrete, not yet bound to like fiber in other moments, now this thread binds up and repairs the old garment of our days. Thus refurbished, our lives seem to fit, to have been made especially for us, here, now; and as we are.

This garment is fastidiously mended; each loss is restored by its incorporation into foil for that thread of gold. Past grief prepared Augustine for the moment of learning real joy. His painful search along a difficult way is redeemed by the understanding that the road was made dark and treacherous by the blemish in his own soul, by his not-altogether-willing will. In retrospect, pain is seen to have been a reminder of God's call, proof for Augustine of his fierce love. God was with him, turning his mis-steps back into the right way, using his error to lead him to knowledge.

Past joy is also reinterpreted; renamed sin, it is occasion for remorse, but as such, for present gratitude and praise for forgiveness and mercy. His actions were evidence of God's call, being befuddled responses thereto, and thus witness to his mercy. The fabric of his history is shot through with the meaning that flashed and shone when God scattered Augustine's blindness. Sight restored, loss is restored: he sees he is looked after. Every memory, every moment passed has been bound up into an infinite and all-redeeming Now.

The world has spoken to the seeker in an intimate voice words most fit--full of his desire's satisfaction--for his very own ear. He has been known: all along some One has been noting, keeping track, waiting for him. It is like discovering we have always had a mother who loved us; only our own waywardness had kept us from full knowledge and actual experience of her loving presence. She was with us all along; it was we who were not with her. She, in our seeking her at all times and in all places, was within, while we floundered among her witnesses without. Now that we have found her we are no longer lost. One moment's epiphany entailed adoption of orphan aimless moments passed, discovered to us their place and made them at home. These things were preparing a place for us, making straight the way at whose end we exclaim, Aha! This is who I was becoming! as we step into the waiting shoes which that loving Presence made ready. Safe, consoled, befriended, as one, we have learned the uses of the things of the world. We are at home.

"I am I!" we say. Memory, trusty guide and interlocutor, enables the world to yield us a life that fits us. In the twinkling of an eye, meaning flashes, gathered from and reflected upon the darkness of the previous moment's ignorance. Its brilliance illuminates the present, and marks it as ours. It is recognized as the destination prepared for by all our days. It is a mirror. We see ourselves in this bright element.

But what can we say about such a moment when it is not understood to be learning God, a gift whose acceptance marks us as God's own? What do we make of the event which yields reconciliation, solace, hints of home, but which is not identified as response to Augustine's God's call? Since this moment, referred to hereafter as the Moment, seems to point to "a bright scienza outside of ourselves" as did Augustine's creation when interrogated, it is natural for the Christian to ascribe to it evidence for Christianity. Since it initiates us into mystery, permits us to enter that element in which "we pronounce joy like a word of our own," we give it to religion. Since it allows us to become "erudite in happiness with nothing learned" we give it to the Omniscient. Since it is a breath of safe-keeping, hearth and home awaiting us, we attribute it God, the Father. Certainly we know a grateful healing, a respite for the heavy laden, refreshment for those who hunger and thirst--a mending of what's ragged. Jesus' promise of rest and peace goes right to the weary heart, but can it relieve those who bear memory's burden and suffer its thirst? What would such relief mean for them? How would their understanding of the world and their relation to it be altered?

Everyone lives with memory, with seeking and longing and loss; the experience of restoration is indeed a gift. Receiving it, we feel it has been given by one who knows our heart. Our understanding of the uses of memory and hence of the things of the world determines our relation to the world. We can put it into the context of

Christianity, discovering its use as beacon and beacon's follower, God shining and us finding our way into and finding ourselves in that beam which we follow toward Him. What would our experience of seeking and finding reveal in another context? Baudelaire's "Le Cygne" offers us an opportunity to find out. Who has given us this knowing gift, self and the present wrapped in meaning? Who calls us, and to what end?

"Andromaque, je pense a vous!" says Baudelaire as he walks through a city whose form has changed more quickly than his heart. His heart contains the city memory has built, a citadel of the self. Therein the city through which he once walked is kept, taken into memory. He walks across the new Carrousel, and suddenly his fertile memory bears fruit. The river swelled by Andromache's tears, the mirror of her widowhood's grief, has made fecund Baudelaire's fertile memory. The present is made to point beyond itself--to something in Baudelaire. Remembering the old Carrousel, Baudelaire suffers one of the Moments. Andromache's grief has made Baudelaire's fruitful; the thought of her is the water bringing forth and preserved in the fruit. What nourishment, what refreshment does it contain?

As Baudelaire crosses the new Carrousel he sees with his mind's eye that which is no more: the camp of booths, the shattered capitals, the hewn stones greened by their pools. The presence of the new place reminds him of the absent one, evokes "en l'esprit" its presence as memory. An inventory of sights remembered is scanned by the mind's eye; among the confused bric-a-brac it comes upon the menagerie that used to sprawl over the tiles there. There he saw one morning, under a clear and cold sky at the hour when Labor awakes, where streetsweepers raised in the silent air a somber hurricane of dust--a swan. Although the memory received and now recalls helter-skelter a record of time and place, light, weather, characters and activity, among these blue sky, dust cloud, waterless gutter and a swan bathing in dust stand out. The memory has marked these as self's own, capable now of speaking meaningfully to the beholder. Recognition has occurred. Memory, a Nathan who, like King David's, is no respecter of persons, has declared: that swan is you.

The heart of the swan is full of his beautiful natal lake. In a dry and dusty place, waddling over pavement on webs meant to paddle, dragging white feathers over rough and broken ground, the swan bathes in dust by a gutter without water and addresses a blue sky: water, when will you rain down? The present provokes memory and exacerbates the pain of remembering. The lake remembered is no more. It is inaccessible to sense, no part of the outside world, yet present to mind. The lake carried in the heart cannot be entered, its waters cannot wash away the dust or refresh the parched throat except in this experience of longing for it, of suffering its loss.

Because of the desert, the lake is recalled; the lake welling up in memory waters thirst, and "suckles grief," by incorporating, naming its own, those aspects of the present which need has marked--thus giving to us what we have of it, of solace. In this way identity is developed; the remembered and its elect in the present are bound up into self via need. The self in the present holds within it past selves and their passed presents. When something outside, something now present as an object to self touches what is held within as memory--as dust cloud touched the swan's lake--the remembered is brought to life in the present. This arousal is a claiming of the stuff of the self, identifying dust cloud as meaningful because related to and ordered by its natal place in the heart. Identification of self's objects as development of meaning allows the self to incorporate the outside, to "take it in". Identity is strengthened and its number of possible objects multiplied.

Thus the swan speaks to its own, out of its full heart, when it addresses a blue sky clouded only by the streetsweepers' dust. The swan's posture of reproach is an attitude of need: I am full of desire both because of the presence in my heart of this lake and for this lake no longer present and accessible in the world precisely

because it is in my heart. The swan is stretched by the lake in the heart from dry ground to cloudless sky. Its presence come to life inside defines him as a figure of longing, impressed by the remembered from within and shaped by its absence without.

Begging a "sky cruelly and ironically blue" for rain would be merely ridiculous were it not that from it alone relief is to be wrested. In his need for it the swan has all that he ever did and ever will have of it. This is ironic. He cannot help needing it; nor can he reach it. This is cruel. Need itself must blossom into all the recompense it requires. Only the cold clearness of blue sky can satisfy the thirsty swan; absence is made fruitful. This is the exile's sublimity.

The swan remembered is present to Baudelaire as a vision by which he is transformed. The memory reveals meaning in the present; in this case the revelation catches up memory itself. No longer "La, je vis", past tense, but here, now "Je vois ce malheureux, mythe etrange et fatal." The memory yields the vision of swan as exile, a strange and fatal sight: it bears like a contagion the revelation of identity. Seeing the swan's exile, he sees his own. Memory has brought the sight; by witnessing, it as a thing seen in memory, by looking on it in the present, he is transformed into an exile. Remembering the swan has made him like the swan: he sees what is not there. An exile, Baudelaire sees what is in his heart. He sees the swan in front of the Louvre as one might see the child's features in the face of the mother. In this case those features are discovered to be one's own, become so through one's looking.

This surely is a Greek swan, no doubt one of Zeus' bastards, mythic in its potency to reveal, fatal in its relation to us as ancestor perceptible only in retrospect. Its pattern, its story, its word, or muthos, is like Baudelaire's; it explains his present by impregnating a past moment with its image. Thus, as Yeats' account of Leda's "annunciation" has it, "burning Troy engendered there" is discerned (in the past rape) from the vantage of the present. This is a writing of history backwards, as must happen if it is to be made meaningful, using the present to give life and understanding to the past--in order to say what one is.

The swan's presence in the new Carrousel is something like the presence of Zeus-as-swan in the new Troy of the false Simois. It renders history as change allegorical, composing autobiography, an account not of discrepancies wrought by time's march on the future, but of identities perceived in retrospect. Something past is built up by the present to be its own foundation. That is, what is real is what is remembered. The present is the mother, nurturing the past, "suckling grief". We discern the mother's features in the face of the child which is born of her labor, her flesh and blood. The only sight we have of her is in the face of her child. What we know of the present is that which elaborates and explicates the past. What we have of the present is whatever the past, inspired by memory, needs in order to live, but lacks. In other words, we have a present to call our own thanks to our character as exiles.

The present city becomes allegory, its new palaces, old neighborhoods, and scaffolding encounterable, comprehensible and thus assimilable only as they refer to the self, the more enduring city in the heart, built of "chers souvenirs" heavier than stone. Walking among them we touch, we taste and see; we carry off within us an effluence, an essence which lack and loss of them inspires. They yield to us their souls; at last we are with them. At last we know them. At last we are possessed of a world.

Baudelaire in the new Carrousel like the swan in the old yearns for a past place in the heart. Baudelaire desires the place in which he saw the swan stretched by desire. Once there, in memory, he stands congruent with the swan and there understands: I am, like the swan, an exile, possessing by pain of its absence the past place and possessed of a self by virtue of this pain. He acquires a present by extension (like swan's neck) of need; need identifies self's objects, those ordained to make up self, by its arousal in their presence. Its objects are allegorical. What he

notices is what need points out. What he hears is what tells us about the past. Loss remembered identifies what belongs to self in the present. The present reveals the identity of the self by relating and furthering the meaning of the past.

The world speaks to Baudelaire in rhymes of loss. The memory of the old Carrousel contains an image of the rememberer and his loss. Now and Before are bridged by identity. Swan and Baudelaire and exiles everywhere meet in memory on the banks of the river of tears they share.

Baudelaire, then, like the swan is grieved and guided by the lost, by what is no more. Hearts full of a present which has dried like pressed flowers, they suffer loss's determination of the new moment's appropriation. Understandably the image of the swan is oppressive; he sees in its mad gestures his own. He, too, is wrung by its relentless desire; the fullness in the heart evoked by the present filling it with his need for what it cannot give him precisely because he needs it. His need comes from within and can be satisfied only there. To set there, to come within a thing must be memory--which is experienced as desire for its lost state as Present.

Need is our element, "O most miserable," the air we breathe. We thrive on need. We have no choice; without our gnawer, our desire, we're as nothing. If not sublime and ridiculous exiles, we become apathetic nobodies, citizens of nowhere. Because Odysseus' identity was so strongly determined by his desire to see the day of his home-coming, he could afford to deceive the Cyclops by saying he was "no-man." Without a like desire we cannot say, I am, let alone what or who we are. Memory consigns us to a life of seeking, drives us to ask the present for what it has supplanted, whose absence it signifies. Need rises like a smoke, conflagration of desire sending up signals of our incongruence with the present, lake in the heart feeding the fire. This smoke's particles congealed and constellated cover the present, marking with an outline of our desire what is ours, bringing it to stand before us as- what is not here. The things that are here we have only by remembering, in their passing into our memories.

Andromache, deine among exiles, is the form of the fruit of Baudelaire's recognition of self in the swan. His loss is swelled into fruition by their shared grief, a river that calls forth and keeps their tears. She is remembered as another for whom relation to and hence meaning in a new, changed city is informed by the internal gravity of a past not passed, an unbudgeable city of melancholy. The new Carrousel and the second Troy weigh upon those who hold within them their predecessors. Their external presence renders the memories they've vitalized insuperably private, inaccessible and inescapable. The remembered as present's referent is source of tears; as present it is the power which bends Andromache into her ecstasy of grief.

The sight of the second Simois is magnified by Andromache's tears. She sees in it both her reflection at the moment--"femme de Helenus"--and the context or support for that reflection, the first Troy, the true Simois, and the reflection's original--"veuve de Hector." The moment of ecstasy unifies these, wresting into agreement the forms of widow and wife. The "slower" heart suffers the impossibility of identity, the incongruence that memory, like the river, engenders and preserves.

Andromache has become a "vil betail," a pack-animal led from a fallen husband's arms by the hand of his proud enemy. Stretched between the two men, between past and present, she is burdened with implacable desire for what was rendered past too soon while bearing the weight of the present necessity. She carries her memories like burdens. The present carries its own weight, only weighing on us when and where we remember. Where we mark an absence within, there the present's touch becomes insupportable.

Andromache bent before the empty tomb is like Baudelaire oppressed by the image of his great swan: each is the image of the image before which she or he bows. Tomb and swan become allegorical. Andromache holds memory within as the tomb holds its emptiness; each marks by its presence something absent. As the emptiness within and

the space around it define the tomb, so Andromache is shaped by her intangible memories and the lack and absence to which they refer. The tomb is built out of memory's desire; so is Andromache. Each is present bearing witness to loss, full of what it does not hold. Andromache's posture, bent in tension between Hector and Helenus, burdened by the weight of airy present on the nothingness she carries within, is that of mediator, of exile, grounding memory with grief, watering herself with her tears.

What the heart holds is what we have of the lost. The blow struck us by the reminder of its absence stirs its memory, working it to ripeness. This fruit's succulence is the preservation and transformation of the tears that brought it forth. Tasted, it yields nourishment of knowledge, of fortified self-identity: by such fruits we know ourselves. Its flavor is bitter; it is ripened in the flaring of grief, solstice of that hot sun's season. For one terrible moment we are one in our longing with the longed-for. Very longing has blossomed into its own satisfaction, an "ecstasy of grief." The present is eclipsed by the ripe moment's flaming forth; dark and cold it is as nothing for us, stirring no memory. Memory itself rises and swells in us to fill all the shape of our desire. Resolution of the internal and external bring them to bear as one on the self, removing us for an instant from the cycle of need-engendering need. The moment of remembering belongs neither to past nor present. For us it is timeless, bearing us outside of time. Remembered and rememberer meet transformed "en l'esprit."

This moment of identification, the deepening and enlarging of self, restores an imbalance which is our natural state. Once passed it is felt to have concretized the present; the lost, so painfully present, are restored and re-stored with our experience of this restoration in memory. The moment's ripeness has burst, scattered and conduced outward, back into the world of the present. Collapsed, the fruit sows the seeds of self, laying claim to what will grow to be self's own.

Thus identification contains in the moment of identity with the remembered the transcendence of memory's pain as well as the seeds of pain's source, of its offspring comprising the present regained. In this way Andromache's "Simois menteur" is strengthened; in its drinking of the present it is all the more potent to grieve us again. If the river as symbol of loss, as witness to and evidence of the absence of the desired, is enlarged by her tears, so is the present in which it is so experienced. This is bitter fruit, but to be desired: the deeper the river the more fruitful the memory and hence, the richer the self and more meaningful the present. The Simois, then, however false, is not like a river of Dante's hell, encircling a repetition, a fruitless imitation of living. On the contrary, the wider the river, the wider the array of self's objects in the present: more of the world is our own--in which to walk as an exile. memory's "blast of the horn" in the forest gives the lost soul direction--and punctuates distance, revealing the extent of the dark wood it wanders. Our sense of self, of our relation to the world, is forged by such memory-stirring blasts.

When we hear this call we answer out of our experience, out of our identity which is never identical with what is present to it now, never belongs. The emaciated negress begging in the mud asks a wall of fog for the coco-palms of proud Africa. The mind is helpless, desire puissant. Living in accord with the ponderous city in the heart, she is bound by its necessities. Where are you, desired? Water, when will you rain down? we demand of the desert. Mad gestures--there is no help for it: this memory, this need, this voice is our own. Because we are given stones, we ask for bread. When we receive it we are bent and bowed like Andromache by such necessitous fare.

Because the name the exile has for herself, her "I", was given her by people and places not there anymore, she suffers their claim on her present, unable and unwilling to be free of them: they are all she has of who she is. Shun them and the present collapses into unidentifiable rubble like the detritus of the old Carrousel,

building blocks without an architect's design. The old Carrousel's shattered capitals and crumbling stones were appropriated and restored by memory's "plan". They were needed to make sense and self of Now. The absent whom we need and desire re-invent for us the meanings and thus the uses of things, adjusting Now to meet Then. We are the malleable joint suffering the alignment only to prepare, by our presence, its going awry once more. We "tettons la Douleur", suckle grief.

Were Andromache to forget Hector immediately upon his death, the painfully perfect fit of her days would be altered. We know the lost through memory's suffusion of the form of its absence, by nursing grief until it grows to press upon the shape of its absence held in memory, holding us tight against its absence in the world around. Like the tomb, we are sculpted by loss. We bear the imprint of the desired. We bear its likeness. Remembered and rememberer meet. This burden of so coming together as to be alike is memory's fruit. This is longing's recompense and the communion of exiles. Such painful accord cannot undo loss, yet on it the future world depends: it builds up of these accords self and self's world. Time's erosion itself gives us the stuff of a world. Consuming our souls in the coming together of Then and Now, breathing a smoky future, we are formed by memory's immense store of debris, by the accrual through memory of the ashes of the lost.

Baudelaire's thought passes from the swan to Andromache to the Negress and on to all who have lost what can never ever be found, who water themselves with tears, suckling Grief like a good she-wolf. Paris changes, his melancholy remains. The changing external city is, in a sense, the timeless if not the eternal; outside of us, it is outside of our time. When we mother grief, we acquire through time the personal experience that mingles the times and places of the external with ourselves. The city memory holds is mortared by identity. Once the present is so enjoined, its material claimed--this is my present--then the presents past in memory go to work on it, hewing and chiseling and joining, making it in their image. The external city, unalloyed with time, at large, not yet part of ourselves, wears away the already-fashioned. Memory harnesses this erosion, turning it to its use, using it to fashion self. We stand remembering between this erosion coming against us and the inertia of the past which, if left isolated and fixed in its grief, would not yield an "I" who can make sense of Now, thereby claiming it. Memory mediates between these forces whose interplay determines the development of identity. Thus we are strangely allied with time whose presence in our memories is their guarantor of ultimate obliteration, whose advent as portended by arousal of desire is accomplished in the search to satisfy it.

We depend on memory to make time's constructs real, accepting the unweildy present with hands guided by time passed, always seeking to accomplish what desire pre-figured and time proposed: homecoming.

We are given an inhospitable present; in it we find no chair familiar with our figure. In fact, we discover here the inexorable eraser of all our imprints. Memory goes before us to encounter the present on our behalf, to save a seat and warm a chair. Memory is Proust's angel Custom, making a habitable room of the world.

But while we are given this present, we are denied the past as equally present, though present it is to us, in memory. There its comfort of the accustomed is beyond our immediate need to be held; we can't sit in the memory of that old chair. Nevertheless its presence in memory is understood as the subject of an imperative: go home! You go home, you who know and need this very chair, find it! Be one with it!

So we seek it. We arrive homesick; homesickness is our native state, furnishing its native daughters and sons with homegrown amenities as souvenirs: melancholy, longing, lonesomeness--our inalienable suitcases. Our native land exists in our experience of the breach and lapse, discord and distance between the city in the heart and that city through whose heart we pass seeking it.

Sailors forgotten on an island, captives, the conquered--all are hailed with an old Memory's "plein souffle du cor." All answer to the name of exile, flock to Memory's summons, as do "bien d'autres encore." Not only those who live with great loss held by memory's terrible fidelity, but any who seek to make sense of their present while grieved because they cannot touch their desired, come to be numbered among the company of exiles. The hero seeking to embrace the underworld's shade wraps his arms around himself--foolish gesture, mad gesture, the exile's fraternal greeting. They are brothers to grief and related by it to others so related.

The oddly anti-climactic "an many others, as well" at the poem's end is like the failing echoes of the horn's blast among the trees. Memory's transcendent moment, the moment of the exile's "kinship", subsides into the ebb and flow of longing, into isolation. The roll call of exiles begun by Baudelaire's particular grief fades from individual, to group, to revery's all-embracing melancholy, its "pauvre et triste" mirror. He is again, as he began, alone.

Who then calls us? Memory calls us. Memory gives us to ourselves. Memory leads us into a valley of shades where we come into the presence of the lost. In memory's court where we are changed by grief at its loss into its likeness we become one with its memory. We instill into it our breath of life and it gives us in return our human life. Praise and thanksgiving are compounded with grief and reproach. Their ally, the exactest element for us, is Andromache's ecstasy of grief, a conversion not of sorrow into joy, but of joy and sorrow into an "I" unconstrained by time's narrow file, a self who knows and is known--as an exile. What is lost holds us, with its knowing arms, in an embrace of the absent, the company of exiles.

What we had and knew in a time passed is truly known and possessed when we are possessed of and by its memory. We suffer the thing we seek to know. Recalling it, we become like it, transformed by this memory's presence in our present, we know it as knowing us: it has come in response to our need for it. It has come to assuage our sorrow at its absence. It has come in answer to a summons written in grief from what has taken its place. It delivers us from a welter of presence, unmarked as Mine, interpreting for us its unintelligible formless address. The remembered arranges and orders that hodge-podge, mediates between the woven "I" and the stuff of experience, incorporating the undiscerned design of the moment, binding up with our monogram the wound its summoner has opened in the flawless flatness of Now.

Not memory as fact, as noun, as word referring to incident or to sight, but the activity of remembering, capitalized and old, sower of seeds which in us bloom into memories, calls us. It is a power, a source. We are patterned by it. It is an activity. We participate in it, making it our own in the ecstasy of grief. We are struck with passion; its touch sparks desire. It is an activity like thinking on thinking, an inexplicable going round, a spiraling which entails us: we are moved by it. We remembering, partake of its moving, the past recollected inspired, collecting and breathing life into the present whose second coming as memory initiates what is for us its real life and continues our resurrection. Each memory thus redeemed furthers our ascension to the outside-time and no-place wherein we stand one with our longing, and congruent with the figure of our losses. We raise, remembrance by remembrance, a body of self-knowledge into its unfigured garment, a waiting air.

Baudelaire's understanding of memory does, then, hint of a completion, a wholeness to be attained, just as it did for Augustine. Something is watching over, waiting for us; why else this longing, this search? How else should the world speak words meet and fit for us?

Even without the meaning-giving "speech", the resolution of fragments into a pattern-casting leaded glass of the Moment, the fact of our longing proposes to us the existence of a grail probably holy. That there is a lost thing we seek, something we remember we have forgotten says to us faith is being kept: the memory will not forget us; we are engraved on the palms of its hands. It has slipped our minds,

this word on the tip of the tongue, but it will wait for us. So habitual is the attitude, we forget it is that of searching. Our days are tinged with apparently native desire, aroused when we stray into the presence of the desired. The thing itself beckons, urges us. We say, No, not this, unable to say what it would be. We feel drawn; we follow; arriving, we sight it elsewhere. It is in our memory, it has become of what has been and yet we turn to face it as though it is yet to be, to be discovered at once, complete and whole. It is what we have of our living. It seems, thus, to be "not-I", outside of ourselves. We hear its call in the things of the world, but cannot discover the caller there.

In this way the things of the world point beyond themselves. For Baudelaire, too, a kind of outer self gathers the mundane material from which the inner gleans, gathering not evidence of, but the unseen itself--the stuff of self. The outer notes the details of the Carrousels prompted by the inner's longing. The inner is the seeker, sifting the wealth brought before it by the outer, for momentos of the desired. In each case the Moment gives access to a deeply inner self secretly wrought in the room of our days, whose continuity--recognized existence--is at once surprise and confirmation, "an agreement provoked by surprise". All along we have sought; only we are surprised to see what it is that we sought. In the moment of "Aha" is "Yes, here it is" and "What? Is this it?" "This" feels somehow familiar.

The inner self senses in the things of this world the presence of it lost, which are at once its progeny and its self-to-be. The memory of the swan belonged to Baudelaire; he had seen it. The memory was one of self's brood, but was held captive in the new Carrousel. That in the new Carrousel which touched on the swan hidden there was claimed by memory to belong. Chance released it. Chance revealed it. Exiles, sublime and ridiculous, are "idiotai", idiots, answering voices only they hear, recovering property that exists only when they are touched by it. They hold their hands before them like sleepwalkers; what is theirs must touch them.

When stumbling in the waking world upon last night's dream, we know a quickening. On the verse of recollection, a sense of wonder transforms us. We enter for a moment that element compounded of instantaneous participation in the dream with the present touchstone yielding it, thus displacing memory and bestowing a wondrous buoyancy on the present. The inner self senses this compound's presence, living in a perpetual state of advent. Always it listens, absent-mindedly heeding, turning toward--toward what? What moved it?

It may happen that we discover what called us. This feels like grace. This feels like redemption. We feel, for a moment, that we have arrived at a lucidity which raises us, effortlessly. An alignment, a resolution of attention yields an atmosphere of vast transparency. We sense mystery, privy to intimations of a world made whole. Disparate events, tergiversating, have eschewed time's rank and file to lie superimposed, revealing as would transparencies, outlines of correspondence.

The thing sought and revealed in the Moment is identified through and identifies the self. The "souls" of those the self has lost, imprisoned in objects, can call it because they share a name. The recognition of this kinship affirms the self and its place in the world. We feel as if two fingers touch, reaching from this world to another whose existence longing suggested and recognition confirms. In this Moment our past is caught up and shown to have spoken the words whose meaning we apprehend now. Our comprehension results in a rapture; we are raised above time, lifted out of ourselves. We feel we have, by participation in something larger than us, learned who we are. There is a knowing, and we are part of it and in these Moments we have access to that knowing and hence to ourselves. Thus we discover what we have desired and what our desire makes us.

This, too, recalls Augustine. How do I say what I am? I seek to discover what I love. In the Moment, identity is discovered as a particular relation to the world. Recognition of identity is portentous; its revelation determines the uses of and re-

lation to the things of the world. Thus the Moment's activity is world-making. In its raising us above time, allowing its interpretation to insinuate itself retrospectively, claiming past events as its emissaries, it is ahistorical and proposes that we, too, are properly more akin to the spiral than to the line. Its meanings spread backwards in a wave, obliterating cause and effect, washing from effect over cause. In the Moment we can see that all those precedents, those causes were this moment; they just happened to be scattered. Something about our presence, something in our nature keeps us from always seeing them wholly recollected, but we have the sense that there is a place where memories gathered meet as one with the rememberer.

Recollection is the paradigm. The whole world is memory's treasure-house. Memory gathers up the multifarious outside, extrudes it through self and grounds it in a Larger Than Self. Augustine read the sequence in the opposite order. One God through his people, created in his image, works to deliver--to create--a kingdom of heaven. All creation groans in this labor of turning the inside, Christ's kingdom in our hearts--out. Thus the Christian's relation to the mystical body will determine the uses of the things of this world.

Baudelaire interprets the sequence in another way, emphasizing our kinship with the "lesser" creation. Nature is a temple wherein we encounter symbols that look at us and do so familiarly, "avec des regards familiers." Here the puppets dance of their own accord in the playroom by night. We may on occasion dance to their melancholy tune, which we're apt to hum, absent-mindedly, while crossing the new Carrousel. We are one of them and all together, taken as one, we in our whirligigs, dervish-like, find revealed in ourselves the figure of a larger, yet like, dance. The things of the world act on us. Because of our presence among them we are swept up into the dance. They speak to us; because their speech is familiar, if confused, we can answer their overtures. It happens on occasion that we feel they answer to us: for an instant we correspond. Deep and twilit, the Larger-Than-I is unveiled.

Through suffering them and being moved by these things we develop identity and a sense of infinite. The very fact that the poets of actuality are outside of us supposes that they are kin to us, will be bound into the final cause, the shape of self to come. They correspond to something within us; we in turn answer to something in the Larger-Than-I toward which we live. Augustine dismisses the things in favor of the God they bring. They are throw-aways, career emissaries not properly lovable in themselves. Our kinship with God is stressed; strengthening this binding tie is the work determining the uses of things. Thus love of music for the pleasure it gives is suppressed; the words' kinship to The Word and music's place as an adjunct to worship are stressed.

Baudelaire, on the other hand, counters that what the senses bring to us is bound up in our experience of the infinite. Sense is not a vehicle abandoned at its destination, but is integral to the destination. There is in us sense which answers to color, sound, taste and touch; and mind, or "l'esprit". In Augustine's view, the former are poor relations, black sheep to be avoided if one would claim inheritance in God's kingdom. For Baudelaire, sense and mind are a desirable continuum, whose inseparability is the source of their transport which the sense of the infinite sings.

Each man would claim that the unity of inner and outer precedes the Moment, but for Augustine such accord is understood to be the inner man's conquest of the outer, whereas for Baudelaire each realm is heightened, overflowing bounds to intermingle. Baudelaire is not troubled by Augustine's pause wherein the complete will awaits God's visit. As sense and mind are a continuum so is their transcendence. Augustine's moment of helplessness and humility during which he waits for God is the source of his memory's transformation. Its emptiness, its need, are the perfect receptacle for God's presence. Only its pain is fit to hold true joy; thus past occasions of grief are filled with joy.

The finding of the lost requires the submersion of their absence in God's presence. What was dear is denounced by Augustine in order to widen the gap between inner and outer man, drawing inner nearer to God. Memory's grief is still, as for Baudelaire, the source of identity, but it is grief at sin, at offending and thus distancing himself from God. Grief over his loss of his mistress is drowned in joy of loving God. Some part of this joy is remorse at having dallied elsewhere, confused by less fair forms. The moment of conversion inhales not only all moments past to mark them with its reinterpretation but exhales interpretations of the moments which follow it. This is the working out of self. The capitalized--Travail, Douleur, Souvenir--in "Le Cygne" are present in Augustine's Confessions of what he is. In the pause before conversion they are stilled, stopped. The inner has vanquished the outer. Learning God, Augustine learns new uses for them. They deepen the rift between inner and outer. They split asunder what they had bound together, in order to bind anew.

Whether in Augustine's or Baudelaire's view, we are in the middle. Mysterious longing is our lot. We mediate between Then and To Come, between the made and the being made, outside and in, between many things and one, happy life and Happy Life. The inner man's body is a middle term; memory as the head of the soul is closest to their home, that head from which all souls flow. Through "un vieux Souvenir" the exile approaches home remembered; as its call fades his vision fades; he is lost in the wood once again.

Being thus in the middle we affect what we see. We see ourselves in what we look at. The inner man finds evidence of the inner man's existence. If the world points beyond itself, saying not we but he made us, it points in our direction. To see beyond ourselves we have to see through ourselves. When the world points, we are part of the vision indicated, for we are part of the pointing world. The witness to a Presence, allusion to One, is like our shadow; our own presence as an integrated and integrating one among the world's manifold casts it.

A sun shines in the moment of looking; when looking recognizes its shadow then it feels the sun. Andromache sees its glint on her river mirror; in its flash she sees herself, heart full of Hector and Troy, reflected in the present of the second Simois; Andromache in the river and Andromache on its bank are brought together. The sun is here is with her; she knows it in that moment.

Correspondence of self in the world, its shadow there, with the inner self who hears its voice and understands its speech yields a sense of an encompassing presence. From the private and particular, from the intimacy of a world which observes us with familiar looks, we are caught up into a sense of infinite things. The world has known this; it is the knowing temple, the portal and dwelling place of this Moment. We have been called into its presence by name. Because the world is kin, we make sense of its speech: it speaks with our voice syllables of accord, sounded by our presence and revealing our name.

A CONCLUSION OR TWO

We all make ourselves at home in the world by means of memory's mediation. Among us are those whose memory holds for them a reminder of another mediator who, by sharing in our memories, shares in memories' uses. This memory in the flesh is a friend.

The Shakespeare of Sonnets 29 and 30 was one possessed of such a friend. The friend sympathizes as "deaf heaven" is troubled with "bootless cries." His presence belies utter disgrace "with Fortune and men's eyes": here is one who loves me, who holds me in his regard; this is great good fortune. All-alone-weepings of outcast states are transformed by the happenstantial thought of the friend's acceptance of us

and presence in our lives, thus enfranchising and offering access to community. As one who knows us, sharing in our memories, mindful of our needs and hopes, the friend grounds us in the present, in an outer changeable world. The friend is a bridge to a familiar world whose presence there enables us to see ourselves at home in it.

Memory's grief is converted by the remembrance of the friend. When the remembrance of things past alienates us from the present, eclipsing it, remembering the friend restores the lost, clearing a way back to the present. In the thought of the friend, our grief catches on something external, refers us to someone who, unlike those who people memory, is not-us and is part of the present. The need born of memory is diverted and no longer gnaws at us; from a solitary descent inward, we are restored to a footing in the populous present.

The friend grants restoration by remembering us. Relieving our woe in the absence of those who knew us, whom we love and in the remembered presence of those who hurt us, the friend's knowledge of and care for us brings solace: we are not alone. We who remember are remembered; memory's burden is shared. The existence of the friend affirms and sustains our own loss-riddled existence.

Augustine, after learning God, had a permanent friend. His friend said, I will never forget you; his friend's immortality gave his words uncommon weight. His friend said, I am always with you, even to the end of the world. Augustine's friend knew his heart, for he made it. His disappointments and sorrows were shared with Christ who promised rest and peace for the troubled and heavy-laden. His happiness was magnified by his friendship with the God he knew to be the source of every joy. Friendship with this never-failing friend transformed the memory of his solitary seeking, revealing in them his friend's benificent presence. With him, the world which had been rendered two-faced by the split in the pilgrim's soul appeared whole. Befriended loss and being lost are seen to be questions of perspective. The finding of the lost sinner "finds out" all his losses, transforming their relation to him through memory's transformation. Once he is found, Augustine's "lost" are found. The press of memories can never oppress by their presence. They have been, along with Augustine, restored in an eternal present. Augustine's memory is grounded beyond this world, in his God. In the Happy Life there is no real loss. For the friends of Augustine's God, this world is not a vale, but a veil of tears. Behind it is the face of a permanent friend. Augustine never walks alone.

Baudelaire, as he crosses the new Carrousel, is quite alone--with the company of his memories. Only he bears them. Their oppression widens the rift between the city within and that without, strengthening the inner with pain come of the outer until it swells in an access of grief into access to the company of exiles.

Memory's grief is Baudelaire's "dear friend"; his "chers souvenirs...plus lourds que des rocs" abide with him, grounding him in grief itself--in the river to which all exiles' tears are tributary. Every exile has a friend in that river wherein he, like Andromache, sees his other self. Exiles are friends not with one another but with their grief. Thus all are related by this common friend in a fellowship entered into always and only "en l'esprit."

Such a friend does not share in and keep one's personal memories, but preserves them transformed and sublime as "Souvenir." A memory recalled led Baudelaire to Andromache's Simois; the memory of an exile led him to the exile's "home." Andromache remembered and no citizen of the new Paris led him through his old Carrousel to the bank of the river where exiles weep.

For Baudelaire, loss is inalienable and its character indelible. No transformation or realignment of the soul through a friend's presence alters loss's form or meaning. Loss itself, intransigent and untransfigured, leads him to memory where the exile's friend is found. Loss here is not restored but deepened. Its "unpublished virtue" runs deep in the cleft between present and past. The friend recalled and God's presence revealed lead, like Ariadne's thread, out of the maze of memory back

into the light of day. Baudelaire's friend is found in the heart of the maze; through his grief, enlarging and elaborating its intricacy, he reaches the no-place wherein he finds its river. There the remembered presses upon the rememberer its likeness. Through this "Travail" life is re-stored and restored to memory. Baudelaire enters into the exile's communion: he is one with his memory.

The friend Proust seeks is himself. An unknown Proust is hidden in a morsel of tea-steeped cake. Trying its taste, he savors himself. He is his own "dear friend" the encounter with whom in memory's chamber effects a strange restoration.

"What is nearer to me than myself?" asked Augustine. Madeleine and cup of tea come between Proust and Proust; matter intrudes, recalcitrant matter. Proust is a god who hides himself and seeks himself in cups of tea and the smell of varnish. He is an outer man and an inner; the outer reveals what the inner hides. Were all the faithful smells and tastes of things relieved of the burden of "their vast structure of recollection," Proust to Proust would be utterly restored.

> I feel that there is much to be said for the Celtic belief that the souls of those whom we have lost are held captive in some inferior being, in an animal, in a plant, in some inanimate object, and so effectively lost to us until the day (which to many never comes) when we happen to pass by the tree or to obtain possession of the object which forms their prison. Then they start and tremble, they call us by our name, and as soon as we have recognized their voice the spell is broken. We have delivered them: they have overcome death and return to share our life.
>
> And so it is with our own past. It is a labor in vain to attempt to recapture it: all the efforts of our intellect must prove futile. The past is hidden somewhere outside the realm, beyond the reach of intellect, in some material object (in the sensation which that material object will give us) which we do not suspect. And as for that object, it depends on chance whether we come upon it or not before we ourselves must die. (p. 34)

Recognizing the voice of the little lost Proust of Sunday mornings at Combray, Proust is filled with a "gaiety that is being," that element "in which we pronounce joy like a word of our own."

> No sooner had the warm liquid, and the crumbs with it, touched my palate than a shudder ran through my whole body, and I stopped, intent upon the extraordinary changes that were taking place. An exquisite pleasure had invaded my senses, but individual, with no suggestion of its origin. And at once the vicissitudes of life had become indifferent to me, its disasters innocuous, its brevity illusory--this new sensation having had on me the effect which love has of filling me with a precious essence; or rather this essence was not in me, it was myself. I had ceased now to feel mediocre, accidental, mortal. Whence could it have come to me, this all-powerful joy? (p. 34)

A genie of vapor freed from madeleine and tea, Proust past welcomes Proust home.

AN APOLOGIA

Proust is my cup of tea. By that I mean two things. His "Overture" to Swann's Way was my chosen essay subject; reading it recalled to me my feeling for the moments like his with tea and madeleine, and served as occasion for one of my own. Out of my

reading and thinking and remembering in preparation for my attempt, this paper, sprang into being. Thus, you have had before you its recalcitrant vapor, outwardly Proustless, and now arrive at its genius, the cup of tea:

> And just as the Japanese amuse themselves by filling a porcelain bowl with water and steeping in it little crumbs of paper which until then are without character or form, but, the moment they become wet, stretch themselves and bend, take on color and distinctive shape, become flowers, or houses or people, permanent and recognizable, so in that moment all the flowers in our garden and in M. Swann's park, and the water-lilies on the Vivonne and the good folk of the village and their little dwellings and the parish church and the whole of Combray and of its surroundings, taking their proper shapes and growing solid, sprang into being, town and gardens alike, from my cup of tea.

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