Erika Gottlieb.

THE "LONG-SHORT PROGRESSE": AN ENTERPRISE IN THE STUDY OF THE METAPHOR OF POLAR OPPOSITES IN BAROQUE AND ROMANTIC SENSIBILITIES

This thesis is a study in the relation of poetic style to view of life, an exploration of the connection between the poet's tendency for metaphor and his vision of reality. My argument is that a tendency for figures of incongruity (that is, paradox, oxymoron, the metaphorical fusion of polar opposites), is a characteristic phenomenon in Baroque and Romantic poetry, as illustrated in my reading of five poems,-- Donne's "Nocturnall", Crashaw's "The Teare", Marvell's "Garden", Shelley's "Sensitive Plant" and Keats's "Fall of Hyperion". I analyze the structure and effect of this metaphor in the light of a mystical-dialectical aspiration which I consider to be at the core of both Baroque and Romantic sensibilities.

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By

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INTRODUCTION

THE METHOD AND THE PROBLEM

The problem of this paper might be described as being on the borderline between literature and religion: its method uses insights relevant to both these fields of study. As a literary critic, I combine the techniques of analysis used by Metaphysical or Religious critics, and New Criticism. Similarly to the New Critic, I concentrate on close textual analysis of the poem: I explore the interrelationship of formal elements as the internal criteria by which the poem is appreciated and evaluated. Yet, like the Metaphysical critic, I also believe that close study of the aesthetic structure inevitably leads to the recognition of the poet's whole vision, that "impassioned seizure of reality," which is uniquely his own. Once this vision is grasped, it illuminates the aesthetic structure to the extent where strengths and weaknesses not apparent before become readily recognizable. Therefore, when talking of the poet's "vision of reality," I do not refer to any systematic body of thought, school of philosophy or particular system of religious doctrine. My kind of Metaphysical criticism does not make normative judgement derived from the "superiority" of any system of thought or belief. It rather addresses itself to the evaluation of the poem as a unity of creative intuition and form; as a unified work of art which is the expressive embodiment of the poet's vision of reality. Therefore, I claim that the aesthetic structure cannot be studied in isolation from the

poet's vision of reality, since such an isolation of vision from structure would deny the organic and indissoluble unity of the work of art itself.[1]

Put another way, my method is somewhat different from that of New Critisicm. While I do accept along with Mark Shorer that "technique is discovery",[2] I also believe that this discovery does not quite signify the ultimate achievement in the creative process. "Discovery" only amplifies the poet's creative intuition. But it is the increased awareness of his own intuition that bestows upon him a fertile technical inventiveness. In short, the process is reciprocal. I find that Mark Shorer, along with the New Critics, does not consider the creative process in its entirety and therefore he cannot do full justice to the definition of the critical process either.

I will define then my critical posture, as the creative combination of deductive and inductive methods, a combination which has an affinity with the creative process itself. Through the "close study" of the poem, the critic gains insight into the poet's vision of reality, his imaginative, intense grasp of existence, his unique union of attitudes, concepts, ideas, and feelings which, when understood, illuminate the particularities of structure. Such a "close study" of the poem is a contemplative experience as well as a critical one, insofar as it is an act of almost devotional intensity in which the critic enters into a rapport with the author's vision of reality and can thus meaningfully appreciate and evaluate the poem as an aesthetic whole. When, for example, I analyze "The Fall of

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[1] I am indebted here for concepts, ideas and even phraseology to Professor Audrey Bruné.

[2] Mark Shorer, "Technique as Discovery", Hudson Review, I,1 Spring 1948.

Hyperion," I treat the narrative as the Keatsian version of the Romantic myth, a myth about the artist who penetrates into the mysteries of the "Essence of reality" through the stage-by-stage maturing of his own poetic development. The fact that the poem is a fragment, suggests to me the breakdown of the myth, the breakdown of the poet's vision - a problem of Metaphysical dimensions indissolubly connected with the aesthetic failure.

In addition to pointing out the relationship between the poet's vision of reality and the aesthetic structure within the individual poem, I also assume that there is a similarly vital interaction between the vision of reality and the aesthetic sensibilities of entire literary movements. As the last two chapters of my thesis will demonstrate, one can approach the characteristic sensibilities of a literary movement in terms of the common features in the author's vision of reality. Therefore, when I examine the similarity in the sensibilities of Metaphysical and Romantic poets, I define this similarity as a mystical orientation in the poet's approach to reality. Among other characteristics, the mystical world picture can be recognized by the poet's tendency to describe reality in terms of the paradox, the oxymoron and the metaphorical connection of polar opposites. I argue that both Baroque and Romantic sensibilities can be recognized by the poet's tendency to use these figures of incongruity in full seriousness and that they are a literary device for the articulation of a mystical vision of reality.[1] I will prove that the

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[1] Dryden's "MacFlecknoe," for example, makes occasional use of the metaphor of polar opposites as a device for satire. He draws conscious attention to the incongruity in the verbal structure to point at the absurd, the ridiculous.

abundance of these figures, (except when the poet uses this as a device for satire) is expressive of the poet's deep concern with mystical aspiration.

Here I must add that when stating that the poem reveals a 'mystical' approach to reality, I do not wish to say that the poet in question is a 'mystic' in the strict sense of the term. Moreover, I do not mean that the poem describes what we could label as a 'mystical experience'. My thesis does not concentrate upon the experience of 'union,' a mystical experience which is given only to a few of those who follow the 'way'. I am not dealing with the ultimate 'result' of the mystic's process, nor do I concentrate on the expression of mystical 'union' in poetry. What I explore is a process, a mentality, a way of thinking and of reasoning. I study the operations of a radically dialectical process, which aims at an ultimately transcendental synthesis. I maintain that this dialectic is manifested in the workings of the "mystical" poetic temperament, reaching for its expression through figures of incongruity. Moreover, I explore the affinity of the mystical dialectic, particularly the dialectic of the <u>via negativa</u>, and the Baroque or Romantic poet's mentality. I also attempt to point out the relevance of this dialectical process in relationship to both the critical and creative process (as I have indicated earlier when discussing the dialectical interaction between technique and intuition in the creative process, and the interaction of deductive and inductive methods in the critical process).

Yet, the similarities of the dialectical method notwithstanding, I also want to draw some important distinctions between poet and mystic, as well as between critic and poet. Even if a poet shows signs of a mystical temperament, there is a significant difference between him and the

mystic in both his purpose and his activities. While the mystic turns to the contemplation of reality in order to achieve a spiritual unity within the self, the poet, even the poet with a mystical vision of reality, has to work out this sense of unity within the poem. Moreover, while the mystic may come to use certain words and verbal structures -- namely the figures of incongruity -- to express and approximate a mystical experience after this experience had already taken place, in the case of the poet it is the work of articulation, the composition of the poem itself which constitutes a significant part of the poet's experience of the *negative way*.[1]

If one would want to include the critic in the series of relationships, one might establish a hierarchical structure. While the mystic is striving for spiritual unity within the self, the poet attempts to work out his intimation of unity within the framework of an aesthetic structure. The critic, in turn, through a contemplative rapport with the poem, has intuitively and analytically to apprehend this unity through grasping the poet's vision in its aesthetic embodiment.[2] The link of these relationships is similar to a series of Chinese boxes: the mystic contemplates reality to achieve a sense of spiritual unity in the self; the poet strives for this unity in the poem; and the critic contemplates the poem to disclose the unity and power of the work of art to his reader.

So far, I have discussed in somewhat general terms the relationship

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[1] I am indebted for this to Professor Audrey Bruné.

[2] Following these relationships further down the road, there is a similar connection between the critic-teacher and his student, and so the series of hierarchical relationships can be continued, most appropriately to infinity.

between vision of reality and aesthetic structure within the individual work of art, and introduced the idea that there is a similarly vital interaction between vision of reality and sensibilities of entire literary movements.

Now I want to examine the issue which seems to be closely related to all these earlier assumptions, namely the psychological relationship between the poet with a mystical vision of reality, and the mystic himself. The existence of some kind of a psychological similarity between poet and mystic is a fact that both the students of mysticism and of poetry have to take into consideration. A major authority on the mystic's spiritual developement, Evelyn Underhill, is convinced that the analysis of the creative process reveals profound similarities between the mystic and the creative temperament in general:

> In the poet, the musician, the great mathematician or inventor, powers lying beyond the treshold, and hardly controllable by their author's conscious will, clearly take a major part in the business of per - ception and conception. . . . This is equally true of mystics, artists, philosophers and rulers of men. . . . [since] the great religion, invention, work of art, always owes its conception to some sudden up - rush of ideas for which the superficial self cannot account.[1]

Narrowing the concept of creativity in general to poetry in par - ticular, we find that the analogy between poet and mystic has been with us since ancient times, at least since the days of Plato. The Romantic critic did much to revive this analogy by emphasizing the profound simi - larities between creative artist and religious mystic, so that in her study of Mysticism Evelyn Underhill does no more than reaffirm an analogy of long and respectable standing:

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[1]Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Developement of Man's Spiritual Consciousness (12th rev. ed.; London: Methuen 1930), p. 63.

> Like all intuitive persons, [says Underhill,] all possessors of genius, all potential artists--with whom in fact they are closely related--the mystics have, in psychological language "thresholds of exceptional mobility". That is to say, a slight effort, a slight departure from normal conditions, will permit their latent or subliminal powers to emerge and occupy the mental field. A "mobile threshold" may make a man a genius, a lunatic, or a saint. All depends upon the character of the emerging powers.[1]

Similarly to the Romantic poet who emphazises the uncontrollable nature of Inspiration, Underhill affirms that "in all creative acts, the larger share of the work is done subconsciously, its emergence is in a sense automatic".[2] The Romantic poets, both in their poetry and in their theories about poetry, emphasize the mystical aspects of their art in the way they describe the creative act as an uncontrollable upsurge of emotions, and, even more significantly, in their views of the artist as a seer, a visionary, a prophet--an image which closely resembles that of the religious mystic.

Precisely at this point the need arises for clarification: I intend to refine the notion of psychological similarity between mysticism and poetry in general. I want to point out that while this analogy is preeminently valid for the Romantic or Baroque sensibilities, it is considered irrelevant or embarrassing for the poet with classicist or Neoclassicist tendencies. The classicist in point of fact often defines his own art as dialectically opposite to any notion of mystical intuition, and he would find the analogy between mystic and poet as beside the point, if not actually distasteful. From Ben Jonson to T. S. Eliot, the poet with classicist tendencies might indeed be recognized by his emphasis on craft, technique and good taste, and by his refusal to discuss any of the transcendental aspects of his 'craft'. Since it is one of the major purposes of this study to define the similarities between Romantic and Baroque sensibilities by contrasting

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[1] Ibid., p. 62. [2] Ibid., p. 63.

them with classicist or Neoclassicist tendencies, I will by no means ignore the argument of a classicist or non-mystical approach to poetry. I handle this question later on.

What I want to suggest now though, is the following. Some obvious differences of activities and purpose notwithstanding, there is neverthe - less some kind of a relationship between mystic and poet, a relationship which is especially significant in the case of the Baroque or Romantic poet. I suggest that this poet's mentality reveals some of the character - istic manifestations of a mystical aspiration, a mystical poetic temperament. In other words, I propose to define Baroque and Romantic sensibilities in terms of a radically dialectical, and therefore, ultimately mystical vision of reality.

And now to the nature of the specific problem: this paper is a study of the metaphor of polar opposites, the figures of speech that draw analogy on the basis of incongruity. Like Shelley's "icy flame", this type of meta - phor forces different levels of experience into a unity which transcends such differences. It unifies the opposite poles of experience by yoking together coldness with extreme heat, associating and identifying darkness with light, lowest with highest: it is a metaphorical construction which joins together a plurality of experiences on the basis of their polar opposition, a metaphor which connects contraries or contradictories.

Though apparently the result of a non-logical process, the abundance of this metaphor in the poem does not indicate a psychological ambivalence, ambivalence which leads to the confusion or breakdown of the aesthetic structure. On the contrary, I see this metaphor as the appropriate device insofar as it leads toward and becomes integral part of the unity of the poem.

I study the metaphor of polar opposites, a figure based on incongruous connections, because I am interested in the problem presented by this non-logical, seemingly weird manner of association, and wish to explore some of its logical, linguistic and metaphysical implications in specific poems.

The central 'argument' of my thesis could be put in the following points:

1. I find that the study of poets who use this metaphorical construction consistently, demonstrates the common tendency of these poets to think dialectically, in terms of thesis and antithesis, that is, through the continous juxtaposition of opposites.

2. I also believe that there is a discernible psychological motivation behind such a consistently dialectical process: the tendency for the polarization of extreme opposites is motivated by a desire for the ultimate fusion or unification of these opposites.

3. Furthermore, I suggest that the desire for unification also motivates the mystical "dialectic of concepts," particularly well illustrated in the case of the _via negativa_. In the dialectical movement which juxtaposes Self and Selflessness, Finite and Infinite, Time and Timelessness -- the negative mystic moves towards the mystical "coincidence of opposites," a progression motivated by the laws of a mystical logic, remarkably different from the laws of classical logic.

In order to test the correlation between these three points, I propose to examine what I consider literary manifestations of this mystical dialectic. Through this examination I want to show that

(1) The metaphor of polar opposites is the embodiment of a vision

of reality which has some significantly 'mystical' aspirations;

(2) The characteristics of this vision can be recognized with a high degree of consistency throughout the whole fabric of the aesthetic experience, (a) in the structure of the whole poem, (b) in the pattern of the images, and (c) in the construction of the individual metaphor;

(3) The mystical element in the poet's vision of reality is a significant common denominator in Baroque and Romantic sensibilities.

To recapture the problem and method of this thesis: I want to examine the Baroque and Romantic poet's mentality, his characteristic vision of reality, by examining some of the characteristic features of his use of figurative language. I want to prove that the poet's tendency to use figures of incongruity is the expression of a dialectical thought process. I suggest that some significant differences between poet and mystic notwithstanding, the plethora of metaphor of polar opposites reveals a psychic process in the poet which is similar to the dialectical process followed by the negative mystic in the _via negativa_. Through analyzing five different poems, I shall demonstrate that the metaphorical fusion of opposites is the embodiment of a dialectical thought process, closely reminiscent of the mystical dialectics which proceed through juxtaposition of such opposites as Self and Absolute, Time and Timelessness, Internal and External, Successive and Simultaneous. I argue that the poet's dialectical thought process is expressive of a mystical aspiration, because the tendency for the paradoxical juxtaposition of opposites aims ultimately at the total experience of reconciling this contradiction in a mystical "coincidence of opposites". I maintain that the poet's consistent use of figures of incongruity is motivated by a desire for the unification of

opposites, a union which is no longer incongruous when examined in terms of the laws of mystical logic, laws which are radically different from those of rational, classical logic.

Since this paper deals with a problem approached through literary analysis, my argument does not aim at 'scientific' proof formulated by the process of logical syllogism. I do not even attempt to present my conclusions as a kind of 'scientific' proof: I believe that such a proof should be available and desirable only for a scientific -- not a literary -- discourse. Since I propose to examine a set of correlations I find relevant to poetry, I shall proceed through the analysis of poems, testing the validity of these correlations. Therefore, the only proof I expect will be a proof by association. If I succeed in demonstrating the connection between a strongly mystical element in Baroque and Romantic sensibilities and the fact that these sensibilities come through to us as a dialectical thought process conveyed by figures of incongruity -- such a demonstration will be sufficent proof of my central argument.

Moreover, I believe that if I succeed in showing the connection between a poet's mystical vision of reality and the centrality of the metaphor of polar opposites in his aesthetic structure, through an analysis by association, I shall have also justified my understanding of the way in which the critical undertaking is like the poetic enterprise.[1]

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[1] I am indebted for this to Professor Audrey Bruné.

PART I

VISION OF REALITY AND STRUCTURE OF METAPHOR

CHAPTER I

POETRY AS THE UNITY OF EXPRESSIVENESS AND MEANING: THE CLASSICAL METAPHOR OF SIMILARITY, THE "MYSTICAL" METAPHOR OF POLAR OPPOSITES

Before I could introduce the central argument of this thesis which deals with a particular aspect of figurative language, it is necessary to determine the major premises of my approach to literature and my views on poetic language. Therefore, in this chapter I will define my position, by discussing such issues as the relationship between thought and emotion, expressiveness and meaning, vision of reality and aesthetic structure.

Ever since the great advance of science in the early 19th century, critics have felt compelled to justify the existence of poetry against that of science. As part of their strategy, they have sharply differentiated the language of poetry from the language of logical discourse. The basic differentiation has been the assumption that the language of logical discourse aims at conveying "information" and at making a "statement", while the language of poetry follows an entire different path towards "emotive utterance". Most schools of criticism would agree that this non-logical, emotive quality in poetry which eludes the laws of logic, is really the inherent quality of figurative language, of the metaphorical way of thinking.

However, once the distinction is made, even the author of the terms that draw sharp differences between "communicative statement" and "emotive

utterance" has to make an important modification. "Metaphor," says I. A. Richards, is the "omnipresent principle"[1] of language, and it should by no means be treated as a deviation from normal linguistic practices. The "leg" of the chair, the "foot" of the mountain, and the"neck" of the bottle preserve the evidence of metaphorical processes that have been organically absorbed into the everyday language of communication. It is only after assimilation into the language that they become "faded," "worn-out" or "dead" metaphor.

In spite of admitting the presence of metaphorical connections in the language of communication, Richards believes that there is an insurmountable difference between "scientific" or "prose" use as opposed to "poetic" use of the metaphor. He asserts that in poetry "there are few metaphors whose effect, if carefully examined, can be traced to the logical relations involved".[2] His seperating the "poetic" from the "scientific" metaphor presents the same kind of dichotomy between logic and emotion as does his distinction between the language of"communication" and the "emotive utterance" of poetry.

Yet, many of the major authors, critics and linguists of all periods, have regarded the poet as the re-vitalizer of the "language of communication," the discoverer of new and valid connections between various aspects of reality. Whether or not the critic approves of Platonic terminology, he will probably agree with Shelley on the unique power of the poet to articulate

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[1]I. A. Richards, Philosophy of Rhetoric (New York: Harcourt, 1936), p. 117.

[2]I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism (New York: Harcourt, 1925), p. 240.

his vision of reality, his unique ability to "unveil the permanent analogy of things by images which participate in the life of truth".[1] The language of poetry, says Shelley, is:

> . . . vitally metaphorical; that is, it makes the before unapprehended relations of things and perpetuates their apprehension, until the words which represent them become, through time, signs for portions or classes of thought instead of pictures for integral thoughts; and then if no new poets should arise to create afresh the associations which have been thus disorganized, language will be dead to all nobler purposes of human intercourse.[2]

Once properly understood and accepted by an audience, the "vitally meta - phorical" language of a poet will be absorbed into the texture of everyday language, and, eventually join the pool of "dead" metaphors of ordinary language. These metaphors, says Shelley, no longer signify "pictures of integral thoughts". Consequently, a new poet will appear and repeat the process of linguistic rejuvenation. Throughout this process, the "vitally metaphorical" language of the poet enlarges the public domain of "meaning" constituting the common ground between poeple speaking the same language. Such a domain of "meaning", in turn, has to be shared between speaker and hearer according to those self-consistent rules that we call the logic of discourse and must regard as basic to any communication. The power of metaphor to explore, clarify or intensify by creating analogies, seems to be an indispensable attribute of language, and, ever since Plato, it has been consciously exploited as a fundamental tool of logical investigation.

In spite of much linguistic evidence to the contrary, some in - fluental schools of criticism emphasize the enormous gap that divides language based on the rational laws of discursive logic, and the language

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[1] Percy Bysshe Shelley, A Defence of Poetry in Complete Poetry and Selected Prose, ed. by Carlos Baker (New York: Rinehart, 1951), p. 499.

[2] Ibid.

of poetry, which is based on the infinitely more mysterious laws of Imagination:

> The laws which govern the making of poetry, asserts Susan Langer, are not those of discursive logic. They are "laws of thought" as truly as the principles of reasoning are; but they never apply to scientific or pseudo-scientific (practical) reasoning. They are, in fact, the laws of imagination. As such, they extend over all arts, but literature is the field where their difference from discursive logic becomes most sharply apparent, because the artist who uses them is using linguistic forms, and thereby the laws of discourse, at the same time on another semantic level."[1]

According to this view, any work of poetry should be considered a miraculous achievement, the manifestation of the poet's triumph over the crucial conflict between the laws of discursive logic conditioning human speech and the laws of imagination.

Philip Wheelwright's views appear to be closely analogous with the interpretation declaring the poet a kind of child prodigy, mostly for being able to utter something remarkably reminiscent of human speech. Wheelwright defines the aesthetic situation as the ontological expression of strife and contradiction, and he describes expressive language as a "suitable word combination to represent some aspect or other of the pervasive living tension. This, when conscious, is the basis of poetry".[2]

When considering poetry as "emotive utterance" not to be consulted for referential value, I. A. Richards seemingly evades the issue of the ontological or linguistic conflict. Lifting the poem from the realm of "reference statement" into that of "emotive utterance", the fundamental conflict is, apparently, transplanted into the realm of psychological responses.

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[1]Susan K. Langer, Feeling and Form (New York: Scribner, 1953), p.234.

[2]Philip Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), p. 48.

A work of literature, asserts Richards, is to be recognized by its successful achievement of an equilibrium of normally conflicting impulses; the wider the diversity of the impulses brought under control, the greater the poet's achievement. Describing tragedy as the "most general, all-accepting, all-ordering experience known",[1] he emphasizes that the equilibrium of tragedy is not ontological proof that "all's right with the world, or that somewhere, somehow, there is Justice; it is [only] an indication that all is right here and now in the nervous system".[2] This assertion, however, does not establish how the equilibrium of impulses can be achieved by tragedy, and how it will be communicated to the responses of our nervous system, if the poet's language is merely an "emotive utterance", indifferent to the rules of discursive logic, and therefore to the factors conditioning meaningful communication between author and reader.

To bring these hopelessly seperated components together again, R. G. Collingwood offers a synthesis that will restore "statement","emotive utterance", "poetry", and "logical discourse" to some kind of peaceful coexistence:

> There is no need, [says Collingwood] for two seperate expressions, one of the thought and the other of the emotion accompanying it. There is only one expression . . . The expression of thought in words is never a direct or immediate expression. It is mediated through the peculiar emotion which is the emotional charge on the thought. Thus, when one person expounds his thought in words to another, what he is directly and immediately doing is to express to his hearer the peculiar emotion with which he thinks it, and persuade him to think out this emotion for himself, that is, to rediscover for himself a thought which, when he has discovered it, he recognizes as the thought whose peculiar emotional tone the speaker expressed.[3]

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[1] I. A. Richards, Principles of Literary Criticism, p. 268.

[2] Ibid., p. 269.

[3] R. G. Collingwood, The Principles of Art (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 268.

In Collingwood's synthesis the sharp differentiation between "expressive language" and "communication" is unnecessary:

> Language in its intellectualized form has both expressiveness and meaning. As language, it expresses a certain emotion. As symbolism, it refers beyond that emotion to the thought whose emotional charge it is.[1]

The language of poetry cannot be considered in isolation from intellect:

> The poet converts human experience into poetry not by first expurgating it, cutting out the intellectual elements and preserving the emotional, and then expressing this residue; but by fusing thought itself into emotion; thinking in a certain way and then expressing how it feels to think in that way.[2] (Italics mine)

A particular critic's definition will probably fit the poetry of one period or type of sensibility better than another. Collingwood's definition seems particularly applicable to the Metaphysical poets and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the Romantics. Much of our present appreciation of Donne, for example, is due to that particular fusion between intellect and emotion that Grierson describes as "passionate thinking".[3] T. S. Eliot seems to refer to this same quality as "sensuous apprehension of thought"[4] which he regards as indispensable to Donne's "unified sensibilities", as well as those instances when Keats's and Shelley's poetry reveals such a "unified sensibility".

In conclusion, I find the contradiction between expressiveness and meaning, or between the language of poetry and the language of discourse often overemphasized. I suggest that the poet's language is based on principles very similar to the language of communication, and I regard

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[1] Ibid., p. 269. [2] Ibid., p. 295.

[3] H. J. C. Grierson, "Metaphysical Poetry", in Seventeenth Century English Poetry: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. by W. R. Keast (New York: Ocford University Press, 1962), p. 4.

[4] T. S. Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets", in Criticism: The Major Texts, ed. by W. J. Bate (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1952), p. 532.

metaphor, the "omnipresent principle" of language, more an extension than an interruption of meaning. I argue that the "vitally metaphorical" language of the great poet conveys much more than an emotive or musical utterance; it conveys "thinking in a certain way and then expressing how it feels to think in that way!" Therefore, I hope to reveal some significant features of the poet's mentality and his whole vision of reality by examining his use of figurative language, his characteristic metaphor.

In addition to its power to present images in their "sensuous particularity"[1] the metaphor also reveals the thought process, the manner of association behind its own creation; it has "power to establish a sense of analogy and comparison".[2] What are the basic types of analogies, the types of realtionships between tenor and vehicle? Examining the figures of speech according to the type of relationships, we find they fall into the following divisions: in the figures of metonymy and synecdoche the relationship is that of contiguity. In the next and broadest group, the relationship is that of similarity. In the third group, however, the relationship is that of incongruity, in such figures as the paradox, the oxymoron, the understatement and the hyperbole -- all characterized by metaphorical connection between polar opposites. I suggest that characteristic types of the metaphorical construction reveal significant aspects of the poet's mentality, his process of association and of his whole vision of reality. We might consider the metaphor both the building block and the characteristic

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[1] René Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature (New York: Harcourt, 1956), p. 187.

[2] Ibid.

structure of the author's whole argument, his entire thought process. We could distinguish between two constructions: The metaphor that makes comparison on the basis of logical analogies seems to be the characteristic structure of a classic or rational vision of reality.--The metaphor that connects polar opposites, a figure of incongruity, is the evidence of a nonrational, mystical, Baroque or Romantic vision of reality.

The language of the Bible, the literature left behind by the mystics and the poetry of Baroque, Romantic and Surrealistic sensibilities is particularly rich in recurrent figures referring to the lowest in terms of the highest, to the external in terms of the internal, to the spiritual in terms of the sensual. Donne's "Sonnet 14" speaks of deliberation in terms of "enthrallment"; of the highest reaches of purity in terms of sensual "ravishment". Castiglione, when describing the soul's union with divine love, chooses the metaphor of "copulation".[1] In addition to this illogical connection between the "principal subject" or tenor, and the "secondary subject" or vehicle, the language of these sensibilities is also rich in the mystic oxymoron, such as Shelley's "icy flame" or Donne's "long-short progresse".[3] Comparing passion (tenor) to the composite image of "icy flame" (vehicle), the poet creates a double exposure of elements contradicting each other; he presents an incongruous connection between polar opposites impossible to connect according to reason, logic or the evidence of our senses.

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[1]Baldassaro Castiglione, "The Courtier", trans. by Sir Thomas Hoby, in Tudor Poetry and Prose, ed. by W. J. Hebel, et al. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crafts, 1953), p. 707.

[2]Shelley, "Epipsychidion", 283.

[3]John Donne, "Of the Progresse of the Soule: The Second Anniversary", Seventeenth Century Poetry, ed. by Hugh Kenner (New York: Holt, 1966), 219.

On the other hand, the literary realism of Homer's classic vision is expressed in terms of externalized description and uniform illumination; it makes an attempt to understand natural phenomena on the basis of logi - cally valid comparisons. On the whole, it presents a vision where "the real world exists for itself, contains nothing but itself, conceals nothing, contains no teaching and no secret second meaning". As a consequence, "Homer's style can be analyzed, but he cannot be interpreted".[1] Character - ized by metaphor based on the linking of logical analogies, the style aims at uniform objectivity and uniform illumination. It conveys "simply the quiet existence of things in accordance with their nature, a goal that is already present at every point of Homer's progress".[2] If the classical metaphor unveils the "quiet existence of things in accordance with their natures", the metaphor of Baroque sensibilities discloses the bewildering mysteries of existence, the operation of things apparently in discord with their nature. There is a sense of turbulence, of disconnectedness behind the soul's "long-short progresse" which makes it greatly different from classical metaphor, from the logical straightforwardness of Homer's progress.

In contrast to the "horizontal connectedness"[3] of classic style, one might actually identify the language of the Bible and the mystic's records by disconnectedness, by the "obscure, high relief quality"[4] of their imagery. The language abounds in metaphors of polar opposites: not aiming at literary realism, the attention is directed at Absolute Truth concealed behind the appearance of reality. Discussing the metaphoric mode of classical

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[1] Erich Auerbach, Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), p. 12.

[2] Ibid., p. 5 [3] Ibid., p. 17. [4] Ibid., p. 23.

as opposed to non-classical sensibilities, Wellek and Warren observe that

> . . . each period has its characteristic metaphoric method. The Baroque is characterized by the paradox, the oxymoron, catechresis--all Christian, pluralistic, mystic figures . . . [The sensibilities of the classic ages, however, are expressed through the use of] the simile, periphrasis, the ornamental epithat, epigram, balance, anti-thesis.[1]

To me this means that the critic should recognize the imaginative qualities of the metaphor, whether the poet's language conveys a "plural-istic, mystic quality" through figures of incongruity or the classical vision through figures of similarity. In either case, "metaphor in the creative use of the term establishes more than an analogy between two different images, it also creates a new image of the combination".[2] I believe that the critic tends to underrate the expressive qualities of the metaphor based on logical analogy, when he reduces it to the status of "scientific" or "prose" metaphor. Drawing too sharp a distinction between logic and poetry, thought and emotion, expressiveness and meaning--this critic tends to deny that logical combination can create a "new image", and, by implication, he excludes classical sensibilities from the "poetic". To avoid this error, it seems actually more justified to examine the meta-phoric mode of each period in terms of the vision of reality the metaphor embodies in its structure. While the classic metaphor, the metaphor of similarity, draws a series of logical parallels between different spheres of the natural phenomena, the different preoccupation of the non-classical vision of reality requires a different metaphorical construction. When Donne speaks of deliberation in terms of "enthrallment" or when he makes a double exposure of opposites in the "long-short progresse"--the new

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[1] Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature, p. 197.

[2] Ibid.

image conveys a deliberate reversal of the logical process, of the clasical-rational flow of associations. Or, going even further, the incongruous connection in the verbal structure may be considered as a device to evoke a notion of a realm which is startingly different from the natural realms, and defies our rational approach to reality.

This thesis will explore the nature of the logical reversal behind the combination of polar opposites --a combination based on incongruity -- which, as I have already mentioned, occurs persistently in the literature of mysticism, and often in the poetry of Baroque and Romantic sensibilities. I want to explore the mental process which impels the poet to this kind of incongruity in the metaphorical construction. By analyzing five poems, Donne's "Nocturnall Upon St. Lucies Day", Crashaw's "The Teare", Marvell's "The Garden", Shelley's "Sensitive Plant" and Keats's "Fall of Hyperion", I hope to verify and illustrate my hypothesis that tendency for this type of metaphor is evidence of a dialectical thought process with mystical aspiration, or, in other words, a mystical vision of reality.

Before analyzing the five poems, a closer definition of mysticism should be useful. Therefore, in the following, I examine the traditional symbols used in articulating the mystical vision.

CHAPTER II

THE TRADITIONAL SYMBOLS OF MYSTICISM: THE PARADOX

The previous chapter has introduced the assumption that tendency for the metaphorical fusion of opposites is the characteristic expression of a mystical vision of reality. This type of vision appears with a certain degree of consistency in major Metaphysical and Romantic poetry. To verify these assumptions, this chapter will examine the traditional symbols of mysticism, in order to establish the criteria for a mystical vision, and to point out the relevance of these symbols in poetry, particularly in the five poems which will be analyzed in greater detail further on.

In her study of Christian mysticism, Evelyn Underhill offers a classification of traditional mystical symbols which I find relevant to the mystical aspirations in both Metaphysical and Romantic poetry. According to Underhill, there are

> . . . three great classes of symbols [which appeal] to three deep cravings of the self, three great expressions of man's restlessness, which only mystic truth can fully satisfy. The first is the craving which makes him a pilgrim and a wanderer . . . in search of . . . Eldorado, a Sarras, a Heavenly Sion. The next is the craving . . . of the soul for its perfect mate, which makes him a lover. The third is the craving for inward purity and perfection, which makes him an ascetic . . . and in the last resort a saint.[1]

Craving for the Absolute as "Place, a Person or a State" produces three

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[1] Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism, p. 127.

corresponding sets of symbols which treat this quest as "Pilgrimage"; "Spiritual Marriage"; or a process of "Spiritual Alchemy".[1] Whether the mystic chooses one or another set of symbols, says Underhill, will depend on his temperament and on the particular stage of the "mystic way" most appropriately expressed by these symbols. Underhill finds it would be impossible to draw too clear a line of distinction between these different symbols as used by different poets, or even as used by the same poet within the same poem. Yet, the symbol of the "Pilgrimage" seems to suit the temperament of those

> . . . who conceive the Perfect as Beatific vision exterior to them and very far off, who find the doctrine of Emanation something which answers to their inward experience [and who] feel the process of their entrance into reality to be a quest an arduous journey from the material to the spiritual world.[2]

Since "Pilgrimage" is the most general and all-inclusive set of mystical symbols, I think that it can be relevant to any of the five poets in question, even if Donne's and Keats's poetic temperament probably fits the above description better than does Shelley's or Crashaw's. Though this is not to say that he would make no use of other groups of symbols, Crashaw's poetry is extremely rich in the imagery of "Spiritual Marriage", indeed, he might be considered the representative of a temperament " for whom mysticism is above all things an intimate and personal relation".[3]

When analyzing a poem according to this mystical typology, it is helpful to identify the typical imagery of the particular mystical temper - ament, and to recognize in the poem a certain stage of the mystic way. It is more relevant however from a critical point of view, to recognize the particular

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[1] Ibid., p. 129. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., pp. 167-175.

use the poet made of the traditional symbol within the poem as a self-contained experience. Therefore, I shall attempt to be constantly aware of all possible implications of the poet's particular use of the symbol, relevant to his specific point of view, or to the purpose of the argument in individual poems.

Thus, while Donne's recurring use of alchemical symbols reveals a preoccupation with the process of spiritual purgation through the metaphor of matter purified into gold, it is necessary to note the different con-notations, the different functions of this same symbol of "Spiritual Alchemy" in his various poems. "Loves Alchymie" for example, could be inter-preted as witty blasphemy of a Neoplatonic "religion of love". The poet negates the possibility of sublimating the "dross" of sensuality into the gold of spiritual love:

> And as no chymique yet th'elixar got
> But glorifies his pregnant pot,
> If by the way to him befall
> Some odoriferous thing, or medicinall,
> So, lovers dreame a rich and long delight
> But get a winter-seeming summers night.

The "Extasie" uses the same metaphor to describe the process of sublimation that takes place as a result of "good love" between man and woman. Out of the union of two imperfect components, the "alchymie of love" creates a new entity: the united "abler soul" of perfection, and of immortality:

> Wee then, who are this new soule, know,
> Of what we are composed, and made,
> For, th'Atomies of which we grow,
> Are soules, whom no change can invade.

In the"Nocturnall" the same symbol can be read as an allusion to God, the divine alchemist. In his bitter despair, the poet reverses the significance of the whole symbol, and describes "Spiritual Alchemy" as a daemonic, malignant process:

> For I am every dead thing,
> In whom love wrought new Alchimie,
> For his art did expresse
> A quintessence even from nothingnesse.

Instead of sublimation, the loss of the Beloved produces a sense of annihilation, and the alchemist conjures up a new being "re-begot" from the despair of "nothingnesse".

In other instances, as in"Sonnet 14" (Batter my Heart), Donne happens to draw from all three sources of the traditional mystic symbol. As the central metaphor of the poem, the siege imagery is one of the many variations of the symbolic pilgrimage: "Batter my heart, three person'd God: for you / As yet but knocke, breathe, shine, and seeke to mend". In addition to the battle imagery, the poem also relies on the symbolism of spiritual alchemy; the process of physical destruction gradually breaks down the original mixture, in order to create a new, sublimated substance:- (in the image of "knocke, breathe, shine" and in its emphatic repetition in "break, blowe, burn and make me new".) The imagery of "Spiritual Marriage," though relevant throughout the whole poem, gives an emphatic evocation of the mystical experience, by ending the poem as a petition for mystical union:

> Take mee to you, imprison mee, for I
> Except you enthrall mee, never shall be free,
> Nor ever chast, except you ravish mee.

Although Donne happens to draw from all the sources of the traditional symbols of mysticism, the critic does not accomplish much by merely pointing out the presence of this "stock imagery" in the poem. What really determines the unique dialectic of the poet's argument is the particular use he makes of these traditional symbols.

Similarly, it may be of some help to recognize the manifestations of the various stages in the mystic progression, the stages of the

"awakening of the self," "purification," "illumination," and "unitive life," or, what some mystics describe as the "Dark Night of the Soul," a stage of spiritual conflict and torment that follows either the experience of union or that of illumination. This is not to say, that this or any other system - atization of experience can hope to explain the full complexity of the aesthetic experience. Yet, it may contribute towards our understanding of the poem if we notice that Marvell's "Garden" contains the light imagery characteristic of illumination, and the images reveal Marvell's awareness of the meditative progression in terms of Introversion, Recollection and Quiet -- leading, with Grace, to the mystical experience of the "sacred plant," Contemplation.

> Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
> And Innocence thy Sister dear,
> Mistaken long, I sought you then
> In busie companies of men.
> Your sacred plant if here below
> Only among the plants will grow.

It may also contribute to our understanding of Shelley's and Keats's quest that the Romantic vision denies the fallen state of mankind, and the poets start out with a conviction in man's utmost perfectability. Therefore, one would expect that the Romantic version of the"mystic way" would dismiss the painful process of "purification," (the stage which proceeds "illumination" in the religious quest). Yet, one finds that even for the Romantic, there is a stage which reveals affinity with the painful process of purgation: As Shelley's "Sensitive Plant" illustrates, the creative expansion of the poet's consciousness is made possible only through an enhanced sensitivity. This capability is the condition for exceptionally intensive suffering as well as delight, the sole condition, according to Shelley, for receiving the visit - ations of Inspiration. The Plant is representative of the poet, because,

due to its exceptional sensitivity, it has exceptional capacity for loving or suffering:

> But none ever trembled and panted with bliss
> In the garden, the field or the wilderness
> Like a doe in the noontide with love's sweet want,
> As the companionless Sensitive Plant. (I, 9-12)

Rich in the metaphors of animism --with the connotations of unity between Man and Nature --the first two parts of the poem present a vision of light, of "illumination". The Plant enjoys the presence of the Lady of the Garden, the presence of Divinity in an earthly Paradise:

> And from this undefiled Paradise
> The flowers (as an infant's awakening eyes
> Smile on its mother . . . . . .
> . . . . . .
> Shone smiling to Heaven, and every one
> Shared joy in the light of the gentle Sun. (II, 58 - 65)

The third part of the poem evokes what the mystics describe as the "Dark Night of the Soul". Shelley's intimations of "living death" are expressive of the spiritual torment which follows the departure of the divine presence from Nature — in this case the departure of the poet's Inspiration:

> The garden, once fair, became cold and foul,
> Like the corpse of her who had been its soul. (III, 17-18)
> . . . . . .
> Then the weeds which were forms of living death
> Fled from the frost to the earth beneath.
> Their decay and sudden flight from frost
> Was but like the vanishing of a ghost. (III, 94-97)

Similarly, many instances in Keat's poetry reveal significant resemblances to the "mystic way". Even the typical experience the mystics describe as the "game of love" can be detected in such poems as "Lamia", "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" or in "The Fall of Hyperion," where the representative of Divinity seeks out the helpless mortal to challenge him with the hardships of a mystical quest, the confrontation of the Absolute. The structure of

"The Fall of Hyperion" might actually be described in stages which co - incide with the mystic's spiritual progression.

Within the framework of a dream-vision, the poet takes a journey which begins with the "awakening of the self" against the background of Keats's early poetry, the landscape of Paradise or Arcadia. The next scene, the following stage in the dream journey, takes the dreamer to the steps of an altar he has to ascend. A painful process of gaining self-knowledge and of coming to face the aesthetic and the moral shortcomings of his earlier poetry --this stage in the poet's progression bears close resemblance to the mystic's "purgative way". Having ascended to the altar, the dreamer comes to face Moneta, the goddess of Recollection or Knowledge; the incarnation of Truth. At this stage--which is analogous with the mystic's "illumination"--the dreamer receives a revelation; he beholds light in the "blank splendour" of Moneta's face. The goddess allows the dreamer to enter into the "secret chambers" of her mind that contains the fate of humanity: the vision of "blank splendour" is thereby followed by the highest stage, "union".

Yet, in spite of its resemblance to the Christian mystic's pro - gression, the Romantic quest is re-enacted within the confines of a basically different mythic structure. As the close reading of the "Sensitive Plant" and of "The Fall of Hyperion" will demonstrate, the psychological authenticity of the progression notwithstanding, the "mystic way" leads the Romantic poet to the breakdown of vision, and, consequently, to the breakdown of the poem as aesthetic structure.

So far I examined the symbols of the "mystic way", a spiritual pro - gression motivated by an urge for "communion" with the Absolute. In the

following I shall explore the symbolism centering around this experience of unification. M. A. Ewer's Survey of Mystical Symbolism offers a classification of the symbols of "union", (revealing a correspondence with Underhill's categories of the "mystic way"). According to this classification,

> . . . there are three general types of earthly union available for the symbolic expression of the highest mystical experience. (1) Union between inanimate objects, physical mixtures and chemical unions, the soul in the fire of God as spark, wood, wax, iron; God as water to the soul, or as the Ocean into which flows the river of the soul. (2) Unions figured according to which the body appropriates the essential elements of life . . . God is the food and drink of the Soul, its Bread, Fish, Water and Wine; (3) human relationships--that of son to father, wife to husband.[1]

After an examination of the literature of religious mysticism and of the poets with a mystical vision of reality, one should probably complete M.A. Ewer's last category: the symbols of "union" also include the relationship of son to father, wife to husband, as well as the relationship between master and servant, friend to friend, child to parent and mistress to lover.[2]

The symbolism of "union", as described by Ewer's categories, seem to correspond to Underhill's three groups of traditional symbols descriptive of the "mystical way". In the imagery of Spiritual Alchemy (where the ability to suffer and be redeemed is projected into inanimate matter), the purgative process is bound to find its ultimate completion in the "physical or chemical union of inanimate objects". Thus, Donne's "Sonnet 14" might be read as a petition for union, particularly when he asks the divine alchemist to destroy physically the sinful substance, as preliminary to the final act of the desired union, ("Bend your forces, to breake, blowe, burn and make me new").

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[1] M. A. Ewer, Survey of Mystical Symbolism (London, n.p.,1933),pp.164-166.

[2] I am indebted for this suggestion to Prof. Audrey Bruné.

Examples of the symbol which describes union "according to the ways in which the body appropriates the essential elements of life," can be pointed out in both Marvell's "Garden" and in Shelley's "Sensitive Plant". In Shelley's poem the plant is a symbol of the poet. While dreaming in the garden, the plant assimilates the joy of his surroundings as a preparation for the song of eternal vision gestating amidst its boughs. (lines 94-114)

In "The Garden," Marvell describes the soul as a bird that "waves in its plumes the various light". The poet's recognition of God's Immanence in Nature results in a new splendour of "various light": As a symbol of the union between the Soul and God, the bird appropriates the element most essential to its body from its surroundings; it fortifies its "silver wings" with light discovered in the garden. The image of the "industrious Bee" who "computes its time" so well in the poem, is another allusion to that imperceptible transsubstantiation in which the soul assimilates the material of the surrounding universe into a more refined substance: the honey of spiritual wisdom.

The symbolism centering around "Spiritual Marriage" bears ob - viously close resemblance to M. A. Ewer's last category, the symbol which treats "union" in terms of human relationships. This symbol of union seems to be used quite frequently by Shelley, who sees Inspiration, the messenger of an undefined Divinity, incarnate in the Beloved Woman.

Closer to the traditional Christian connotations, we find that many of Herbert's poems are based on the experience of such a personal intimacy between God and the human soul, while expressed in terms of the human relationship between Father and Son:

> But as I raved and grew more fierce and wilde
> At every word,
> Me thoughts I heard one calling, Child.
> And I reply'd, My Lord.[1]

Although it might be interesting to explore the traditional symbolism of the mystical vision in greater detail, for the particular purposes of this paper it is sufficent to illustrate that records of religious mysticism abound in figures of incongruity. It is especially significant therefore, to point out how these central mystical symbols evoke a powerful sense of the paradox.

Thus, the symbolism of the Pilgrimage, when brought to its ultimate conclusion, reveals a secret: the trials that we thought were taking place in the external world, are actually trials taking place in the soul. Spenser's "Book of Holinesse" offers a subtle example for this double exposure of internal and external. There is a scene where the poet describes a confrontation between two warriors, the hero, Redcross Knight, and his antagonist, Despair. Haunted by guilt and shame for his earlier fall, this is the portrait of the Redcross Knight as he emerges from Orgoglio's prison:

> His sad dull eyes deepe sunk in hollow pits
> Could not endure th'unwonted sunne to view;
> His base thin cheeks for want of better bits
> And empty sides deceived of their dew.[2]

Soon after his deliverance from Orgoglio's power, the hero meets his antagonist, Despair, whose

> . . . hollow eyre
> lookt deadly dull, and stood as astound
> His raw-bone cheeks through penurie and pine
> Were shronke into his jaws, as if he did never dine.[3]

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[1] George Herbert, "The Collar," Seventeenth Century Poetry, 33-36

[2] Edmund Spenser, The Faerie Queene, in Selected Poetry, ed. by L. Kirschbaum (New York: Holt, Rinehart, 1956), p. 127.

[3] Ibid., p. 141.

The two descriptions use the same imagery and evoke the very same picture, so that there can be no doubt that the knight has to encounter his own state of despair. This means that the ensuing battle can only take place within his own soul: the metaphor describes a spiritual, internal process in terms of the external.

In the Symbol of Spiritual Marriage, as it will be more thoroughly illustrated in the analysis of the IVth Book of Castiglione's "Courtier", the enormous distance between God and Man is actually eliminated. It describes distant adoration in terms of close physical intimacy, thereby connecting the polar opposites of Transcendence and Immanence, spiritual and sensual, lowest and highest.

The imagery of Spiritual Alchemy is based on the paradox that makes inanimate matter carry the properties of the human soul and body; the metaphor is linking polar opposites of dead and live matter.

In the final analysis, the logic behind the 'stock imagery' of mysticism is the same kind of logic that operates behind the figures of incongruity, the paradox, the oxymoron, or more generally, behind the metaphor connecting polar opposites.

CHAPTER III

THE PARADOX AND THE CENTRAL EXPERIENCE: THE CONFRONTATION OF TIME AND TIMELESSNESS -- THE MYSTICAL REVERSAL

In the previous chapter I offered a short survey of the symbols of mysticism and of the use the Metaphysical and the Romantic poets made of these symbols. The survey indicated that these poets show a great degree of affinity with mysticism because -- consciously or unconsciously -- they make use of mystical symbols, and manifest a certain psychological analogy with the mystic's spiritual progression. -- As for the mystical symbols themselves, I found that they are based on the coupling of contradictories, conveying a vision of reality imbued with a strong sense of the paradox.

In this chapter I intend to continue the investigation of the "meaning" behind the metaphorical connection of polar opposites pertinent to the mystic's spiritual progression. I will examine some features of that unique experience, central to all types of mysticism, which seem to call for the paradox. -- I will also explore the particularly characteristic logic of mysticism which brings forth paradoxical connections and renders legitimate the fusion or identification of opposites.

One of the major scholars in his field, Mr. Rudolph Otto describes the fundamental categories of this type of logic on the basis of accounts left behind by Eastern and Western mystics and mystical philosophy. His scheme for the universal description of mysticism is based on the observation that for the mystic "the essence of all creatures is seen as One", and

"with this One, all otherness as opposition immediately disappears".[1] As a result, the perceiver experiences a blending or unification with the perceived, and the "objects emerge as coalescing identity".[2] It is this experience of coalescing identity between perceiver and perceived, says Mr. Otto, which calls forth the characteristic logic of mysticism. This logic is peculiar to mysticism in so far as it discounts the two fundamental laws of classical logic, the law of Non-Contradiction and that of the Excluded Third. As non-Euclidian geometry sets aside the axiom of parallels, so mystical logic disregards these two axioms, and therefore arrives at the "dialectics of conceptions" and the "coincidentia oppositorum",[3] the identity of opposites.

The similarities between Romantic and Baroque sensibilities are, to a large extent, due to the mystical strain in the poet's vision of reality. This is not to say, however, that this mystical strain appears as a uniform vision, identical among the Metaphysical and the Romantic poets, or indeed, even among the various members within the same group. The poets in question differ from each other according to poetic temperament and distinctions in philosophy as well as according to the whole mystical structure forming the background of their particular vision of reality. Even within the same religious structure, there can be significant differences concerning the various levels of union the believer has reached with the Absolute. However, before I differentiate between the literary manifestations of the mystical element, it seems advisable to establish the common ground to all types of

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[1] Rudolph Otto, Mysticism East and West, trans. by B. L. Bracey and R. C. Payne (New York: Collier, 1962), p. 63.

[2] Ibid., 64. [3] Ibid., p. 63.

mysticism. This common ground might be defined as the mystic's overwhelming desire for a sense of union, a sense of personal communion with the Absolute.

Louis Martz draws attention to the fact that the examination of St. Ignatius's Spiritual Exercises or religious meditations will shed light on many aspects of 17th century devotional poetry. He even suggests that we re-consider the poetry of the "Donne tradition" in the light of a "meditative tradition". In his description of the structure of meditation, he also points out that in the long run, all spiritual exercises were aimed at a mystical experience: contemplation, the highest stage attainable in meditation. But, because this highest stage was not expected to be attained in the practical context of everyday devotions, Martz suggests the use of the term "mediative experience",[1] instead of "mystic experience" when referring to a poem re-vealing a connection with the meditative tradition. When, in the following analysis of poetry, I make an attempt to examine the workings of a "mystical logic" behind the metaphorical structure, I do not mean to say that the poem conveys a mystical experience. What I do say is that the poet's thought process is oriented towards an experience of ultimate unification between perceiver and perceived: his dialectical juxtaposition of thesis and anti-thesis is aiming at an all-inclusive synthesis.

One could, of course, cite many instances when the poet refers quite explicitly to this final experience, either as a petition for, or as a description of the actual "union". Here is Donne in the "Second Anniversary":

> Only who have enjoy'd
> The sight of God, in fulnesse, can thinke it;
> For it is both the object, and the wit. (439-440)

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[1] Louis Martz, The Poetry of Meditation: A Study of English Religious Literature of the 17th Century (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 3.

In a similar instance, Marvell's "Garden" describes the soul in a stage of illumination as a bird "ready for longer flight". Here, the soul developes its wings for the final unification with the One, a uni - fication that might refer to death or to the mystical experience of "union".

The Nature mysticism of the Romantics, too,is directed towards a central experience of unification with Love, the God principle of Nature or, more often, simply towards a pantheistic diffusion with the surrounding universe. Shelley's poetry is particularly rich in images of overflow, diffusion and blending --all leading towards the giving up of the self:-- since he believes that " the great secret of morals is love, or a going out of our own nature and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action or person not our own".[1]

In his"Endymion", Keats describes his own spiritual progression both as a man and poet. At the apex of this progression, he sees the "One" as an "orbed drop of light" that kindles the soul, "till in the end, melting into its radiance, we blend, mingle and become a part of it".[2] This "mingling with Essence" is apparently the final stage of the poet's search for the Eternal, and is described as a unification bringing forth a poetic as well as a kind of metaphysical immortality.

There are numerous instances in Metaphysical and Romantic poetry which explicitly describe such a desire for, or experience of "union". Yet, for the purposes of this study, it is even more interesting to recognize the many instances when the poet's fundamental assumptions implicitly reveal a mystical approach to reality. For example, regardless of the great

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[1]Shelley, Defence of Poetry, p. 502.

[2]John Keats, "Endymion" Complete Poetry and Selected Prose, ed. by H. E. Briggs (New York: Rinehart, 1951), 779, 810, 811.

ideological differences between Metaphysicals and the Romantics, or the differences between individual poets within the same period, a mystical vision of reality places great emphasis on intuition. Coleridge expresses the typically Romantic version of mysticism when he writes that " deep thinking is attainable only by a man of deep feeling ... and all truth is a species of revelation".[1] But, probably one of the most conspicuous manifestations of any version of mysticism is to declare intuition the only faculty which might gain access to Truth, in an act of revelation.Castiglione calls intuition "Universal Understanding" and describes it a faculty which transcends the grasp of "Particular Understanding".[2] Shelley and Keats call intuition Imagination, and postulate that it transcends the powers of empirical Reason. Whatever the name, a mystical vision of reality considers this "intuitus mysticus" as the only vehicle for establishing an immediate communion with the Absolute, whether the Absolute takes the name of the One, of Truth, Essence, Beauty, Nature or God.

In spite of the many versions of mysticism manifested in the East and West, as well as in various historical periods, it is a fundamental feature of mysticism to "postulate the existence of the Absolute and the possibility first of knowing, finally of attaining it".[3] Aiming for more than "communication" with the Absolute, the mystical temperament seeks immediate "communion", an act it pursues with great "personal passion".[4]

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[1]Samuel Taylor Coleridge, letter to Poole, March 23, 1801, qouted in I. A. Richards, Coleridge on Imagination (London: 1959), p. 16.

[2]Castiglione, "The Courtier", p. 24.

[3]Rudolph Otto, Mysticism East and West, p. 24.

[4]E. Underhill, Mysticism, p. 24.

This central experience, for the "personal contact", that is the confrontation between Self and Absolute, presents a particular problem in the mystic's relationship to Time. As studies on comparative religion point out, the universal mystical aspiration is a union with the sacred. Such a desire for a non-alienated sacred reality is the basis of all religious symbols:

> At bottom all religious symbols express a state, or a primal mode of being in the world in which man exists in continuity with the world and the sacred. This state is one of non-alienation, man is alienated neither from the world nor from the sacred.[1]

It will contribute to our definition of the mystical aspiration, if we recognize that for the religious man the only "real" is the "sacred". The mystic would consider this sacred reality as normative vision in relation to our reversed condition of profane existence. As Mircea Eliade describes it:

> Since the fall the sacred and the profane have been alienated from one another, and this rapture can be healed only by an ecstasy that <u>reverses</u> man's profane condition and transforms him <u>momentarily</u> into this prefallen and paradisial state.[2] (Italics mine)

This statement mentions two factors which may have a bearing on the language of the mystic or of the poet whose attention is focussed upon this central experience. The mystic trip into the paradisial state is a "momentary" transformation: it is an experience that disrupts the continuum of quantitative time, and reaches towards an entirely different, qualitative perception of time. It is at such a psychological turning point that the mind creates a double exposure, such as the "deep and dazzling darkness" or as the "long short progress".

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[1] Mircea Eliade, <u>Myths, Dreams and Mysteries</u>, trans. by P. Mairet (New York: Harper, 1960), p. 50.

[2] <u>Ibid.</u>

In addition to the disruption in the psychological and cognitive process, the mystical reversal has ontological implications as well: The "momentary" transformation is an experience that "reverses" man's profane condition: the mystic feels he has gained insight into the "upside-down" world of the paradisial state, where the phenomena we consider polar oppo - sites, coexist. Instead of the "successive" thought process that charac - terizes our normal experience of quantitative time as a continuum, this reversed world is perceived in terms of "simultaneity", a basically qualitative experience of time. When examining a literary description of this "mystical reversal" in the IVth Book of Castiglione's "Courtier", I will show that this experience finds appropriate expression in figures of incongruity. In addition to the oxymoron and the metaphor of polar opposites, there is another linguistic phenomenon which is a characteristic device for the description of this state. It is what modern criticism describes as "synasthesia" (largely referred to as "catachresis" in 17th century criticism). Here, one sense perception is described in terms of another,[1] in such images as the "privy smell of right angelic beauty" or the "smell of those spiritual savours that relieve the virtues of under - standing".[2]

So far I wanted to establish the various levels of cognitive, psychological and ontological "meaning" suggested by the metaphor of polar opposites in the context of the mystic's progression. I decided to study this progression as a paradoxical confrontation between Self and

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[1] Although we usually disregard the "mystical" connotations, Hazlitt's original conception of "gusto" is also denotative of such a simultaneous engagement of all the senses, a kind of "total involvement" in the aesthetic experience--a revealing example of the strong aesthetic orientation of the Romantic version of mysticism.

[2] B. Castiglione, "The Courtier", p. 708.

Absolute, Succession and Simultaneity, Sacred and Profane, Time and Eternity --motivated by a desire for union, the fusion of opposites.

I shall now illustrate the connection between the figures of incongruity and the 'mystical reversal' by examining Bembo's speech of Love, in the IVth Book of Castiglione's "Courtier". I also want to demonstrate the significant differences between corresponding passages of Bembo's speech and Plato's Symposium, through an examination of the connection between the type of metaphor, the type of experience, and the author's entire vision of reality. Although both pieces of literature allegedly describe a kind of confrontation between the Self and Absolute, or Time and Eternity, this confrontation takes place in the framework of different mythical structures, controlled by different concepts of Time, and both the kind of experience and the metaphorical mode reflect these ontological differences. My analysis will concentrate on the author's notion of Time, an ontological concept which determines the whole vision of reality--finding its appropriate expression in the metaphor of logical analogy in Plato's Symposium, and in the metaphor of polar opposites in Bembo's speech.

Plato's Symposium is the prime example of "intellectual mysticism" which aims at mystical experience as the final development of both personality and mental power.

Socrates defines love as a "desire for the beautiful"[1] which will lead the lover to the"everlasting possession of the good".[2] The progression seems straightforward: "the true order of going or being led by another

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[1]Plato, Symposium in Dialogues, ed. by J. D. Kaplan (New York: Washington Square Press, 1951), p. 209.

[2]Ibid., p. 212.

to the things of love is to begin from the beauties of the earth and mount upward for the sake of that other beauty: using these as stairs only".[1]

Bembo's speech in the IVth Book of Castiglione's "Courtier" is a Neoplatonic rephrasing of Plato's Symposium, one of the many Christian mystical variations on the Platonic ascent on the "ladder of love" which leads to perfection, and thereby, to immortality. Castiglione encourages the courtier to "climb up the stairs which at the lowermost step have the shadow of sensual beauty, to the high mansion place where heavenly, amiable and right beauty dwelleth".[2] Yet, he will describe this highest stage of "heavenly" beauty in intensely "sensual" terms.

Having described the highest form of love in terms of superlative visual delights, Socrates ends his speech with an elegant flourish and he is applauded by his sophisticated audience:

> Remember how in that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty,but realities ... and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may. Would that be an ignoble life? ... The words which I have spoken, you, Pheadrus,may call an encomium of love, or anything else if you please.
> When Socrates had done speaking, the company applauded . . . . .[3]

In contrast to the controlled elegance maintained throughout Socrates's lecture, Bembo's speech changes remarkably between the beginning and the ending of his discourse. The speech begins as a prosaic discourse on intellectual developement:

> And because in our soul there be three manner ways to know; namely by sense, reason, and understanding: of sense, there ariseth appetite or longing, which is common to us with brute beasts; of reason ariseth election or choice, which is proper to man; of understanding, by the which man may be partner with angels, ariseth will.[4]

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[1] Ibid., p. 216. [2] B. Castiglione, "The Courtier", p. 708.

[3] Plato, Symposium, p. 219. [4] B.Castiglione,"The Courtier",p.694.

By the end, the discourse turns into a religious hymn to Heavenly Love:

> "What tongue mortal is there then (O most holy love), that can sufficiently praise thy worthiness? Thou most beautiful, most good, most wise ... Make us to smell those spiritual savors that relieve the virtues of understanding ...".[1]

It continues as arduous prayer, until it reaches into the language of religious ecstasy; abandoned, sensuous and mystical. The speaker himself, in marked contrast to the calm poise of Socrates, shows signs of being "ravished and beside himself".[2]

The difference between Plato's and Castiglione's language can be examined through comparing the authors' different concepts of Time. In the intellectual mysticism of Plato, the communion between the Soul and the Eternal is actually only a reunion. Torn from the circle of Eternity when born to the physical life of profane existence, the Soul can be restored to Eternity only after the perfection of the intellect and the annihilation of the body. After the intellectual "contemplation of beauty absolute", the "eye of the mind" will come to see "the true beauty--the divine beauty pure and unalloyed, not clogged with the pollution of mortality".[3]

The bleak, spatially unrealized Heaven of the Platonic myth is the home for a non-spatial, non-physical self, the Intellect: after the successful annihilation of all sensuality, the Intellectual Soul can rejoin Eternity. In this concept of Time, there is no real contradiction between the Time sequence of Mutability and that of Eternity. The Time of Eternity is seen as the continuum of the superlative and fully perfected Time of profane existence.

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[1] Ibid., p. 708. [2] Ibid., p. 709.

[3] Plato, Symposium, p. 218.

The language that describes this glimpse of the Absolute is rich in almost geometrically abstracted visual imagery, drawn from the sense least corporeal and closest to intellectual sublimation, in the numerous images of "beautiful form" or "outward form".[1] Sensual images of our physical existence can give only an imperfect approximation of the Absolute until "the eye of the mind ... will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities".[2] Yet, the Absolute beauty of Eternity can be described only as the superlative of all that is changeable, as the "divine beauty, pure and clear and unalloyed". It is characteristic of the Platonic concept that though Absolute Beauty is the superlative of profane beauty, nevertheless this superlative can only be expressed by denying the validity of our sense-perceptions. It can be known only as the superlative of the sensual, yet has to be described through the negation of sense perceptions. It is a Beauty to contemplate "without meat or drink",

> . . . a beauty if you once beheld, you would see not to be after the measure of gold and garments, and fair boys, and youths, whose presence now entrances you.[3]

Seeing the Time of Eternity as the non-corporeal continuum of the Time of profane existence, the metaphor makes a connection between logical analogies. The tenor, Absolute Beauty--is linked logically to the vehicle: profane beauty. Alike in kind, they differ only in degree, since eternal beauty is the superlative final sublimation of temporal, physical beauty.

The dynamism that dictates the connection between tenor and vehicle is that of discursive logic, taking for granted an uninterrupted continuum of our perception of Time. The time of profane existence differs from the

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

Eternal only in degree but not in kind: the Platonic Heaven can be reached by the successive intensification of intellectual understanding, until, after death, the Soul can rejoin the cycle of Eternity. When connecting the physical with the intellectual Plato does not connect polar opposites: the beauty perceived in profane existence is an approximation of Absolute Beauty. They are divided only by the time-span of physical existence, a seperation to be gradually closed by the annihilation of the body and the restoration of the intellect to the Absolute. The metaphor is valid under the laws of discursive logic.

A Neoplatonic re-phrasing of the Symposium, Bembo's speech abounds in the public symbols of Christianity grafted upon the Platonic structure. The"eyes of the mind"[1] are opened by the straightforward intellectual progression prescribed by Platonic philosophy. Yet, this new sight "seeth in herself a shining beam of light which is the true image of the angelic beauty partened with her".[2]

I find that the experience that Bembo happens to describe and re-enact through his description, could be approached in terms of a diagram of an 'hourglass' type structure. The experience reaches its turning point, a kind of"mystical reversal", at the point where Particular Understanding, based on the evidence of the senses, is "made dim with this greater light", and "waxed blind about earthly matters, the soul is made most quick of sight about heavenly".[3] After this turning point the description of the progression continues as the Hymn to Heavenly Love, and the figurative language is characterized by the recurrence of metaphors linking polar opposites. The clash between the two contradictory concepts of Time re-sults in a disruption breaking the normal flow of sense perceptions and the

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[1] B. Castiglione, "The Courtier", p. 706. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

logical flow of ratiocination. Contradictory phenomena that should be seperated, coincide and intermingle. The sense of sight is expressed in the sense of smell as in the "privy smell of the right angelic beauty".[1] The highest is expressed in terms of the lowest.

The highest reach of spiritual delights --reached as a result of the purification of the senses --is expressed in sensual and sexual terms: the soul is "ravished", she "waxeth drunken" and wants to "couple herself with light ". It"fleeth to couple herself with the nature of angels", so that finally it may die a "most happy and lively death".[2]

Castiglione's language reflects a concept of time that is thoroughly different from Plato's. The concept of Eternity implies more than a continuum, it also implies a reversal of the Time of Mutability. The continuum of the Eternal Time cycle was disrupted by the fall, and the fallen existence of man is seen as the reversal of his sacred existence in Eternity. The metaphor that links polar opposites reflects a glimpse of an 'upside down' reality; the vision of Eternity is the reversal of the world of Mutability. (Within the whole context of the experience, the metaphor occurs right after the reversal in the hourglass-like structure.)

The dynamism that dictates the reversed connection between tenor and vehicle is the dynamism of mystical logic, centered around a crucial interruption of the continuum of time, and, thereby, on the interruption of the normal flow of sense-perception and of the logical thought process. This disruption alone, however, cannot fully explain the peculiar nature of mystical imagery. What is the explanation for the fact that the imagery becomes sensuous exactly at the point when it should describe a sublimation

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ibid., p. 709.

from sensuality? Is this a common process, as D. Rougemont suggested, of the "materialization of the mental, or sublimation of the spiritual"? [1] Or, are we to accept C. S. Lewis's explanation that it is the "very nature of thought and language to represent what is immaterial in picturable terms"?[2]

Probably no single answer could sufficiently explain the many facets of the phenomenon of coupling contradictories. As far as communication or linguistic expression are concerned, the linking of polar opposites may mean one of two things. As F. Dunbar observed, "it is inherent in mysticism to demand expression and at the same time realize that the most perfect ex - pression attainable is but a shadow of reality".[3] In this sense, when the poet relies on the mystical metaphor, he makes an implicit statement that any effort to translate his experience according to the laws of communication— that is, any attempt to make 'sense', would be useless. As a possible second alternative, the metaphor may mean more than a desperate gesture: describing the spiritual experience in terms of sexual consummation may approximate the experience in the 'degree' of intensity. Yet, the very choice of the subject excludes any hope for conveying the 'kind' of experience meaningfully.

To determine the precise relationship between the incongruity which couples contradictories and the kind of experience it signifies, one should probably give equal consideration to a great variety of factors in the psychological, cognitive and linguistic process. Yet, there is another, and probably more inclusive ontological explication based on the eschato - logical structure of Christianity within which Bembo had re-eanacted the

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[1] Denis Rougemont, Love in the Western World (New York, 1938), p.138.

[2] C. S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love: A Study in Medieval Tradition (London, 1938), p. 45.

[3] Flanders Dunbar, Symbolism in Medieval Thought and its Consummation in the Divine Comedy (New York: Russell, 1961), p. 22.

Platonic progression. If we bear in mind that through Bembo's description the Platonic stair of love had changed to a Christian's progress, it may help to explain some differences between Plato's and Castiglione's metaphor. When Bembo is praying to love, to be allowed to "hear the heavenly harmony", he is actually praying for redemption, since heavenly harmony could be heard only before the fall, and will only be heard again after being "purged from the misty ignorance" characteristic of earthly existence. The most likely source of the sensuous imagery is, in fact, the very nature of the under - lying Christian concept of Heaven. In the Symposium, both the ideas of Heaven and of the immortality of the soul are taken for granted, but the concept of Heaven is not defined either in terms of location or duration, and the immortality of the soul is conceivable only after its seperation from the body. Bembo's picture of the universe is more minutely defined; there is a definite gradation of spheres, with all inhabitants from the lowest stones up to the hierarchy of angels in their appropriate places. And redemption does not aim to seperate body from soul.

> The corruption of the body which weighs down the soul, is not the cause (as Platonists think) but the punishment of the first sin; and it was not the corruptible flesh that made the soul sinful, but the sinful soul that made the flesh corruptible.[1]

In spite of man's fall, Divine Love will bend down to redeem both his erring will and the sins of the flesh. This concept of redemption seems to be the theological background to Bembo's Hymn to Holy Love, an ex - pression of spiritual heights in the most sensual terms.

In contrast to the Platonic concept, we are confronted with a physically more intensified world picture, where heaven, and, ultimately its counterpart, hell, become more physically real: The puzzle of the

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[1] Ibid., p. 353.

resurrection in the body becomes more disturbing, and the miracle of re - demption via incarnation more mysterious. It seems to be this very pro - cess of retaining the physical while sublimating it into the spiritual that lies at the source and gives the intensity to the sensuous imagery so characteristic of the language of religious mysticism.

What Castiglione's description re-enacted, was, in most general terms, an experience which "modern psychology and religious interpretations describe as a mystical reversal, or the crisis of an inner experience followed by the reorganization of the self according to a new center".[1] If we regard the whole of the lover's progression as an 'hourglass' type structure, we find that the metaphors of polar opposites appear at the turning point of the hourglass, at the point of reversal.

In the context of Castiglione's description, the metaphor of polar opposites has given appropriate expression of a climactic point in experience, a reversal which suggests (1) a psychological sense of disconnectedness, (2) an illogical jump in the cognitive process, and (3) an ontological concept of a normative situation, of some kind of sacred reality, con - ceived of as the reversal of our ordinary, profane existence.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 385.

PART II

THE "MYSTICAL" METAPHOR IN FIVE POEMS OF BAROQUE AND ROMANTIC SENSIBILITIES

Up to this point I have attempted to establish the relationship between vision of reality and tendency for metaphor. More specifically, I have undertaken to explore the cognitive, psychological and ontological 'meaning' suggested by the fusion of opposites within the context of a mystical vision of reality.

In the five chapters that follow, I shall examine the different types and functions of the figures of incongruity within the context of five poems. The poems are not related by any common theme or genre. Therefore, at first glance, it might appear rather absurd to integrate the analysis of five works as varied as Donne's "Nocturnall Upon St. Lucies Day", Crashaw's "The Teare", Marvell's "The Garden", Shelley's "Sensitive Plant" and Keats's "Fall of Hyperion". Yet, the five poems offer abundant examples for the study of the paradox, the oxymoron, the metaphor of double vision, the metaphorical connection between the sen - suous and the imperceptible—in short they reveal the poet's tendency for the metaphor of polar opposites.

Therefore, if my earlier assumptions were correct, the examination of each poem should reveal the dialectic of the mystical aspiration: a tendency for the emphatic confrontation of contradictories, and a desire for their fusion or integration.

Similarly to my approach in the previous chapter, my analysis of the paradox will proceed by concentrating on the poet's concept of Time, his confrontation between Time and Timelessness, the Time of Mutability and that of Eternity. The desire for such a confrontation—ultimately the desire for mystical experience— takes different shape in each poem. To begin with "The Nocturnall", my study of the paradox will be based on Donne's confrontation of sacred and profane.

CHAPTER IV

THE "LONG NIGHTS FESTIVAL" -- DIALECTICAL INTERACTION BETWEEN SACRED AND PROFANE IN DONNE'S "NOCTURNALL"

Discussing the well-known conflict between sacred and profane tones in Donne's poetry, Louis Martz points out that in some of the Holy Sonnets "images of profane love are deliberately used in love sonnets of sacred parody".[1] He also suggests the greatest possible "caution in con - sidering the relation between the profane and the religious in Donne's work" and warns that "individual poems will not fall easily into such categories".[2] Yet Martz does classify the "Nocturnall" among the love poems, though he finds it example of an interesting situation where "human love is exalted to the religious level", because, "in accordance with the ancient ecclesiastical usage of the term 'nocturnal' or 'nocturne', Donne presents a midnight service, a Vigil commemorating the death of his Be - loved--his saint".[3]

Due to this interesting duality between sacred and profane, Louis Martz feels that the "Nocturnall" "vividly illustrates the way in which Donne's poetry, throughout his career, moves along the Great Divide between sacred and profane, now facing one way, now another, but always remaining intensely aware of both sides".[4]

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[1] Louis Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 214.

[2] Ibid., p. 216 [3] Ibid. [4] Ibid., p. 215.

I shall examine the relationship between the sacred and profane in the "Nocturnall" because I believe that the poem represents more than merely "moving along the great Divide". Expressive of more than Donne's "awareness of both sides", there is a dialectical interaction between sacred and profane that manifests Donne's aspiration for the fusion of opposites, an aspiration to bridge the "Great Divide" in the mystical ex - perience. In addition to the fact that the "Nocturnall" "exalts human love to the religious level", the poem reveals a tendency for bringing religious love down to the human level, a tendency for the humanization or even profanation of the sacred. Behind the dialectical interaction of these contradictory tendencies, I find Donne's aspiration to an experience in which the contraries will coincide, where the sacred will appear the vital essence of the profane, and the profane the fundamental mode for the existence of the sacred. I study the relationship between sacred and profane images as the dialectical interaction between opposites which is motivated by the poet's desire for the fusion or unification of opposites. This dialectical process manifests Donne's aspiration for personal communion between Self and Absolute, Time and Timelessness, profane and sacred--an experience of contemplation.

As for the effect of this dialectical movement, it is characterized by the violent contrast of ups and downs and the clash of opposites. It is this quality of Donne's poetry which C. S. Lewis describes with mild puzzlement: "As if Donne performed in deepest depression those gymnastics which are usually a sign of intellectual high spirits".[1]

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[1] C. S. Lewis, "Donne and Love Poetry in the 17th Century", in Seventeenth Century English Poetry, p. 97.

The structure of the poem might be recognized as the explicit negation of the "Hymn to Holy Love", a veritable "sacred parody". As Bembo's speech illustrated[1], the hymn celebrates the lover's ascent on the "ladder of love", the progression of the soul towards the perfection and mystical union with Divinity. In the "Nocturnall" this metaphor of ascent is reversed empha - tically. The mourner's sensation of descent is supported by the images of diminishing light fading into total darkness, images of waning corporeality descriptive of utter annihilation of all creatureliness.

The mourner expresses despair by the nearly sacrilegous suggestion that he is no longer part of the "Great Chain of Beings". Being broken up and re-shaped by a malignant process, he bitterly denies that he be - longs to God's creatures:

> Were I a man, that I were one,
> I needs must know; I should preferre,
> If I were any beast,
> Some ends, some means:
> Yea plants, yea stones detest,
> And love: All, all some properties invest;
> If I an ordinary nothing were,
> As shadow, a light and body must be here.

At first glance, the mourner's negative progression might be taken to illustrate the Neoplatonic concept of love: Since there the ideal woman is regarded as a mediator between God and the Lover, it seems natural that the departure of the Beloved brings forth a pause or lapse in the lover's progression. Yet, the mourner's descent below the lowest being in Creation has quite different implications. It shows that the mourner loved the Be - loved Woman not as a connecting link between himself and God, but as a near substitute for the highest being: not only as partner in the preparation towards the Divine, but as actual partner in a divine union.

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[1] B. Castiglione, "The Courtier", pp. 705-711.

Many religious mystics describe the union between God and the Soul in terms of the body assimilating its life substance from the surrounding universe. Here, however, the mourner declares that the loss of the Beloved woman deprived him of the life substance of existence:

> All others, from all things, draw all that's good,
> Life, soule, forme, spirit, whence they being have;
> I, by loves limbecke, am the grave
> Of all that's nothing...

The spiritual progression toward Divine Love seems to be greatly profaned. The mourner's descent is the conscious reversal and thereby the negation of the progression towards the sacred: his bitter outbursts imply that he considers his union with the Beloved woman comparable to the highest mystical union --"spiritual marriage".

There are many instances where the imagery points at the profanation of the sacred to convey an almost unbridled vehemence of grief:

> Study me, then, who shall lovers be
> At the next world, that is, at the next Spring.

The savagely bitter connotations of the images referring to the renewal of love in terms of crude sensuality--contribute to the profanation of Love:

> You lovers, for whose sake the lesser Sunne
> At this time to the Goat is runne
> To fetch new lust, and give it you,
> Enjoy your summer all;

The image of the Beloved as a corpse who "enjoyes her long night's festival" has connotations reminiscent of Shakespeare's jeering comments on the plight of physical destruction, in the speech wishing Cleopatra enjoyment of the worm .

At the same time, the process of negation and explicit sacrilege is directed from the very beginning toward a higher sacred reality. However, reaching toward the sacred does not mean an absence of terror and grief over

the physical mutability of profane existence. The mourner can reach towards the sacred only through an affirmation and acceptance of his burdens: he reaches towards an experience felt to be transcending, yet at the same time containing, the burden of existence. Therefore, the hour he chooses for the Vigill is emphatically defined as the hour of deepest despair: "Let me call / This hour her Vigill ... since this / Both the yeares and the dayes deep midnight is".

The complexity of the poem seems to be the result of the multiple levels of meaning implied by its key symbol, the Sun, and the ambiguous connotations of the Time imagery that supports this key symbol. The under - lying number symbolism appears to be closely associated with solar symbolism, and forms its very substance.

The setting of the poem is zero hour: "the Sunne is spente", it is the "yeares midnight and it is the dayes", and, by analogy, the midnight of despair in the mourner's life. The very last line of the poem repeats the first line with a small but significant difference: the image of mid - night turns into "deep midnight" in the end.

Centered around the contradiction between the unrisen Sun of Eternal Life and the "spent" Sun of Temporal existence, the structure of the imagery reveals a significant connection between the zero of non-being and its opposite, the number of unity and perfection: twelve. By the last stanza, the totality of profane existence is reduced to "None". Yet the stanza and the poem end with a repetition and thereby with an affirmation of the "deep midnight" of annihilation that reaches towards the high noon of Salvation.

Such dynamics of growth, in spite, or perhaps because of the very

process of the diminishing of all existence, is a movement consistently supported on the various levels of the poem.

The first metaphor that relates to the mourner identifies him as an "Epitaph"; the superlative of cosmic desolation:

> The worlds whole sap is sunke:
> The generall balme th'hydroptique earth hath drunk,
> Whither, as to the beds-feet, life is shrunke,
> Dead and enterr'd; yet all these seeme to laugh,
> Compar'd with me, who am their Epitaph.

The dynamics of despair accelerate as the superlative gives place to an image of negation in the "quintessence of nothingnesse".

> For I am every dead thing,
> In whom love wrought new Alchimie.
> For his art did expresse
> A quintessence even from nothingnesse.

The acceleration continues in a double negation in the "grave of all that's nothing". This is followed by the superlative of all negations, as the mourner is "of the first nothing the elixer grown". Finally, the last stanza re-states the original simple negation and also gives the cause that brought forth reduction and the impossibility of renewal: "But I am None: nor will my Sunne renew". The rhetorical movement goes from Superlative (Epitaph) through the witty acceleration of reduction in terms of negatives, to the solemn re-statement in a simple but powerful negation which leads finally to a kind of affirmation: "Let me prepare towards her, and let me call / This hour her Vigill".

The analysis of the sensuous qualities of the imagery reveals the same movement, the same 'hourglass'-like structure. The acceleration of negation is carried by the movement of gradual and total annihilation of all spatial and temporal images, up to the point of "None" in the last stanza. Here, as if having affirmed the Nadir of the progression, the

movement of shrinking and reduction suddenly changes to a movement of reaching out, a movement of expansion.

The waning, shrinking, contracting movement toward the point of "None" is expressed in terms of a cosmic process: "the world's whole sap is sunke", the"balme" of the World's living body "whither", life,like a dead body is "shrunke" --until all corporeality is reduced to a "quintessence of nothingnesse". The following stanza elaborates on the waning of physical existence, and on the sinisterly negative developement of Non-Being in the images of the "grave of all that's nothing", "chaosses" and "carcasses". The fourth stanza contains the negation of Creation, implied by the diminuitive order in which the images of the "Chain of Beings" are examined one by one--and then dismissed by the mourner. He cannot consider himself a human being: "Were I a man, that I were one, I needs must know". He must be lower than beast, plants, even stones:

> I should preferre,
> If I were any beast,
> Some ends, some means: Yea plants, yea stones detest,
> And love; All, all some properties invest;
> If I an ordinary nothing were,
> As shadow, a light, and body must be here.

Lacking in the substance of the lowest being, he cannot even consider himself a shadow, because this would presuppose the existence both of corporeality and of light. Having already denied his own physical existence--because of the loss of the Beloved, the source of light--. the process of his physical and spiritual annihilation now reaches ultimate completion.

The last stanza opens with the emphatic absence of any visually realized image, except the symbol of zero, the point of final annihilation; "But I am None".-- Being spatially reduced to nothingness, the concentric

circle of his Sun cannot renew either: " But I am None, nor will my Sunne renew". Yet, the arrangement of the two images--the point of nil in zero and the circle of the renewing Sun--already foreshadow a kind of expansion, a growth from this nothingness into some new dimension.

Throughout the poem the mourner is full of contempt for the natural world, for objective, external reality. Natural life is given the unpleasant image of a corpse "shrunke to the beds feet". He bitterly dismisses regeneration as provided by the natural life cycle: "You lovers ...enjoy your summer all".

The love that once existed between the mourner and the Beloved is described as a subjective universe, which, because of its intensity, had far superseded the significance of the cosmos. The lovers' tears were "floods" that "drowned the whole world", and totally sufficent for each other, they "oft did grow to be two chaosses, when (they) did show care to ought else". Having contracted the essence of the whole world in the subjective grasp of this private universe, the mourner's world is shattered by the departure of his Sun. He dismisses with contempt the whole world of outsiders who contend themselves with the regeneration of the natural life cycle and the "lesser Sunne" of the Universe. The profane tone of cynicism regarding the merely physical aspects of love carries the same contempt towards the whole world of Nature:"You lovers, for whose sake the lesser Sunne / At this time to the Goat is runne ... enjoy your summer all".

In line with his contempt towards the natural world of objective reality, he definitely refuses to participate in the regeneration of the natural cycle. In this context, the image which describes his intention to join his Beloved, contains bitter resignation: "Since she enjoys her long nights festival,let me prepare towards her". In line with the

bitterness of the jeering tone which dismissed the summer of the "dull sublunary lovers", the image of "preparation" carries the bitterness over physical destruction even further. In this sense, when he recalls this very hour of savage despair a "Vigill", the image of worship comes to be charged with sacrilegous undertones.

At the same time there is a constant movement from the objective towards the subjective and internal; from the natural and cosmic toward the private. This movement indicates that the image of natural destruction cannot contain the final answer. Because of his mourning over the loss of his "own Sunne", he rejects the Sun of the Cosmos, the "lesser Sunne". Yet the movement cannot lead from the subjective to the objective and stop there. Having refused the world of Nature, he recalls his private world again, and through this evocation, reaches out towards the universal.

One should by no means disregard the sacrilegous connotations of death as total and final destruction in the image of the "long night's festival". These connotations of the metaphor are particularly relevant because of their close proximity to the image of crude sensual delights in the "new lust" of natural regeneration. Yet, when examining the sensuous qualities of the metaphor, it is inevitable to recognize that the "long night's festival" contains associations with light. Simultaneously with the darkness of the "long night", the image also suggests the splendour of "festival", or a splendour the whole festival is in preparation of: there is an indication of light below or beyond the texture of darkness.

This hidden light becomes apparent as we refer back to the first stanza in which St. Lucy, the symbolic representative of the Beloved and of Light, had "unmasked herself" for the scarce seven hours of the day. The implications are that Night is like a "mask", worn by the physical

universe. It also implies that the "long night's festival"should be seen as a temporal "mask" worn by the Beloved whose true face, "unmasked" light, points toward Eternity.

The movement of the light imagery seems to support the interpretation whereby the "long night's festival" has a close association with light.-- The poem starts with a tension between darkness and light. It is the mid - night of Lucy's day, the Saint of Light, who unmasked herself for the seven hours the soul demands for preparation towards death. The light of day is "masked", the stars send forth only light "squibs", instead of "constant rays". Instead of the certitude radiated by the Eternal light of the stars, the poet complains of the oscillation of temporary, hesitant "light squibs".

From this flickering, masked, hesitant light, we move to absolute darkness, suggested by the "dull privations" and by the shadowy substance of Being "re-begot of absence, darkness, death: things which are not". The associations of the "grave", the "flood", chaosses" and "carcasses" point at the total extinction of light throughout the second, third and fourth stanzas. The very last line of the fourth stanza, however, introduces "light" again: "If I an ordinary nothing were, As shadow, a light and body must be here". Although this "light" is introduced only to deny its own existence, the last stanza re-introduces images of the "renewed Sun" and of the "lesser Sunne" of the lover's "Summer".

The flickering light at the beginning, the total darkness and blank ness in the middle, and the re-introduction of the tension between darkness and light at the end all describe a movement indicating that the poem of despair has reached a resolution. Supported by this structure of the light ima - gery,it may not be too eye-straining to detect in the last stanza a sunken image of a third Sun, which follows the re-introduction of "my Sunne" and

of the "lesser Sunne".

The suggestion that the preparation toward the Beloved implies an affirmation of a Divine Sun beyond the "long nights festival", will probably be supplemented by exploring all the ambiguities in the last three lines as they exist today. Due to ambiguities in the syntax and punctation of the seventeenth century text, we might take the liberty of considering various readings for the last three lines. The suggestion of the mourner's progression towards the Eternity of the Divine Sun could be greatly supported if we change the reading from the "year's and day's deep midnight" to the"years' and days' deep midnight". Such a reading connects the time of the Vigill and the particular time in the mourner's life with the mid - night of the whole universe, and the midnight of human history. The mid - night of the days' and years' is re-enacted in the particular hour of mourning: the Vigill re-eanacts the deepest point in universal history,-- a hint, in this case, of the crucifixion.-- Making the mourner a participant in this deepest midnight, the Vigill would, through the implications of the sacramental framework, reaffirm the rising of the Divine Sun, and with it, redemption and resurrection.

There is another point to support the suggestion that the poet strives to extend the significance of this particular hour of private grief into a midnight of universal significance. If we read the last three lines care - fully, we discover another possible reading, in addition to that which con - siders "Eve" as a synonym for the hour of the Vigill. The lines read:

> Let me prepare towards her, and let me call
> This hour her Vigill, and her Eve, since this
> Both the yeares, and the dayes deep midnight is.

In addition to the obvious and usually accepted reading, the passage could also be paraphrased thus: "I do prepare towards her by calling this hour her

Vigill, and by calling her, or recognizing her as Eve".-- The possible connotations of universal mourning over the Beloved as Eve, mother of humanity and the mate of Man, would extend the significance of private grief and mourning. It would also remind the mourner of the justifying cause of her departure, the commonly carried burden of original sin. At the same time, an allusion to Eve also evokes in its wake the whole frame - work of futurity and the redemption of the original sin, thereby supporting the motivating purpose of the whole poem: the reaching towards the certainty of light beyond the "long night's festival".

The possibility that "Eve" could be read as "evening" and also as a pun on "Eve" is supported by William Empson's view on the function of the pun[1] as planted ambiguity expressive of basic vacillations in the poet's convictions. By alluding to Eve, the poet would diminish the significance of the Catholic element implied in the celebration of a Vigil for a saint: in this context the term "Vigill" itself would only be taken as an illustration, metaphorically, and not literally.

Whether or not we decide to keep all the possible connotations of the last three lines in mind, the image of the Vigil seems to open a wider sacramental or Biblical framework, which expands the mourner's consciousness to see his hour of personal, private grief in the context of the midnight of "both the yeares and the dayes". The hint to such a wider, universal frame - work can be seen as an evocation of a certitude radiated by the "unmasked light", no longer through hesitant light "squibs", but by "constant rays".

If, in one sense, the poem indeed represents the "elevation of human love to the religious level",[2] this tendency is savagely undercut by the

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[1]William Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity (London:Chatto Windus,1961),III

[2]Louis Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 214.

poet's bitter negation of the Creation, a negation which often approaches not only the profane but also the blasphemous. The poem, as most of Donne's major works, shows a great tension between these two elements, in search for a final synthesis in the mystical experience of enlightenment and certitude.

The handling of the traditional symbols of mysticism is particularly revealing. The imagery of Spiritual Alchemy is a public symbol of the mystic's way leading to God. The second stanza evokes this symbol of Spiritual Alchemy, but only to present it as a process of annihilation: it extracts all living substance from the mourner, it is a sinister process leading to the total collapse of his Being:

> For I am every dead thing,
> In whom love wrought new Alchimie.
> For his art did expresse
> A quintessence even from nothingnesse,

Instead of preparing the lover towards the final union with Divine Love, this "new Alchimie" performs a sinister reversal of the spiritual progress: the lover is destroyed and daemonically "re-begot / Of absence, darkness, death: things which are not". Love as the great alchemist is a metaphor which in the final analysis, points to God himself, and acts here as a powerful expression of despair, and therefore, blasphemy.

The reversal of the traditional meaning of Spiritual Alchemy, as well as the reversal of the progression on the ladder of love seem to be indicative of the mourner's blasphemy, the deliberate profanation of the sacred by the implication that the Beloved is worshipped as a Saint. The particular dynamism of the poem can be understood only in terms of the dialectical interaction between the two tendencies: an attempt at bridging the "Great Divide" between sacred and profane.

Adding to the tensions between sacred and profane in Donne's poetry, there is also a conflict between Catholic views on "carnal resurrection" and the Protestant stress on "spiritual rebirth", a tension between Protestant subjectivism and introversion as contrasted with an attraction towards Catholic sacramentalism. Examining the language of the devotional poets according to the Protestant tendency toward metaphor and the Catholic tendency for symbolism, M. Ross points out, that "differentiation is by no means clear cut between different poets or even between the different poems of the same poet. Thus, due to the Anglican dilemma a single poem may contain clashing Catholic and Protestant biases".[1]

Donne's "Nocturnall" seems to be a relevant example of the tension between the poet's impulse towards highly individualized metaphor and the traditional use of the insight symbol. Even when using the central insight symbol that had been at the core of medieval mysticism, Donne is compelled to make explicit equations to explain it in the context of his private, subjective universe. Throughout the Middle Ages the central insight symbol had been the Divine Sun, "in whom darkness and light, being and non-being, existence and non-existence are one". One also has to add that "the use of one symbol in many senses was natural to the medieval or mystic mind, ever conscious as it was of an underlying unity of all things".[2] Thus, the Sun was symbol of God, as the giver of light and heat, as well as for any human being sharing to some degree in God's function.

Though Donne refers to the Sun several times during the poem, he reveals a strong desire to explain and clarify, to draw the distinction

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[1]Malcolm M. Ross, Poetry and Dogma: the Transfiguration of Eucharistic Symbols in 17th Century English Poetry (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press,1959), p. 66.

[2]F. Dunbar, Symbolism in Medieval Thought, p. 273.

between the different meanings of the insight symbol: He draws a sharp distinction between the cosmic Sun, (the "lesser Sunne") ,and the Sun of his own universe, ("my Sunne"), by no means taking for granted the correspondance between their various manifestations. Although built around the Sun as the universal symbol, the poem expresses the individual's effort to reach towards the Divine Sun through the experience of contemplation.

In line with all these tensions caused by "clashing Catholic and Protestant biases", there is a fairly consistent, though ulterior number symbolism, suggestive in the context of a poem structured around the con - frontation of Temporal and Eternal.

The dynamics of the number symbolism seem to be expressed by the connection between 12 and 12; 12 and zero; and 12 and 7.-- The day of Saint Lucy's is the 13th of December, and 13 is the number of birth and death, rebirth and regeneration . As such, it is a particularly suggestive setting for a poem which describes the vacuity of being "re-begot of absence, dark - nesse, death", refuses the regeneration offered by the natural life cycle, and makes a final resolution to prepare towards death as a "long nights festival".

There is a mysterious connection between the "None" and the "twelve". The"None" of annihilation follows the "twelve" of midnight in the first line, as if making a reversal from despair towards the high noon of salvation which is to follow the deepest midnight.-- The symbolic twelve, the mystical number for salvation, is significantly emphasized by the poet, when he is stressing "midnight" twice within the first line, and repeats it over again in the last line of the poem.

Another significant symbol is the "seven", the number of the seven vices, the seven virtues, the seven terraces of Purgatory, and the seven

ways of Truth. The statement that Saint Lucy "scarce seven hours her - self unmasked" is based on the observation of natural phenomena, and fits in as a concrete detail in the descriptive elements of the first stanza. At the same time it also draws attention to the long night that follows the day of Saint Lucy. The saint of light, a surrogate for the Beloved, and in the long run, a surrogate for the Divine Sun, St. Lucy "unmasked" her light for "seven hours" to give a foretaste of the light of Eternity.

Following the pattern of the number symbolism we find that the twelve of "midnight" was followed by "seven", than it became reduced to "None". After this reduction, "None" reaches out again towards the twelve of"deep midnight". This movement of gradual contraction and annihilation which is turning, by a reversal, into a sudden expansion, happens to des - cribe the diagram of the 'hourglass'--and this diagram of reversal is also characteristic of the imagery pattern throughout the poem.

If one would describe the poem in terms of the mystical experience it is in search of, the achievement could be described as the process leading to the crisis of the dilemma--a progression leading up to the point of a "mystic reversal",the "crisis of inner experience consisting of a point of inversion, followed by the reorganization of personality around a new center".[1]

Beginning with the midnight of despair and mourning in the first line, the poem leads to a point of final annihilation. This is followed by a set of powerful suggestions that such a nadir could be but the be - ginning of a new growth, a "preparation" that will reach out and penetrate into the "long night" of the Beloved. By the last line, which is an almost

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[1] Ibid., p. 385.

word-for-word repetition of the first one, the connotations of despair finally turn into affirmation and, through this process, to hope.

The death of the Beloved as the "long nights festivall"is a meta - phor that connects polar opposites and it reveals an oscillation between the desirable and undesirable, spiritual and physical aspects of death. Expressive of the darkness and the negative aspects of the "long night", it also denotes the brightness of celebration, the "festival". The two contraries are being held together in a momentary state of equilibrium after the mourner had reached the climax of his experience which might be considered a mystic reversal. After his crucial decision to prepare towards the Beloved, the poet evokes this image of double vision, as if related to the psychological oscillation after the mind had reached the climax in its progression. The various possible connotations of the metaphor and its position within the whole structure seems to be crucial to the understanding of the whole poem, as an attempt at the integration of sacred and profane, Eternal and Temporal.

CHAPTER V

THE "MOIST SPARKE" -- THE SACRAMENTAL AS THE REVERSAL OF THE NATURAL ORDER -- CRASHAW'S "THE TEARE"

Crashaw's poetry is usually considered representative of a trend fundamentally alien to the mainstream of 17th century English poetry. Most critics would agree that "in his use of conceits Crashaw has neither Donne's intellectual range nor Herbert's homely realism", because of a "voluptous mysticism which suggests Italian and Spanish baroque art".[1]

Yet, in analyzing devotional poetry in the light of the meditative tradition, Louis Martz points out that the whole of "English poetry of the 17th century represents the impact of the continental art of meditation upon English poetical tradition".[2] If, then, Crashaw's conceits are so significantly different from the rest of the Metaphysical poets, it is probably his sensibility which connects him with the Counter-Reformation, with its emphasis on emotional intensity and ecstatic participation in the sacramental, as opposed to the Protestant tendency towards introversion and soul-searching, represented by the more intellectual epigones of Donne. Though both tendencies acknowledge that love is a form of knowing, Crashaw's poetry has a greater affinity with the Thomistic tradition of "connaturality", or knowledge through union. His emotional intensity and the comparative lack of intellectual argument seems to emphasize the belief that in meditation

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[1] R. G. Cox, "A Survey of Literature from Donne to Marvell", in From Donne to Marvell, ed. by B. Ford; Pelican Guide, Vol.3 (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1956).

[2] Louis Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 13.

the soul should be engaged "not to learne but to love". As, in the words of Francis de Sales:

> Sometimes we consider a thing attentively to learn its causes, effects, qualities; and this thought is named studie, but when we think of heavenly things, not to learne but to love them, that is called to meditate.[1]

The first stanza in Crashaw's "The Teare" establishes the object of the meditation, upon which the poet's "loving attention" will be focussed until this concentration reaches an ecstatic intensity. The object is one drop of tear shed by the Virgin Mary:

> What bright soft thing is this?
> Sweet Mary thy faire eyes expence?
> A moist sparke it is,
> A watry Diamond; from whence
> The very Terme, I think, was found
> The water of a Diamond.

The tear of Mary's sorrow is payment for original sin, the "expence" Mary pays for the whole of humanity. As "moist sparke" and "watry Diamond", the tear is immediately established as a synecdoche for Mary: when speaking about her tear, the poet is celebrating Mary. The "moist sparke" of her tear combines water and fire; matter created and divine power to create, or, the water of purification and the spark of redemptive grace. As "watry Diamond", the oxymoron combines softness and hardness, the flux of Muta - bility and the permanence of the diamond. Yet, not to leave any doubt in our minds, the poet leads our attention from the tear directly to Mary's person: she herself is like a Diamond, and so her tear must be "the water of a diamond".

The second stanza presents the metamorphosis of the miniature object, the tear, into cosmic proportions.

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[1] Ibid., p. 15.

O'tis not a teare,
'Tis a starre about to drop
From thine eye its spheare;
The Sunne will stoope and take it up.
Proud will his sister be to weare
This thine eyes jewell in her Eare.

The personification of the Cosmos in terms of Greek mythology seems to serve a twofold function in enhancing the dramatic effects of the tear's progress. Stooping to take up the tear and give it to his sister, the "Sunne" is obviously an allusion to Apollo, so that his "sister" must be Diana, the chaste goddess of the moon. At the same time, in the thoroughly interwoven set of correspondances that define Crashaw's universe, the Sun is also the personification of God. Stooping to take up the human tear, the Sun personifies Divine Love that "stoops" through the incarnation of Christ to "take up", or redeem the sorrows of humanity. Yet, since the Sun-god, Apollo is the representative of Christ, the Moon-goddess, Diana must, within this context, correspond to Mary herself. The symbolic content of the imagery brings forth a curiously overcharged atmosphere, where Mary's jewel, the tear, after the most elaborate set of comparison, can finally be compared to nothing else but itself.

Though the tear is fit to become an ornament to the moon itself, it will fulfill its function in the superhuman drama only through its humble human qualities:

O'tis a Teare,
Too true a Teare; for no sad eyne,
How sad so e're
Raine so true a Teare as thine;
Each Drop leaving a place so deare,
Weeps for itselfe, is its owne Teare.

The poet reaffirms the earthly, human qualities of the tear as the quintessence of human suffering, and establishes Mary as the purest of all

humanity. The following stanza, however, by continuing the double exposure between the allegorical figures of Greek mythology and Christianity, also introduces sexual connotations:

> Such a Pearle as this is,
> (Slipt from Aurora's dewy Brest)
> The Rosebuds sweet lip kisses;
> And such the Rose its selfe when vext
> With ungentle flames, does shed,
> Sweating in too warme a Bed.

Aurora, the personification of Dawn, can be seen here as represent - ative of the dawn of redemption, or the anticipation of the rising Sun. As a female figure in a motherly role, it serves as a metaphor for the chaste Mary, although one could by no means ignore the sexual connotations of "dewy brest", "kissing of lips" and the "too warme a bed". The elaborate symbolic content behind the images evokes multiple layers of ambiguity. Yet, the same complexity is also a means for the compression of thought, as the "pearle" has already established the consubstantiality between the tears of Mary, the "Rose", and of Christ, the "Rosebud". The tears shed by Mother and Son are parts of suffering, and these pearls are fit to ornament Aurora, the personification of Dawn and of redemption.

Since the"kissing of the lips" in the metaphorical language of nuptial mysticism often stands for the soul's contemplative union with Christ, the tear which kisses the sweet lips of the Rosebud is the tear of human purgation that reaches toward union with God.

The last three lines of the stanza evoke images similarly over - charged with the traditional symbols of mysticism. The "ungentle flame" that vexed the Rose simultaneously evokes the "flaming"sword that expelled humanity from Paradise, and that often painful, ungentle "flame", the "arrow of divine love" which pierces the human heart in the mystical quest. If

we consider that the poem is centered around Mary's role as the human mother of a divine son who will redeem humanity, the image of "ungentle flames" in "too warme a bed" might also evoke the painful act of giving birth, thereby symbolizing the painful condition of human life under the laws of Mutability. Such a suggestion, in turn, will also recall the idea of original sin and the promise of redemption, thereby integrating the multiple suggestions of the symbolism.

In the following stanza the sexual connotations are carried even further, as Mary's tear, the "maiden gemme" "blushes on the manly Sun". There can be no doubt that the "maiden gemme", through an implied compli - ment to the gem of all maidens, refers to Mary. Though apparently only a graceful improvisation on the qualities of the tear, the first five stanzas actually develop the progression of the tear in terms of the human predicament and history up to the point of redemption.

> This watry Blossome of thy Eyne
> Ripe, will make the richer wine.

Mary, or her tear, will be instrumental to Christ's sacrifice; the tear is blossoming into a flower which is suggested to turn into grapes and wine--a series of metamorphoses that actually suggest the metamorphosis of the tear of purgation into the blood of redemption.

In the sixth stanza the reenactment of the sacramental drama reaches a kind of culmination as the poet appears in person to participate in the scene. Focussing his "loving sympathy" on the tear as a physical object, the poet arrives at an enthusiastic affirmation: the tear, though made of the destructible substance of human existence, cannot be subject to the laws of Mutability:

Faire drop, why quak'st thou so?
'Cause thou streight must lay thy Head
In the Dust? o no;
The Dust shall never bee thy Bed:
A pillow for thee will I bring,
Stuft with Downe of Angels wing.

The last line of the stanza presents an example where compression of meaning is becoming the source of a naive sense of humor: The pillow brought down by the poet contains the "downe of angels wing", as if a guarantee that the pillow is bound to rise again. Since "downe" is a pun on "down", the line carries the paradox that going down eventually means going up. Another pun on "Dawn" as ascension is also relevant.

The seventh stanza describes the tear's ascension to heaven to hear the music of the spheres, denied to human ears since the fall, and promised to be heard only after redemption. Humility and gentle wit are simultaneously maintained features in the stanza, where the tear's progress actually refers to Mary's. Finally, the poem ends with the metamorphosis of the tear into an "eye of Heaven", and the poet offers a graceful compliment to Mary:

Yet, I doubt of thee,
Whither th'hadst rather there have shone
An eye of Heaven; or still shine here
In th'Heaven of Mary's eye, a Teare.

Throughout his meditation, the poet's attention is concentrated on the tear with an intensity which aims at a coalescence between perceived and perceiver. Rich in imagery of overflow and metamorphosis, the sensuous particularity of the images suggest various stages of transfiguration preceding this coalescence, the highest stage—contemplation:

> On its sensuous surface, [writes Austin Warren] Crashaw's imagination sparkles with constant metamorphosis; tears turn into soft and fluid things like milk, cream, wine, dew; into hard things like stars, pearls and diamonds . . . if in the Gospels, water changes to wine

> and wine to blood, Crashaw was but imaginatively extending this principle when he turned tears into pearls, pearls into lilies, lilies into pure innocents . . .[1]

Within "The Teare" alone, one might follow the metamorphosis of the tear from "moist sparke", "watry diamond" into the star of the sky. Back to the miniature again, it changes from "pearl" to "dew", from "maiden gemme" to "watry blossom"--thereby including the full range of melting solidity and coagulating softness.

> The effect, [remarks Austin Warren] is often that of phantasmagoria . . . For Crashaw the world of senses was evidently enticing, yet, it was a world of appearances only--shifting, restless appearances.[2]

In contrast to Donne's method, Crashaw develops his argument in an imagistic, as opposed to a rhetorical or a logical manner --as though aiming at the evocation of sensual-emotional responses instead of intel - lectual persuasion. Yet, there is a consistent structure behind his "phantasmagoria", and the poem proceeds according to the peculiar dynamism of a "rhetoric of metamorphosis".[3]

Throughout the whole poem there is a consistent framework of para - dox: the poem is developed through the elaboration of a non-natural, non- rational atmosphere. The oxymoron, the paradox and the metaphorical con - nection of polar opposites have the function of describing a universe fun - damentally different from Nature: Natural phenomena are used only as a means of pointing at the unnatural combinations of upward falling, meta - morphoses, melting solidification, playful alternation between expanded and miniature horizons. The rhetoric of metamorphoses outlines the rhetoric of the paradox. They are both sources of wit, directed at our normal appreciation of the natural realms.

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[1] Austin Warren, Richard Crashaw: A Study in Baroque Sensibility (Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1939), p. 192.

[2] Ibid., p. 193. [3] Ibid.

The cohesive framework of the paradox within the whole of Crashaw's universe brings us to the consideration of his central symbol--spiritual marriage. As I have already mentioned briefly, the poet describes the mother-son relationship in the sexual terms of a man-woman liasion, when the "maiden gemme" "blushes" at the "manly Sun", or, the pearl from Aurora's "dewy brest" kisses the "sweet lips" of the Rosebud.

According to William Empson:

> Crashaw's poetry often has two interpretations, religious and sexual; two situations on which he draws for imagery and detail". But, asks Empson, "are these both the context which is to define the opposites, or is he using one as a metaphor for the other?[1]

In search of an answer to the self-imposed question, Empson observes:

> Crashaw certainly conceived the bliss of saints as extremely like the bliss which on earth he could not obtain without sin; and this certainly was a supply of energy to him and freed his virtue from the Puritan sense of shame.[2]

Empson offers this suggestion only as a tentative or partial answer, which by no means should be regarded as a full explanation of this peculiar metaphorical connection of polar opposites. His suggestion is even less complete an answer if we recall that Crashaw describes the relationship between Christ and Mary in terms of all possible types of human relationships. In the second stanza, for example, the brother-sister relationship between Apollo and Diana is a suggestion of a similar relationship between Mary and Christ. Another reversal of the Mother-Son relationship carries the connotations of sexual union between man and woman. Brother and sister, male and female, mother and child--it is rather unlikely that Crashaw would project these incestuous relationships as "the bliss of the saints which on earth he could

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[1] William Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity, p. 217.

[2] Ibid., p. 219.

not obtain without sin". It is even more unlikely that the projecting of such relationships could possibly have "freed him from the Puritanical sense of shame".

It will be more meaningful to examine the symbol of Spiritual Marriage in the context of the mystical typology. The "union" between the human soul and God in terms of all possible human relationships is inherent in the very nature of this symbol. As to the function of this symbol in the poem. In her historical role, Mary has a paradoxical relationship towards her son who is also her God. Thus, according to Christian theology, Christ, the Son of Man is the universal brother of humanity: therefore also of Mary. In a somewhat more general context, Mary also represents the human soul and contemplative life: when describing the paradoxical relationship between human mother and divine son, the poet meditates on the "union" between the human soul and God.

This metaphor gains particular significance in the poem if we recognize that the poet in contemplation is aiming at the approximation of Mary's union with God. Through this meditation on Mary's tear, he celebrates Mary, the representative of contemplative life. The intricate relationship between the poet and his object is becoming even more significant if we recognize that the poem consists of eight stanzas, and eight is the mystical symbol for purification. By reenacting Mary's historical role in terms of the tear's progression, Crashaw creates a framework for the liturgical celebration of the universal drama. At the same time, however, the poet is also engaged in an intimately personal act of meditation: he reaches towards contemplative union

through concentrating on the process of spiritual purgation.

By evoking the oxymoron of "moist sparke" and "watry diamond" at the very beginning, and by maintaining the logical reversal throughout the poem, Crashaw elaborates on the traditional symbols of Christian mysticism. Embedded in the atmosphere of a sacramental universe, the poem celebrates the paradox which connects intimacy with distance, immanence with transcendence.

If Donne's poem moved between Absurd and Rational and then made another reversal toward the Suprarational, Crashaw's use of the paradox seems to ignore the middle region altogether. The paradoxical connection between opposites creates a reversal right in the beginning and is being maintained throughout as means for the celebration of the Supernatural drama, embodied in the paradox. The laws of Mutability are not only ignored but also dramatically reversed to evoke a sense of participation in the Eternal.

CHAPTER VI

THE "DIAL NEW" -- THE SIMULTANEITY OF IMMANENCE AND TRANSCENDENCE IN MARVELL'S "GARDEN"

"The Garden" exemplifies the peculiarity of Marvell's wit described by T. S. Eliot as an "alliance between levity and seriousness", an alliance that ultimately intensifies seriousness. Characteristically, Marvell takes delight in a sophisticated game of hide-and-seek with his reader: the straightforward description of the natural surroundings turns imperceptibly into the description of the internal world of the mind, and expands, again imperceptibly, from a glance of Nature into a vision of Paradise.

Through this movement we are often faced with a sense of surprise, a sense of paradox. Yet paradox has a very different effect here than in Crashaw's poem which emphasizes the public symbols of Christianity and uses natural phenomena mainly to describe a suprarational, sacramental cosmos.

In spite of the fact that Marvell sometimes describes the natural landscape in allegorical allusions, William Empson finds it much "easier to feel that Marvell observed intensely what he had described only in this cursory and implausible manner".[1] Empson draws attention to the complexity of Marvell's imagery which is "admired both by his own generation and by the 19th century", because its combination of the sharp wit of the

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[1]William Empson, Seven Types of Ambiguity, p. 174.

Metaphysical conceit with "the more direct, evocative and sensory mode of appeal"[1] of the Romantics. In line with this "sensory mode of appeal", Marvell's symbolism fits well the natural description of the actual garden, and it rarely draws direct attention to itself as symbolic representation. Thus, the "skilful Gardner" and the "Dial new" are both parts of the well observed natural description. Yet, as symbols, the same images celebrate God as a gardener whose skilfully planned design assures the restoration of profane, temporal existence into the eternal time cycle.

By the eighth stanza Marvell explicitly admits that he sees in the Garden the approximation of Paradise:

> Such was that happy Garden-state,
> While Man there walk'd without a Mate.

Yet, unlike Crashaw's notion of the sacred, Marvell's conception of Paradise does not entail the diametrical reversal of natural phenomena. At first glance Marvell's vision appears to be even closer to Keats's "speculation" which considers the Eternal as the repetition of our profane existence on a "finer tone". Apparently also anticipating the Romantic vision of Shelley's "Sensitive Plant", Marvell's "Garden" presents a vision of a sublunar Paradise, and the poem celebrates the "milder Sun" of illumination which seems to anticipate the "tender sky" and the "gentle sun" of Shelley's "undefiled Paradise".

Yet, these similarities notwithstanding, Marvell's garden is every-thing but a manifestation of a Romantic Nature mysticism. Shelley's garden is a "sublunar heaven": the Absolute seems to be incarnated in Nature.

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[1] Ibid., p. 170.

It is an "undefiled Paradise" which contains the promise of perfection and of immortality both attainable within the natural realms of the garden. Shelley's Paradisial vision, however, changes drastically to a apocalyptic vision of "living death", when Nature manifests itself also as the de - stroyer, the executive of the laws of Mutability.

Marvell's garden is not a Paradise, it is a garden of retreat and of contemplation. Only through cultivating the inner garden (through Introversion), will the poet come to see his surroundings as an approxi - mation of "two Paradises in One"; the recollection of Paradise Lost and the anticipation of Paradise Regained.

In this paper, therefore, I want to take issue with F.W. Bradbrook's interpretation which echoes an influential school of criticism in stating that "philosophically the Garden is associated with the school of Epicurus, where highest good is sensual pleasure". According to this philosophy, says F.W. Bradbrook, the poet comes to realize that "Time has no power over the flowers since both Time and Death are conquered by Nature".[1]

The examination of the central heat and shadow imagery in the poem should probably be sufficient to refute this interpretation. The garden is a place of retreat: "After running Passions heat / Love hither makes its best retreat".

A retreat from passion and from the " white [and] red" heat of sexuality, the garden is a place of cool "green", of "Innocence", the "Sister dear" of "fair Quiet".--"Green", the representative of the garden

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[1] F. W. Bradbrook, "The Poetry of Andrew Marvell", in From Donne to Marvell, p. 197.

is juxtaposed with the heat of the active world: the "green shade" of the garden offers more protection against the heat of profane existence than the "short and narrow verged shade" of the crowns rewarding worldly excellence. At the peak of the experience, in stanza six, the poet reduces the whole world to a "green thought in a green shade", to a thought consubstantial with the shade that brought it forth and protected it from the heat of profane existence. Having transformed the external world into a "green thought in a green shade", the Soul gains access to a new, cool light: like a bird of "silver wings", it "waves in its plumes the various light". As the final conclusion, the poet reaffirms this vision of light by emphasizing the absence of heat, the absence of any "cruel flame": In the last stanza he celebrates the appearance of a "milder Sun" that runs through a "fragrant" Zodiack. The pursuing heat of active life and of passion are associated with the "cruel flame" of the Sun that marks the passing of Time, foreboding of the Mutability of the natural world. Through the "wholesome hours" of contemplation in the garden, (by withdrawing from active life to nature and from nature to the mind)--the poet comes to realize the existence of a "milder Sun" directing the operation of the newly recognized sun dial.

> How well the skilful Gardner drew
> Of flow'rs and herbes this Dial new;
> Where from above the milder Sun
> Does through a fragrant Zodiack run;
> And, as it works, th'industrious Bee
> Computes its time as well as we.
> How could such sweet and wholsome Hours
> Be reckon'd but with herbs and flow'rs!

Though discovered through contemplation in the natural surroundings, the"milder Sun" is not the Sun of the natural world: "Time and Death", are not"conquered by Nature" as F.W. Bradbrook asserts. On the contrary, it is

Time that conquers Nature, but it is a conquest that also implies the salvation of Time, the long-term "computation" of the time of Mutability that operates in Nature, to the time of Eternity.

The poem begins with the contrast between active and contemplative life, contrasting the "uncessant labours" of wordly ambition and the willing - ness with which "all flowers and all trees do close, to weave the Garlands of repose". The illusory or fragmentary fame gained in active life is re - presented by the "single" crowns of the "Palme, the Oke, or Bayes " -- rewards for military, civic or poetic excellence. The crown of fame, like a "short and narrow verged shade" made from a "single" herb or tree is con - trasted with being crowned by the "garlands of repose" that unite all flowers of the mind, and represent a glory that far supersedes the fame gained by earthly ambition:

> How vainly men themselves amaze
> To win the Palm, the Oke, or Bayes;
> And their uncessant Labours see
> Crown'd from some single Herb or Tree.
> Whose short and narrow verged Shade
> Does prudently their Toyles upbraid;
> While all Flow'rs and all Trees do close
> To weave the Garlands of repose.

The poem sets out to weave this garland stanza by stanza, as an act of celebration and a tribute to the "skilful Gardner". If one would want to place the poem in the structure of the meditative tradition, it might actually be considered as an account of illumination.

> Recollection, Quiet and Contemplation . . . answer to the order in which the mystic's powers unfold. Roughly speaking, we shall find that the form of spiritual attention which is called Meditative or Recollective goes side by side with the purification of the self; that Quiet tends to be characteristic of illumination; that Contemplation proper--at any rate its highest form--is most fully experienced by those who have attained, or nearly attained the Unitive way.[1]

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[1] E. Underhill, Mysticism, p. 310.

There can be little doubt that this type of meditation was familiar to Marvell who searches for the "sacred plant" of "Quiet", con - templation; and for the "Innocence" of purification.

> Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
> And Innocence thy Sister dear!
> Mistaken long, I sought you then
> In busie Companies of Men.
> Your sacred Plants, if here below,
> Only among the Plants will grow,
> Society is all but rude,
> To this delicious Solitude.

In a series of witty reversals he makes paradoxical juxtapositions between active and contemplative life, claiming the superiority of rustic solitude to the civilized refinements of society: "Society is all but rude / To this delicious Solitude". He also makes a self-conscious differentiation between the image of the actual garden and the metaphor of the internal garden of the mind: "Your sacred Plants if here below, / Only among the Plants will grow". In the next stanza he continues the paradoxical statements, by stating that green is more amorous than white or red, allegedly symbols for passion, or according to Frank Kermode,[1] the colour combination standing for woman.

> No white nor red was ever seen
> So am'rous as this lovely green.
> Fond Lovers, cruel as their Flame,
> Cut in these Trees their Mistress name.
> Little, Alas, they know,or heed
> How far these Beauties Hers exceed!

More than a regression from animal passion to vegetative Nature, "green" seems to stand for uncorrupted Nature, Nature as it had been origi - nally created by God. The green trees themselves evoke the image of the

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[1] Frank Kermode, "The Argument of Marvell's Garden", in Seventeenth Century English Poetry, p. 298.

sacred tree of life, and, ultimately, God. Therefore, when Marvell juxta - poses the "white and red" and the "lovely green", he contrasts profane love with the love of Nature which ultimately points at the love of the sacred.

The tree is the meeting point between divine and human, it is a link which stabilizes the elusive connection between mortals and immortality:

> When we have run our Passions heat,
> Love hither makes his best retreat.
> The Gods, that mortal Beauty chase,
> Still in a Tree did end their race.

The race was intended to end in metamorphosis:

> Apollo hunted Daphne so,
> Only that She might Laurel grow.
> And Pan did after Syrinx speed
> Not as a Nymph, but for a Reed.

The reason for the chase, says Marvell with a witty reversal of the original episode, is the god's intention to give humanity the gift of laurel, symbol of poetry, and the gift of the reed, symbol of music--both gifts being means to man's reach towards divinity. The pun on the word "retreat" might draw the various witty statements together. Describing the garden as a place of "retreat", a sanctuary for contemplation, the word also suggests the act of re-treatment: it performs the transformation of the "white and red" heat of profane love into the "lovely green" of the sacred.

The fifth stanza reads like a ceremonious dance, a ritual of care - free, pastoral existence,- a vivid picture of Innocence, defined as the emphatic absence of sin:

What wond'rous Life in this I lead!
Ripe Apples drop about my head;
The Luscious Clusters of the Vine
Upon my Mouth do crush their Wine;
The Nectaren, and curious Peach,
Into my hands themselves do reach;
Stumbling on Melons, as I pass,
Insnar'd with Flow'rs, I fall on Grass.

The image of the ripe apples dropping by themselves evokes the apple of Paradise and significantly reverses it from the symbol of sinful yearning into a symbol of innocent fulfillment. The "luscious clusters of the Vine", usually the embodiment of toil and effort, "crush their wine" by themselves. The "curious peach" suggests a similar reversal of man's curiosity about nature into nature's curiosity about man. Even "stumbling on melons" seems to emphasize somehow gay connotations of innocent stumblings which fore - shadow the same kind of innocent fall: "Insnar'd with flow'rs, I fall on grass". Instead of the ensnarements of the serpent constantly present in the profane existence of active life, the inhabitant of this garden of solitude is ensnar'd only with flowers. Even in his fall he again touches upon the substance of "lovely green", the colour of growth, organic beauty and innocence.

It is probably no accident that the number six stands for the human soul, and that Marvell's meditation on the garden comes to its turning point in the sixth stanza. In the first two stanzas he excludes the pleasures of active life in order to enjoy the natural surroundings of the garden. Then, from his innocent pleasure in Nature he further withdraws into the realm of the mind. He turns from the"pleasure less" of the external world to the source of "happiness"; to the realization of the mind's similarity to God:

Mean while the Mind, from pleasure less,
Withdraws into its happiness:
The Mind that Ocean where each kind
Does streight its own resemblance find:
Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other Worlds, and other Seas;
Annihilating all that's made
To a green Thought in a green Shade.

God is revealed in Nature, and this, in turn is mirrored in the mind, in "that Ocean where each kind / Does streight its own resemblance find". The act of withdrawal into the depths of the mind completes the movement of concentration. Having narrowed down the vistas from the world of active life to the garden, here the poet reduces the whole garden to a non-spatial entity: he contracts the reality of the outside world into a "green thought in a green shade". Now the vistas again expand to "create far other worlds and other seas", transcending the world of Mutability to probe into the vistas of a "longer flight".

After the annihilation of all corporeal matter in the mystical reversal, the richly sensuous content of the imagery in the next two lines seems to evoke the ambiguity of all sensations. The fountain's foot is "sliding" even if it were the fountain of light and the shady roots of the trees are "mossy", even if they were the sacred trees of life; the senses perceive life in terms of ambiguity and not in terms of light. To gain true light, in a vision of illumination, means the discarding of everything sensual:

Here at the Fountains sliding foot,
Or at some Fruit-Trees mossy root,
Casting the Bodies Vest aside,
My Soul into the boughs does glide:
There like a Bird it sits, and sings,
Then whets, and combs its silver Wings;
And, till prepar'd for longer flight,
Waves in its Plumes the various Light.

The new splendour of the light imagery in this stanza brings to mind the mystic's account of illumination:

> The illuminatives seem to assure us that its apparently symbolic name is really descriptive; that they do experience a kind of radiance, a flooding of the personality with new light. A new sun rises above the horizon, and transfigures their twilit world. Over and over again they return to light imagery in this connection . . . It really seems as though the . . . attainment of new levels of consciousness did bring with it the power of perceiving a splendour always there, but beyond the narrow range of our poor sight . . .[1]

The image of the bird that "waves in its plumes the various light" seems to unify the whole movement of the poem which began with the weaving of"the Garlands of repose". The close similarity between "weave" and "wave" suggests the same kind of movement, in addition to unifying the plant imagery for the garden and the water imagery of the "Ocean", the "seas" and the "fountain" that stand for the mind. The bird in pre - paration for the "longer flight" is an obvious allusion to the union between God and the soul, since one of the most potent mystical symbols describes such a union in terms of the body assimilating its life sub - stance from the surrounding universe. The metamorphosis of the "various light" into the birds "silver wings" seems to refer to the preparation for this final union, as if a preparation for the "longer flight".

The next stanza again is rich in puns and witty reversals when it re-states the moment of illumination as the recollection of Paradise Lost and a foretaste of Paradise Regained. It also implies the ritual re - enactment of the Paradisial existence of totality before existence had been divided into male and female sexes:

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[1] E. Underhill, Mysticism, p. 249.

Such was that happy Garden-state,
While Man there walk'd without a Mate:
After a place so pure, and sweet,
What other Help could yet be meet!
But 'twas beyond a Mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two Paradises 'twere in one
To live in Paradise alone.

In a series of puns, the poet makes another allusion to the fact that Contemplation, or cultivation of sacred love means to "meet" Help that far supersedes the help of any "Mate". It is, in fact due to the ap - pearance of his "Mate" that man has become a mortal. Though a conglomeration of puns and allusions, the last four lines nevertheless convey a sense of loss and discontent and end the stanza on a note of half serious prayer:

Two Paradises 'twere in one
To live in Paradise alone.

As if to minimize this sense of discontent with the human pre - dicament, the poem returns to a note of affirmation: the poet acknowledges the divine design in the restoration of the human condition of Mutability to the eternal Time cycle:

How well the skilful Gardner drew
Of flow'rs and herbs this Dial new;
Where from above the milder Sun
Does through a fragrant Zodiack run;
And, as it works, th'industrious Bee
Computes its time as well as we.
How could such sweet and wholsome Hours
Be reckon' but with herbs and flow'rs!

The new sun dial at the end of contemplation is pointing to the poet's new consciousness of Time, guarded by the "milder Sun" of Spiritual Understanding, and, probably, since the Sun is also symbol of Christ, by a new consciousness of God's mercy. As the bee, archetypal symbol of the sacred, "computed" its time by absorbing the matter of the surrounding

universe to create the refined substance of honey, so has the soul computed the hours spent in the garden to assimilate the time of muta - bility into the time of the new dial. The hours spent in meditation, (the cultivating of the mind's garden through contemplating the natural garden), were hours well spent. They were indeed "wholsome" hours, another double pun on healthy and on unified. They were healthy because they were restorative: In contrast to the"single" herb and tree that crowns the toils of active life, the hours of contemplation restored a feeling of "whole-ness", a feeling of restored unity within the self, and of being united with the whole world of Nature. The "uncessant labours" of the first stanza are also brought back into the picture by the reference to the "industrious" bee. The "Dial new" might actually be seen as a unifying symbol which, as if in a concentric circle, unites the circular metaphors of the "crown" of active life with the "garlands of repose". Both concepts of labour and both concepts of Time are being now united in the operations of the "Dial new" which marks the time of Mutability, yet also points to the fact that through the well spent hours, the profane existence of Mutability will be restored to the cycle of Eternity.

Though focussing on natural phenomena, the poem is far from the Romantic feeling for the particularity of the object: The splendour of the natural surroundings is rather regarded as the revelation of Immanence. Similarly, the keen interest in the mysterious operations of the mind might be considered a link between Marvell and the Romantics, until we realize that Marvell's interest is actually directed to the transcendence of the mind's operations, to the intimations of "far other worlds and other seas" in the direction of a "longer flight".

Yet Marvell's poem is also remarkably different from Crashaw's mysticism. Marvell's Paradise does not evoke the Supernatural as a realm radically different from the natural realm of reason. Though rich in paradox, "The Garden" does not emphasize the metaphorical fusion of polar opposites, nor does it abound in the juxtaposition of contradictories in figures like the oxymoron. Instead, the figurative language evokes a vision of reality in which the natural realm participates in the Supernatural: The Immanent contains the Transcendent, the metaphor connects "polar opposites" only insofar as the sensuous is used to express the supersensuous.

This analysis of the three Metaphysical poets indicates that the mystical confrontation of contradictories assumes a different form in every poem. Thus, Donne's "Nocturnall" reveals the area of paradox in the contradiction between sacred and profane. The poem reaches its reso - lution in a metaphor of double vision, in the image of death as a "long night's festival".

The paradoxical juxtaposition of contradictories is the essential element in Crashaw's sacramental vision of reality--a vision which gains its vitality through the constant rejection of natural laws. The most relevant illustration of his vision seems to be the oxymoron, such as the "moist sparke".

The construction of Marvell's paradox is again different: the metaphor connects polar opposites only insofar as the sensuous is used to express the imperceptible; it describes a vision in which Nature participates in the Supernatural. The image of the "skilful Gardner" and of the "Dial new" are both parts of the natural description in addition to being symbols for God, and the Time cycle of Eternity: the paradoxical connection celebrates the simultaneity of Immanence and Transcendence.

Though widely different regarding poetic temperament and religious philosophy, the three Metaphysical poems nevertheless demonstrate that the paradoxical juxtaposition of opposites evokes psychological,cognitive and ontological implications of 'meaning'. Through these various levels of meaning, this type of metaphor is a successful literary device wich contributes to the success of the poem as a unified aesthetic experience.

When we turn to the two Romantic poets, their tendency for para - doxical fusion of opposites seems to demonstrate a fragmented experience: it conveys the sense of an unresolved paradox within the vision of the Romantic poet.

CHAPTER VII

THE "SUNNY STORM" — THE UNRESOLVED PARADOX OF THE ROMANTIC MYTH — SHELLEY'S "SENSITIVE PLANT"

Myth appears to be one of the favorite terms of modern criticism. It has been so often applied to the Romantic predilection of re-creating the universe in terms of individual poetic vision that M. H. Abrams suggests "symbolism, animism and mythopoeia" as the "most pertinent single attribute for defining Romantic poetry".[1]

As for the manifestations of a mythic imagination, critics suggest to concentrate on the poet's tendency for the "projecting of personality upon the outer world of things, which animates and animizes nature".[2] I believe that Shelley's well-known tendency for animism and mythopoeia must also be recognized as a manifestation of a Romantic Nature mysticism: the tendency for animating Nature is motivated by the poet's desire for "union" with Nature.

When describing the process of poetic creation, Shelley implies that the moment of inspiration almost invariably follows or accompanies a diffusion with nature, a union between Nature and artist.

> In childhood there was no distinction between all that we saw and felt from ourselves. They seemed, as it were, to constitute one mass . [This state is continued in a state of "reverie" when the poet feels]

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[1] M. H. Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition (New York: Norton, 1958), p. 296.

[2] Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature, p. 197.

> as if his nature were dissolved in the surrounding universe, or if the surrounding universe were absorbed in his being.[1]

This "reverie" reveals close analogy with the trance state of the religious mystic. To Shelley, it seems to be the preliminary stage of illumination which precedes or accompanies creative consciousness, a stage he describes as an "unusually intense and vivid apprehension of life".

"The Sensitive Plant", like most Romantic poems, is centered around the poet's quest for creativity, the Romantic version of a fundamentally mystical experience in the moment of creative consciousness.

The first part of the poem ends on a note of "perfect dissolution" in the universe, as all the inhabitants of the garden are "drowned in an ocean of dreams without a sound; / Whose waves never mark, though they ever impress / The light sand which paves it, consciousness". Dream, the world of the subconscious, is described as the terrain for the poet's revelation, where "delight, though less bright, was far more deep as the day's veil fell from the world of sleep". The next image of the sleeping plant dreaming about the Elysian chant of the nightingale suggests the poet's subconscious reverie or trance:

> (Only overhead the sweet nightingale
> Ever sang more sweet as the day might fail,
> And snatches of its Elysian chant
> Were mixed with the dreams of the Sensitive Plant); (106-109)

This trance, a process of blissful gestation, precedes the act of giving birth to the poem, the "Elysian" song of Eternity. Dreaming about the poem, in terms of the metaphor, is analogous to the ripening of the fruit within the Sensitive Plant's boughs, a ripening process that draws

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[1]Shelley, On Life in Complete Poetry and Selected Prose, p. 459.

and assimilates its life substance from a mysterious union with the surrounding universe. As I already pointed out, this process of assimilation is also one of the mystical symbols for the union between God and the human soul, probably unconsciously used here by Shelley when describing "union" between poet and Nature. In this process of gestation, consciousness is like a stage of illumination which anticipates union with "Love", the god-principle in Nature --incarnated in the poem by the Lady of the Garden:

> But the Sensitive Plant which could give small fruit
> Of the love which it felt from the leaf to the root
> Received more than all, it loved more than ever,
> Where none wanted but it, could belong to the giver,--
>
> For the Sensitive Plant has no bright flower;
> Radiance and odour are not its dower;
> It loves, even like Love, its deep heart is full,
> It desires what it has not, the Beautiful! (70-78)

If the first two parts of the poem might be described as a vision of light in an "undefiled Paradise"--a vision of"illumination"--the third part of the poem can be seen as Romantic account of the "Dark Night of the Soul" which follows the departure of the Divine presence, (incarnated in the Lady of the Garden, the goddess of Nature and of the poet's Inspiration.). Cut off from the Lady of the Garden, its life principle, the plant is also cut off from its vital elements. Instead of the ripe fruit it dreamed about in the beginning, it receives the dead bodies of frozen birds into its branches:

> And under the roots of the Sensitive Plant
> The moles and the dormice died for want:
> The birds dropped stiff from the frozen air
> And were caught in the branches naked and bare. (III,98-101)

Any hopes for a creative rebirth are shattered as the wind finally severes the branches loaded with the dead birds, the dead visions of the

poet. The plant is left behind,as a "leafless wreck", no longer capable to probe into the creative contact between the states of dream and conscious - ness. Destroyed is the fundamental mode of its being,the state of illumi - nation, when it had opened its "fan-like leaves to the light, And closed them under the kisses of Night". (3-4)

The poem consists of three sharply distinguished structural units. The first two parts constitute the vision of "illumination", completely reversed in the vision of the third part which describes the departure of the Lady of the Garden and the destruction of the garden. This vision of unredeemed horror is followed by the poet's Conclusion, a hint of recon - ciliation of the two diametrically opposed visions--a final attempt to create an equilibrium between the paradoxically juxtaposed visions of Heaven and Hell, Eternity and Mutability within the garden. Yet, the Conclusion itself cannot create an equilibrium. It cannot resolve the para - dox in the poet's vision which conceives of Eternity within the natural realm in the first part and sees this hope bitterly frustrated by Mutability in the next vision. As if to demonstrate the impossibility of the creative resolution of the paradox on the aesthetic level, the Conclusion is rendered in a tone of discursive logic, no longer in the "vitally meta - phorical" language of the whole poem.

The vision of illumination is rich in images of double vision:

> But none ever trembled and panted with bliss
> In the garden, the field, or the wilderness,
> Like a doe in the noontide with love's sweet want,
> As the companionless Sensitive Plant. (I, 9-12)

The trembling and panting with bliss suggests the juxtaposition of pain and pleasure, a juxtaposition not untypical of the Christian mystic pierced by the "arrow of love".

In another remarkable image of double vision the poet seems to create an almost emblematic picture:

> And the wand-like lily, which lifted up,
> As a Maenad its moonlight-coloured cup,
> Till the fiery star which, is its eye,
> Gazed through clear dew on the tender sky; (I, 33-36)

The image suggests a double vision, the simultaneous existence of the purity of the lily and the ecstasy of the Bacchante--the Maenad. It is an image maintaining a precarious balance between usually contradictory modes of innocence and celebration. Such an equilibrium of opposites is closely analogous to the bliss and yearning in the plant itself, and it suggests a double vision of mystical intoxication within a state of Innocence.

The pattern of the imagery in the first part suggests a profusion of mirror images placed around the central figure of the plant. As the flowers are rising up one by one from the "dream of their wintry nest", each reflects some of the sensate as well as the symbolic aspects of the plant itself. The Naiad-like lily of the vale, the nymph-like rose and the Maenad-like lily are all analogous to the plant because of their delicacy. The analogy extends even further if we consider that according to Yeats,[1] the nymph is an archetypal symbol of the soul descending into generation, and so is the Naiad or the water-nymph, both reflecting their symbolic meaning on the plant itself.

Another mirror-like relationship, the one between stream and the garden, affords an opportunity to the poet for repeating the images of floating and of interwoven relationships on a different scale and in a

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[1]William Butler Yeats, The Philosophy of Shelley's Poetry in Ideas of Good and Evil (New York: Russell, 1963), p. 52.

different medium: "And on the stream whose inconstant bosom / Was pranked under boughs of embowering blossom / With golden and green light, slanting through / Their haven of many tangled hue, / Broad water lilies lay tremulously / And starry river-buds glimmered by" (41-46)

The world of the stream reflects the world of flowers in the garden. The world of the stream, in turn, is reflected in another element, in the light dance of winds, the "swift and free" movement of the "plumed insects" and in the "unseen clouds of dew", all enveloped in the "quivering vapours of dim noontide, which like a sea o'er the warm earth glide" (89-90)

The relationships between plant and flowers, between land and stream, stream and air, and, finally, the air and the plant--suggest a pattern of a lace-like, interwoven design in which every being reflects upon another, and is, in turn, reflected in the elements. By repeating the same pattern over and over again, the poet suggests a consubstantiality between the different configurations: through the profusion of mirror like relationships, he evokes the feeling of union between poet and nature, the immanence of the "One in the Many and the Many in the One".

The vision of such a mystical interrelationship is strongly empha - sised by the rich synaesthetic imagery throughout the first part. There is a feeling of all sense impressions moving in unison, "as sound, odour and beam / Move as reeds in a single stream", and gustatory, auditive and visual sensations are being united in the experience of the river which "dances and glides with a motion of sweet sound and radiance". The most expressive example of synaesthetic imagery in the following lines indicates a transfusion between odour and sound, between colour and music, and colour and odour, suggesting a process by which one sensation is passing imper - ceptibly into another: "And the hyacinth purple and white and blue / Which

flung from its bells a sweet peal anew / Of music so delicate, sweet and intense / It was felt like an odour within the sense" (25-28).

The fusion of the different sensations into a delightful harmony is pointing to an almost supersensory experience, an appropriate back - ground for the Sensitive Plant when enjoying a state of perfect identi - fication with the universe, a state analogous to the mystical moment of creativity when the poet enjoys a feeling of perfect diffusion with nature.

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Choosing the plant as the central metaphor of creativity may appear rather extraordinary to us now, unless we recall that it had been the habit of early 19th century psychology and aesthetic theory to refer to the workings of the human mind as that of a plant,[1] denoting organic growth stimulated by an internal source of energy. Shelley makes full use of the plant metaphor, for example, in "Epipsychydion," where he talks about "flowers of thought" a "plant puts forth / Whose fruit, made perfect by the sunny eyes / Will be as of the trees of Paradise".

The poet's mind, the plant, produces thought that will reach fruition in the poem, under the sunny eyes of the Higher Being, the poet's epi-psyche, and the source of his Inspiration.

Shelley considers it the task of poetry to "arrest the vanishing apparitions which haunt the interlunations of life and redeem from decay the visitations of divinity in man".[2] He describes these visitations again in the language of mysticism, as the "interpenetrations of a diviner nature through our own",[3] and claims that the conditions of the fleeting

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[1] M. H. Abrams, The Mirror and the Lamp, p. 168-175.

[2] Shelley, Defence of Poetry, p. 520.

[3] Ibid., p. 518.

apparitions of Inspiration are "experienced only by those of the most delicate sensibility and the most enlarged imagination".[1] The poem extends the original plant metaphor to embrace these characteristics of the poet's mind, that is, the extraordinary sensitivity, which conditions his enlarged imagination.

Shelley conceives of Inspiration as of the "visitations [of] a divine nature [whose] footsteps are like those of the wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only, as in the wrinkled sand which paves it".[2] When, in the "Sensitive Plant" he describes the Lady of the Garden, the image evokes a similar feeling of almost traceless visitations: "And wherever her aery footstep trod, / Her trailing hair from the grassy sod / Erased its light vestige with shadowy sweep, / Like a sunny storm o'er the dark green deep". The fleeting, unpredictable nature of Inspiration, the granting or denial of the grace of divine visitations seems to be the poet's central concern. The ambiguous role of the Lady seems to be the key problem, throughout the poem: "There was a Power in this sweet place, / An Eve in this Eden; a ruling Grace / Which to the flowers, did they waken or dream, / Was as a God is to the starry scheme".

The idealization of woman cannot completely explain the fact why Shelley worships woman as "God to the starry scheme" until we realize that the very transcience and fickleness of woman seems to be part of the divine quality suggested by the poet.

There can be no doubt that the feminine has an ambiguous role to play throughout the poem. The "dark breast of Earth" gives nutrition to

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[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.

the young flowers but it also shelters the poisonous weeds, forms of "living death", as they "flea from the frost to the earth beneath". The motherly role of the Lady is similarly placed into an ironic perspective: "If the flowers had been her infants, she / Could never have nursed them more tenderly" (II, 1.40) Yet, by her sudden departure she leaves the Garden unprotected against the ravages of Autumn and Winter. Though she is the incarnation or at least representative of Divinity, she also re - presents the ambiguous roles of Mother Nature. This ambiguity can be demonstrated by following the developement of the child imagery in the poem.

At the end of the first part (111), the poet describes the plant as a"sweet child". In the second part, the flowers are "smiling to Heaven" and their confidence in the Lady is described in terms of "an infant's awakening eyes / that Smile on its mother, whose singing sweet / Can first lull and at last awaken it" (59-61). Seen in the light of their final destruction, Mother Nature has awakened her children's smile only to an - nihilate it, since the last simile of the third part presents natural destruction in the image of a pursuing "wolf that had smelt a dead child out" (1.107).

In terms of these analogies, the fate of the plant is the fate of the hunted doe, sweet child of passion, first annihilated and then finally devoured by its malignant pursuer. The noontide vision of the doe had been destroyed, and any hope for spiritual rebirth in a poem of eternal beauty is to be denied to the plant which is mortally mutilated.

The Lady's role is closely associated with the Moon, symbol of Mutability, an association reflected by the imagery throughout the poem. In one of the many mirror-images, the Lady is identified as the transient

Moon of the Earth. She "Tended the garden from morn to even: And the meteors of that sublunar Heaven / Like the lamps of the air when the Night walks forth / Laughed round her footsteps up from Earth". (II, 9-12) Her departure is described in terms of the eclipse of light in the Garden, followed by the rise of the new Moon on the sky--the symbol for the triumph of Mutability over an illusionary "Sublunar Heaven". This sudden eclipse of light and the rising of the moon is a dramatic turning point in the poetic structure, and it is followed by a complete change in the texture of the imagery.

The colour scheme of the paradisial vision is dominated by gold and green (similarly to the emerald and gold vision of the "Witch of Atlas", or Marvell's "Bermudas"). The stream is paved with "gold and green light", the insects are like "golden boats on a sunny sea", and the hair of the Lady is like a "sunny storm over the green deep". The combination of gold and green may suggest the eternal vision over the natural beauty of organic growth. At the same time, however, the golden vision of Eternity seems to be ironically questioned by an almost equal prominence of the "silver dew" and of the "moonlight-coloured cup": the golden dream of perfection is questioned by a "silver" world, imperfect and subject to Mutability because it is being dominated by the Moon.

The sudden death of the Lady causes a total reversal in the originally many-coloured but subdued colour scheme. There is a feeling of dimming light as the luminous whiteness of the lilies turns into the white of decay and death, "like the head and the skin of the dying man". After this dimming of light, the original colour scheme turns into the gaudy colours of "brown, yellow, gray and red".

The texture of the imagery presents the negative of all former bliss after this point of reversal. The tactile imagery in the first vision suggested a graceful, lacelike structure shielding the eye from the light, " as the light of tremulous bells is seen / Through their pavilions of tender green". Together with the change from the smooth textures into a rough-edged, sharp imagery of "broken stalks" "bent and tangled across the walk", the lacelike design itself has changed dramati - cally to the "leafless network of parasite bowers / Massed into ruin".

The originally idealized imagery of olefactory sensations is simi - larly transformed. From the "jessamine faint and the sweet tuberose" they turn to the "smell, Cold oppressive and dank, sent through the pores of the coffin plank". Similarly, the sweet harmonies of sound turn into a "mournful moan"--"groan for groan"--until the final horror of silence descends, imposed on the garden by Winter, whose "breath was a chain which without a sound / The earth and the air and the water bound". (90-91)

When examining the structure of the individual metaphor, we find that the first vision presented images of double vision in the "Maenad - like lily" and in the doe "trembling with bliss" -- and a hint at such a juxtaposition of opposites in the "sunny storm" which describes the Lady's presence as the incarnation of Inspiration. The vision of destruction presents images where the contradictories are held together in an even tighter metaphorical structure, in the oxymoron of the "living death" and in the "crimson snow" of the rose leaves. Described in the first vision as a nymph unveiling her beauty fold by fold, the rose is now shedding its leaves"like flakes of crimson snow", suggestive of snow besmirched with blood, a vivid visualization of the loss of the vision of Innocence.

In addition to the abundance of figures of incongruity, one might regard the whole structure of the poem as a paradoxical juxtaposition of contradictories; the vision of Eternity, the preparation for the song of the eternal vision stands against the vision of Mutability, with the poet mourning over the loss of his creativity--the departure of his Inspiration. The structure of the paradox might be seen as two contradictories following each other after the moment of complete reversal, represented in the eclipse of the moon which divided the first structural unit (I and II), the vision of the "undefiled Paradise", and the second unit (III), the vision of "living death". As an attempt to keep the two contradictories in a meaningful equilibrium, the poet offers a third structural unit in the form of a Conclusion.

In contrast to the vivid imagery of suggestive metaphorical connections in the main body of the work, the imagery of the Conclusion seems to be unrealized. Even when it refers back to the first golden vision, it uses unsubstantial, vague images, as if recalling the fading memory of "that garden sweet, that lady fair, / And all sweet shapes and odours there".

Imagery based on sensuous perception gives its place to a sunken imagery, merely recalling fully realized images of the preceding vision: "Whether the Sensitive Plant or that / Which within its boughs like a spirit sat . . .". The "that" refers to the soul of the plant, previously externalized in the image of the nightingale, singing over the boughs of the plant.

Similarly, in the third stanza, when speaking of "this life of error, ignorance and strife", the poet obviously refers to a group of sensually realized images in the earlier vision of the decaying garden,

but this reference is vague and unrealized.

In the singular discursive stanza aimed at minimizing the effects of pain in a most didactic fashion, the texture of the allegory totally disappears and the poet comes to offer his opinion in person:

> It is a modest creed and yet
> Pleasant if one considers it
> To own that death itself must be
> Like all the rest, a mockery. (128-129)

The sunken imagery, followed by the total disappearance of sensuous images seems to have a twofold function. Through the vagueness and generalization of the images the poet attempts to minimize the effects of pain and suffering. At the same time, it also tones down the splendour of the golden vision, so that the contrast between the pleasant images followed by the unpleasant ones, is clearly diminished.

Toning down the intensity of both visions which constitute the paradoxical structure of the poem, Shelley strives to overcome the tragic finality of the vision of Experience or of Mutability by questioning the validity of sense-experience in general. Twice removed from ultimate reality, he seems to say, why should we ponder the sorrows of the world "where nothing is, but all things seem, And we the shadows of the dream". Throughout the Conclusion, he strives for a philosophical consolation so that he might assert a vague hope for a world of perfection:

> For love, and beauty, and delight,
> There is no death, nor change; their might
> Exceeds our organs, which endure
> No light, being themselves obscure. (III, 134-137)

There can be no doubt that there is an image suggested by "love and beauty and delight" which contrasts it with "this life of ignorance and strife", but the images no longer refer to a sensually comprehensible world as did

the images of the preceding three parts.

In a curious contradiction, Shelley maintains that the world of eternal beauty can live only in the finite world of the mind. Yet, one should find consolation in the suggestion that if this vision seems to exceed his grasp, it is due only to the bluntness of his organs. Although it was intended as a consolation, the Conclusion ends with the image of "obscure organs", an image evoking the Limbo which "endures no light", a final negation which amounts to admitting defeat: Within the poem the loss of eternal vision seems to be unredeemed.

The Conclusion attempted to resolve the paradox presented by the confrontation between eternal and temporal, yet within the framework of the Romantic myth, the paradox cannot be resolved meaningfully. In spite of the many beauties of the imagery the structure of the poem seems to re - present the phenomenon T. S. Eliot called the "dissociation of sensibility", showing an almost total seperation between descriptive and reflective tones, as if the whole body of the first three parts were radically opposed to the discursive Conclusion.

CHAPTER VIII

THE "BLANK SPLENDOUR" -- THE UNRESOLVED PARADOX OF THE ROMANTIC MYTH -- KEATS'S "FALL OF HYPERION"

The two fragments of "Hyperion" and the "Fall of Hyperion" have invited a great deal of critical analysis and speculation, since both versions were written within the short period that marks the "great year" of Keats's poetic maturity, and both were abandoned at points that recall the rather abrupt interruption of the stream of the narrative.

"Hyperion" was to be a tour de force in Keats's career. His intention was to write a "work of epic grandeur"[1] in the"naked Grecian manner",[2] a work thoroughly different from the Romantic confessional. He wanted to break with the "Wordsworthian and egotistical sublime",[3] to realize the objective method of the great epic poets, a method relying on the poet's"negative capability". Yet, by the time he turned to the second version, his approach changed considerably towards the subjective, the "confessional". Although he still wanted to combine the finished parts of the epic from "Hyperion" with the dream-vision of "The Fall of Hyperion", most critics seem to agree that the project was an experiment doomed to failure. They name different areas of conflict as the cause.

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[1] John Keats, Letters, ed. by M. B. Forman, no. 17, p. 71.

[2] Keats, letter Jan. 23, 1818, in Complete Poetry and Selected Prose, p. 431.

[3] Ibid., p. 448.

W. J. Bate stresses the incongruity of Keats's desire to achieve "epic grandeur" in an age of spiritual turmoil, an age lacking the "seeming sure points of reasoning" that the epic poets of the past seem to have possessed.[1]

David Perkins substantiates Bate's emphasis on the lack of the "seeming sure points of reasoning" in Keats's philosophy. According to Perkins, the failure of the project might be seen as a result of Keats's uncommitted, dramatic habit of mind, which was eminently unsuited for the task of writing an epic.[2]

Douglas Bush seems to represent a minority of critical opinion when stating that the second version would have carried out the general intentions of the original, and it is only due to Keats's sickness and early death that the "Fall of Hyperion" is left behind unfinished.[3]

It might also be interesting to mention T. S. Eliot's opinion here. In most poems of the "sentimental age", says Eliot, the poets "thought and felt by fits, unbalanced; they reflected", yet, in "the second Hyperion (the Fall of Hyperion) there are traces of a struggle toward unification of sensibility".[4]

The fact that the "Fall of Hyperion" is left unfinished may indicate a close interaction between thought, emotion and the aesthetic

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[1]Walter Jackson Bate, John Keats (Cambridge, Mass., 1963), p. 421.

[2]David Perkins, The Quest for Permanence: The Symbolism of Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats (Cambridge, Mass., 1959).

[3]Douglas Bush, Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition (Cambridge, Mass., 1937), p. 126.

[4]T. S. Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets", in Criticism: The Major Texts, p. 532.

structure. Therefore, my analysis will consider the poem, the last or next to last piece in Keats's poetry, as a structure which presents his aesthetic and metaphysical vision brought to an ultimate conclusion. The conclusion, similarly to Shelley's vision, seems to break down as a result of a fundamental contradiction, a paradox unresolved within the author's vision of reality.

The analysis of the paradox in the "Fall of Hyperion" might be approached through observing Keats's handling of the "dream", a metaphor he often uses to define the ambivalence of reality, so that "dream" might equally refer to the substance of "thoughtless sleep" or to the substance of poetry, the transcendental vision of Imagination.

"The Fall of Hyperion" begins with Keats's central problem, the moral dilemma of the poet who wants to realize his vision and turn it to the good of humanity. The central theme, the quest for Truth, or the Essence of reality, however, can be approached or understood only through the dream: "Fanatics have their dream, wherewith they weave / A paradise for a sect; the savage, too, / From forth the loftiest fashion of his sleep / Guesses at Heaven .. . . / But bare of laurel they live, dream, and die; / For poesy alone can tell her dream," (1-8)

According to Hazlitt, all human beings "live in a world of their own making", and the poet does no more than"describe what all others think and act".[1] Apparently, Keats here introduces the dream as the metaphor for a "world of one's own making", for a private world confined to the subjective vision of each individual; a metaphor for the externally unverifiable vision of subjective reality. In this sense, indeed all living beings are "guessing at heaven in their loftiest dreams", and probably this is the direction

[1]William Hazlitt, "On Poetry in General", in Criticism:the Major Texts,p.304.

Imagination is to take once "saved from the sable chain and dumb enchantment" of mortal limitations. Yet, the poet's dream of Truth, says Keats, should be superior to that of the savage because the poet is capable of expressing his intimations--the poet's dream is also distinguished from the fanatic's because the poet's quest will accomodate a far wider range of humanity than a mere "sect". The poet's superiority lies not only in the "felicity and power" to articulate his dream: the touchstone of poetic power is in the universal truth and validity of the vision:

> Whether the dream now purpos'd to rehearse
> Be poet's or fanatic's will be known
> When this warm scribe, my hand, is in the grave. (16-18)

Keats precedes the description of his own quest with an appeal to posterity as the only judge qualified to determine the validity and the power of his "dream", his poetic vision. Yet, by this very appeal, he introduces a note which prepares the reader for a dream-like ambivalence of sense ex - perience which will be an important feature throughout the poem. Although he is trying to solve the ambivalence between dream and reality, Truth and illusion, Keats nevertheless presents the entire poem in the form of a dream-vision. The dreamer goes through a stage-by-stage progression that seems analoguous to the "mystic way", yet the connotations of the dream-vision might suggest that the dreamer is not the conscious hero of the quest, but rather, a person on an unpleasant pursuit, a possible victim of a "torture-pilgrimage".

In the first scene the dreamer finds himself in a landscape that reminds one of Paradise or Arcadia, the characteristic scenes of Keats's early poetry which celebrated the "awakening" of the powers of imagination and of the senses. Spread on a "mound of moss" before an inviting arbour,

there is a "feast of summer fruits". The feast fits well into the land - scape which also evokes strong sexual connotations. Itself a preparation for sensual fulfillment, the feast is also metaphor to celebrate physical love and sensual delight in terms of rich fruit and food imagery.

Yet, upon closer inspection, the dreamer recognizes that the feast is only "refuse of a meal, by angel tasted or our Mother Eve". It is a recurring theme of Keats's poetry that invitation of pleasure already foreshadows the loss of delight: the promise of Paradise foreshadows the loss of Paradise. Yet, in spite of these forewarnings, the dreamer has an "appetite more yearning than on earth he ever felt", so that he eats vociferously. Having satisfied his yearning hunger for sensual experience, he feels like penetrating into the deeper meaning of existence; having tasted the "grapes" he now thirsts for their "cool transparent juice". Determined to penetrate into the meaning of human existence, he is "pledging all the mortals of the worlds and all the dead" and then quenches his thirst. At this point, the first dream, or rather the first phase of the dream changes into a new one. The "awakening of the self" through Imagination is taking the dreamer, paradoxically, deeper into the dream, deeper into the core of the mystery and further away from the world of everyday existence.

In Keats's earlier works, for example in "Endymion" and in "Lamia", the drinking of the elixir is a delicious experience which precedes a pleasure trip to the unconscious, with the promise of "happiness" at the end of the journey. Here, however, the dreamer feels more like a victim of a "domineering potion", and the elixir is like "poison gendered in close monkish cell to take unwilling life away". In view of the dreamer's painful struggle, the Paradisiac scenes which enticed his thirst and

appetite, the scenes that stood for the "awakening" of his Imagination, may emerge now in a sinister light.

With the return of sensations after his swooning trance, the "mossy mound and arbour were no more": the promise of fulfillment disappears and he finds himself in the sanctuary of an "eternal domed monument", the scene of a painful "purgative stage" in his progression. He takes in the situation of existential loneliness and finitude:

> The embossed roof, the silent mossy range
> Of columns north and south, ending in mist
> Of nothing; then to eastward, where black gates
> Were shut against the sunrise evermore. (83 -86)

Approaching a high altar he is told by the Goddess Moneta that if he is unable to ascend the steps leading to the altar, he has to die on the "cold marble pavement for lack of nutriment". Like a soul in Purgatory who had a glimpse of the Infinite, no earthly food can nourish him any more, yet he could not exist without nourishment. Overawed by the "fierce threat and the hard task", the dreamer has another 'mystical' fit even more pain - ful than his earlier swooning:

> I shriek'd, and the sharp anguish of my shriek
> Stung my own ears--I strive hard to escape
> The numbness, strove to gain the lowest step.
> Slow, heavy, deadly was my pace: the cold
> Grew stifling, suffocating, at the heart;
> And when I clasp'd my hands I felt them not. (126-131)

Yet, this numbness was only the signal of reaching a greater depth in the dream and a higher stage in the progression, because now we find him mounting the stairs, having earned his right for imaginary flight "as once fair angels on the ladder flew from the green turf to heaven".

The poet's gradual self-effacement which is about to follow, can be considered different stages of purgation. If he wants to be a true poet,

"sage, humanist and physician to all men", he has to face the shortcomings of his earlier poetry. To be worthy of the rank of the true poet, the dreamer-narrator condemns all false poets, as "mock lyricists and large self-worhsippers", and calls "Apollo's misty pestilence" upon all who will not administer to mankind those healing powers that Apollo bestowed on poetry.

Harold Bloom[1] feels it necessary to apologize for this outburst as Keats's bitter outcry against his fellow poets, but the curse seems actually directed more against his former self than against others. This reading seems to be justified in view of Moneta's reaction to the dreamer's out - cry in the following scene.

Hungry for sacrifice, the "langruous flame" of the altar is "fainting for sweet food", but Moneta declares that the "sacrifice is done". It seems to be most likely that she refers to the dreamer's former self-sacrifice, whereat he renounced his former identity and expressed readiness to take upon his shoulders the poet-physician's burdens.

The "purgative way" or in Keats's own words, the "purging off" the mind's film, is over; Moneta reveals her face, a revelation of Truth that actually takes the dreamer's progress to its culmination.

So far the language is not rich in metaphors of polar opposites: the paradox inherent in the framework is expressed only through the movement according to which deeper and deeper layers of the dream--preceded by gradually increased numbness -- lead toward a more and more enhanced per - ception. At this climactic point, however, the language of the description becomes rich in oxymoron and paradox: metaphors of polar opposites. The scenes are "swooning vivid" in Moneta's brain, and her face is described through a profusion of the paradoxical juxtaposition of contraries:

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[1] Harold Bloom, The Visionary Company (New York, Doubleday, 1961).

> . . . . . Then saw I a wan face,
> Not pined by human sorrows, but bright-blanch'd
> By an immortal sickness which kills not;
> It works a constant change, which happy death
> Can put no end to; deathwards progressing
> To no death was that visage . . . . . (256-261)

Having passed this climatic moment of revelation, the dreamer expresses his desire, to see the "things the hollow brain enwombed", to find an illustration or clarification of the enigma revealed in Moneta's face; to find an explanation of the paradox. Though the moment of "illumination" is followed by the highest stage, "union" with the Absolute, this stage itself is described as if an anticlimax of the revelation:

> No sooner had this conjuration pass'd
> My devout lips, than side by side we stood
> (Like a stunt bramble by a solemn Pine)
> Deep in the shady sadness of the vale
> Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
> Far from the fiery noon and eve's one star. (291-296)

The long and painful ascension takes the dreamer to the climactic moment of revelation, a stage comparable to "illumination". Yet, it is in the nature of the paradoxical revelation that is has to be followed by sudden descent: the dreamer finds himself again in the deepest point of his journey, "deep" and "far sunken" from light.

The passages following the dreamer's descent are taken over almost entirely from "Hyperion", the first epic version of the poem. Now in the fragmentary "Second Canto", Moneta introduces Hyperion, the powerful titan, on his way to the titan's Assembly. Together with Hyperion, Moneta and the dreamer emerge from the "dusky vale" and reach the gathering place of the fallen titans. In the first version the description of this place is followed by the description of the Assembly. At this point, however, Keats abandons the "Fall of Hyperion", without transferring those scenes from the first version which would further the epic developement.

Keats's reluctance to transfer the already completed Second Book from the first "Hyperion" poses a curious question. The first version, "Hyperion" consists of two complete and one incomplete section, an un - finished attempt to represent the progressing developement of human consciousness in terms of mythology. The Second Book ends with the description of the Titan's Assembly, where the fallen titans, defeated by the immortal Apollonians, retire to the dark caverns and "sad places of oblivion". In the very last scene, Hyperion, the light of human consciousness makes his appearance in "morning like splendour" but this "splendour" can only make the fallen titans more fully aware of their fall and their tragedy: Mutability.

The third Book of "Hyperion" was to continue the history of spiri - tual progression through Apollo's developement as a poet -- a progression to culminate in apotheosis. There can be no doubt that "The Fall of Hyperion" was to exclude the book of Apollo's development in its entirety: It is the dream vision itself which takes the place of Apollo's quest for Truth, and it is up to the dreamer-narrator to re-enact the role of Apollo. In addition to this fact, Keats also changed the title from "Hyperion" to "The Fall of Hyperion", so that the new version could by no means accomodate the trans - cendental vision, Apollo's poetic apotheosis. In this case, "The Fall of Hyperion" was to end where the Second Book of "Hyperion" ended. Within this framework, then, the titan's tragic confrontation with Mutability was to be final and unredeemed.

It is interesting to note that the dream-vision stops short before the insertion of this final scene from the first version, as if the poet were reluctant to accept the finality of the "morning splendour" illuminating tragedy.

The same kind of reluctance to accept the finality of his own vision--after going all the way in the progression--had probably prompted Keats in the first place to introduce the epic, after the hero has reached the climactic point within the dream-vision. The dreamer's confrontation with Moneta brings the dream-quest to its culmination, a fact also made clear by the language, the profusion of oxymoron and paradox--metaphors of polar opposites.

The analysis of Moneta's revelation seems to be crucial to the development of the poet's vision, and to the whole structure of the poem. When, in the earlier work of "Endymion" Keats described his progression towards Truth, he found it comparable to a "pleasure thermometer"[1] where the ascending intensity of the sensations might be taken as a direct indication that the quest is progressing in the right direction, with the ultimate promise of "happiness" beckoning at the end:

> Wherein lies happiness? In that which becks
> Our ready minds to fellowship divine,
> A fellowship with essence . . . . . (777-779)
>
> . . . . . till in the end,
> Melting into its radiance, we blend,
> Mingle and so become a part of it. (809-811)

This quest for Truth is closely related to poetry as a personal salvation and the ultimate promise of happiness seems to include immortality, at least in the aesthetic, if not also in the metaphysical sense of the word.

The "Fall of Hyperion" begins with the self-lacerating doubt of the poet about the value and power of his own vision: he descends to the dream-quest with an uncertainty as to the means and the extent of his own powers,

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[1]Keats, letter Jan. 30, 1818, in Complete Poetry and Selected Prose, p. 435.

uncertain as well of the final point the dream will take him. Less than a hero, he is an unwilling and bewildered dreamer, allured by some almost hypnotical and often sinister elements in his experience. Yet, he makes painful efforts to ascend the steps to the altar. To reward his effort--or to punish his imperfection, the Goddess reveals her face, described in the paradoxical terms of polar opposites: It is "bright blanched by an immortal sickness which kills not", "deathward progressing to no death", and reveals a "constant change which happy death can put no end to".

A similar use of this paradox seems common among poets in the 17th century, though, of course, the assumed resolution of the paradox comes to a conclusion directly opposite from Keats's.

In "Sonnet 146" Shakespeare adresses the soul to assure it of immortality:

> So shall thou feed on Death, that feed on men
> And death once dead, ther's no more dying then.

Donne in "Holy Sonnet X" makes use of the same paradox:

> One short sleepe past, we wake eternally
> And Death shall be nor more: Dath thou shalt die.

Moneta's"immortal sickness that kills not" is the sickness of the human condition, a sickness that can never be terminated. "Deathwards progressing to no death", Moneta is the allegory of mortality, she is the incarnation of Mutability that can never die or be trascended by man.

As the allegory of man's predicament, she carries the secrets of existence with the benign indifference of the universe which, "like the mild moon comforts those she sees not". The "fellowship with Essence" the poet has pursued from the very beginning by no means can be equated with the highest degree of happiness he expected from his progression.

He stops short before accepting the "blank splendour" of Moneta's face as the final answer to his mystical quest for the communion with the Absolute.

Implied in his disenchantment is the fact that his entire vision of reality had been based on false, or paradoxical assumptions: the Arcadia of his earlier poetry was only an illusionary achievement, and the failing powers of Imagination, unable to open the gates to Immortality, will let the poet wake into nothingness, instead of "dying to life".

The breaking down of the poet's vision is not represented by a violent change in the texture of the figurative language as it was in Shelley's "Sensitive Plant". Keats expresses the moments of highest psychological intensity in terms of metaphors of polar opposites, and the "vitally metaphorical" substance of the descrition does not collapse with the breakdown of the vision. Yet, the poem, already a second attempt of an abandoned version, is left as a fragment. The existential attempt at experiencing every "axiom" of certitude and Truth upon his "own pulses"[1] was an impossible task which led the poet to an unresolved contradiction. Eternity can be conceived of only as the "constant change" of the nature cycle: the principle of Mutability cannot be transcended. Keats's con - frontation between the two contradictory concepts of "dream"--dream as vacant sleep or the transcendental vision of Imagination -- comes to the same conclusion as the confrontation of the two contradictory concepts of Time, the Time of Eternity and the Time of Mutability.

The unresolved paradox sends back the poet-dreamer to the "shady sadness of the vale", the deepest point of his original quest, and it is

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[1] Ibid.

most likely the same unresolved contradiction that makes the poet abandon his great project as a fragment.

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This analysis of the five poems is based on what I consider to be a central theme of the mystical aspiration, namely the radical con - frontation of two contradictory concepts of Time and Timelessness, Muta - bility and Eternity. I explore the connection between the poet's Meta - physical concern with the ultimate paradox, and his tendency for the polarization and the metaphorical fusion of opposites.

In somewhat more specific terms, the purpose of this analysis has also been to explore the different types, and the function of this meta - phor, and to examine the degree of success the poet achieved through this metaphorical construction in the context of the poem. Thus Donne's poem embodies its resolution in a metaphor of double vision: the metaphor which connects death with a "long night's festivall"has both sacred and profane connotations.

Crashaw's poem manifests the ingenuous use of the traditional symbols of Catholicism. The poem is embedded in paradox: it is structured not just around, but within the construction of a mystical reversal of logic, expressed by the paradoxical juxtaposition of natural phenomena in the oxymoron: "moist sparke" and "watry diamond".

The paradox is an equally important element in Marvell's "Garden". Having retired from active life to the garden of Paradisial seclusion, the poet reaches a new recognition of Time. The hours of meditation he spent in the garden were hours well spent, well computed. He recognizes the sun- dial as a "dial new": marking the passing Time of Mutability, it also marks the Time of Eternity. His conclusion is embodied in the metaphor that

connects the sensuous and the imperceptible: God and the "skilful Gardner"--Eternity and the "dial new".

Similarly to these examples, the two Romantic poems confront the contradiction between Time and Timelessness, the perfect vision of Eternity and the marred vision of Mutability. They also end in paradox, but this paradox is not reconciled in terms of religious and philosophical doctrines, or in terms of the poet's psychological resolution. Consequently, the juxtaposition of opposites ultimately leads to the breakdown of vision, illustrated through the various shortcomings of the aesthetic structure.

In the following chapters I want to point out the many analogies between the five poems analyzed, in order to examine further the paradoxical verbal structure within the context of the poet's vision of reality.

PART III

THE STRUCTURE OF THE METAPHOR

CHAPTER X

THE PATTERN OF IMAGES AND THE DIALECTICAL REVERSAL

The previous chapters contain the analysis of five poems of different historical and cultural background, and psychologically expressive of various poetic temperaments. I selected poems conspicuously different in many important aspects, in order to emphasize the significance of the quality they do have in common--evidence of a powerful mystical aspiration for unity, a desire for the personal confrontation of the Infinite. Within the context of each individual poem, I proved that this mystical inspiration coincides with an abundance of the metaphors of polar opposites. It remains to be proven, however, that the poet's tendency for this type of metaphor is the exclusive manifestation of the mystical aspiration.

Therefore, in the remainder of this thesis, I shall examine the following questions which occured during the course of the analyses: (a) Is there a way to define the mystical aspiration in terms that can be also applicable to definite characteristics of the aesthetic structure? (That is, on the evidence of the five poems, can one establish the relevance of a *leitmotif* which points to mystical aspiration, to the desire to "possess the infinite in the finite"?) (b) To what extent is this *leitmotif* relevant to the various levels of the aesthetic experience, i.e., to the structure of the whole poem, the pattern of the images, the construction of the individual metaphor? Can one say, for example that the

leitmotif behind the overall structure of the poem is also characteristic of the construction of the individual metaphor? (c) How does this leitmotif operate in the individual poem, when examined in the context of the Romantic or the Metaphysical poet's vision of reality?

In the course of analyzing each of the five poems, I came to the conclusion that the aesthetic experience reveals a relationship with the 'hourglass' type structure of the mystical reversal (as described by Castiglione). Such a diagram of reversal seems to be closely related to the poet's dialectical thought process, the dialectical reversal. I shall begin my analysis of this dialectical thought process by studying the poet's most characteristic pattern of images, and will consider these patterns as a kind of 'graphic chart' of the poet's argument.

I expect to find that the pattern of images spells out the strategy behind the dialectical movement: the poet's central concern with the mystical aspiration, his desire for unity. The continuous juxtaposition of opposites--a dialectical movement--propels the poet's argument to a point of climactic reversal. The pattern reaches its climactic point through a movement of concentration. This point of reversal, if the progression can be completed, is followed by images of expansion and unification.

To begin with, I wish to establish some significant patterns of images characteristic of a dialectical movement.

One of the characteristic patterns in Metaphysical poetry is the quick shifting between enlarged and contracted horizons, the 'witty' alternation between colossal and diminutive. Donne makes many references to the fact that, according to the laws of perspective, the size of the object will depend on the position of the beholder:

> Thou look'st through spectacles; small things seem great
> Below; But up unto the watch-towre get,
> And see all things despoyl'd of fallacies: [1]

The vistas of our rational consciousness are insignificant when compared to the enlarged consciousness only spiritual wisdom and certitude of religious belief can supply. In contrast to these vistas of higher reality, life is but a "stage", artificial and of limited significance when isolated from the proper concerns of the soul:

> How others on our stage their parts did Act;
> What Caesar did, yea, and what Cicero said, [2]

are all "unconcerning things, matters of fact", and for the truly wise, "this world was but a stage".

As for the lovers, their subjective universe contains the whole world in miniature, and this miniature exceeds the significance of the whole world of external reality. Thus, in the "Canonization" he celebrates the lovers "who did the whole world's soul contract, and drove into the glasses of [their] eyes".

In the "Sunne Rising" the whole world is "contracted" in the lover's room, their subjective universe. The Sun is offered a share in the lovers happiness: from now it can confine its activities to a contracted universe:

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[1] Donne, "Of the Progresse of the Soule: Second Anniversary", Seventeenth Century Poetry, 293-295.

[2] Ibid., 286-287.

Thou sunne art halfe as happy'as wee,
In that the world's contracted thus;
Thine age askes ease, and since thy duties bee
To warme the world, that's done in warming us.

The movement of the poem follows a pattern as if the poet were looking through both ends of his telescope. Aware that "through specta - cles small things seeme great", he looks at the external world of the court, of civil service and of the geographical discoveries only to dis - miss all as insignificant:

. . . . . , goe chide
Late schoole boyes and sowre prentices,
Goe tell Court-huntsmen, that the King will ride,
Call countrey ants to harvest offices;
. . . . . .
Looke, and to morrow late, tell mee,
Whether both the'India's of spice and Myne
Be where thou leftst them, or lie here with me.

He excludes the external world to concentrate on the lover's contracted universe. At this particular point, however, the telescope is turned to again scan the wider vistas: the subjective universe of the lover's"con - tracted" world expands to embrace the whole Cosmos:

Shine here to us, and thou art every where:
This bed thy center is, these walls, thy spheare.

The pattern does not follow a steady movement directed towards horizontal vistas as in classic poetry. As though playing with his tele - scope, Donne turns to the myopic vision of diminutive or miniature and swiftly alternates it with the vision of the colossal. The result is an inching progression as if the poet were continuously scanning the distance between depth and height:

. . . . . On a huge hill,
Cragged, and steep, Truth stands, and hee that will
Reach her, about must, and about must goe;
And what the hills suddennes resists, winne so.[1]

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[1]Donne,"Satire III [On Religion]", Seventeenth Century Poetry, 79-82.

The "Second Anniversary" presents one of his most characteristic patterns. The gradual widening of the lens is followed by narrowing the focus to the vanishing point, only to quickly expand the vision again. The passage describes death as the ultimate enlargement of the vistas of consciousness--the final stage of physical growth and expansion:

> Thinke that no stubborne sullen Anchorit,
> Which fixt to a pillar, or a grave, doth sit
> Bedded, and bath'd in all his ordures, dwels
> So fowly as our Soules in their first-built Cels.
> Thinke in how poore a prison thou didst lie
> After, enabled but to suck, and crie.
> Thinke, when'twas growne to most, 'twas a poore Inne,
> A Province pack'd up in two yards of skinne,
> . . . . . .
> But thinke that Death hath now enfranchis'd thee,
> Thou hast thy'expansion now, and libertie; (173-180)

The "first built" home of the soul, the womb, was like a "cell". Being born into the "prison of the body", the growth to manhood is described in terms of further expansion into an "Inne" and a "Province". Finally, physical death, like a "rusty piece, discharged", scatters the shell of the body. The body is "flowne in pieces" in order to liberate the "bullet" of the soul. The image of the "bullet" emphatically stops the process of expansion. The pattern moves from slow growth to explosion and than to concentration. At this point, however, the telescope opens up again: the movement makes a sudden reversal to the expanded vistas, as the soul "dispatches in a minute all the way 'twixt heaven and earth".

Having reached these wider vistas, (the upside-down section of the 'hourglass') the imagery describes the expanded consciousness in terms of simultaneous perception. The movement concludes with a metaphor that juxtaposes polar opposites: "This must my soul thy long-short progresse be".

Turning the telescope from the miniature to the colossal appears to be a characteristic movement in Donne's pattern of imagery. The dialectic of this movement is also essential to the understanding of some of the important aspects of his 'wit', since the point of dialectical reversal between contraction and expansion is also the point of reversal in significance and meaning.

Demonstrating the poet's consciousness of the fact that the tele - scope is reversed deliberately, "The Flea" performs a succession of witty reversals. A playful argument to get the lady to yield, at first the poem minimizes the significance of the lover's union. In a rather grotesque way, the first stanza emphasizes the small size of the flea in whom the lover's blood had already mingled:

> Marke but this flea, and marke in this,
> How little that which thou deny'st me is;

Thus "pampered" by a small drop of blood, the flea suddenly "swells" to enormous proportions as if to accomodate the vast significance of the lover's union:

> This flea is you and I, and this
> Our mariage bed, and mariage temple is;

The third stanza again returns to natural proportions, when it points out the smallness of the flea whose only guilt is seen in that "drop" of blood which it sucked. In proportion to the enormous significance of the union, the small detail of the lady's yielding now becomes insignificant:

> Just so much honor, when thou yeeld'st to mee,
> Will wast, as this flea's death tooke life from thee.

The lens makes a reversal from the insignificant size of the flea into the enormously significant mystery of the love union in the "marriage temple", and again returns to the ridiculously small size of the flea. The argument,

as followed through the pattern of imagery, reflects a sense of playful scepticism--a witty statement of the fact that size is relative, since the significance of the phenomena depends on the position of the per - ceiver in relation to the object perceived.

If Donne's pattern of imagery is characterized by the movement from macrocosmos to microcosmos, Crashaw's imagery follows the shifting focus between miniature and colossal within the framework of the same macrocosmos. In the atmosphere of an unnatural macrocosmos, the solid tear is suspended as a "watry diamond", "moist sparke", or precious "jewel", moving to the ritual music of the poetry to become metamorphosed into a Star, or to be picked up by the Sun as a jewel for the moon. The changing of the vistas does not follow the same persuasive purpose as in Donne's poem. The shifting between wide and narrow vistas does not lead to a point of reversal between absurd and rational: both the miniature and the colossal are seen to be moving constantly in a non-rational 'upside down' world of reality.

In "The Teare" Crashaw begins with focussing on a miniature object, minutely defined in its odd particularity and placed in the cosmos of the mythical framework with unquestioned solidity:

> What bright soft thing is this?
> Sweet Mary thy fair eyes expence?
> A moist sparke it is,
> A watry Diamond: from whence
> The very Terme, I think, was found
> The water of a Diamond.

The meditation proceeds with the quick widening of the vistas. From the "moist sparke" the attention turns to the cosmic images of the Star, the Sun and the Moon. Back again to the diminutive in the next stanza, the tear is seen as the concentration of all sorrow as it "weeps for itselfe,

is its own Teare". Through the images of "pearl" and "dew", the size of the jewel is expanded again: as "such the Rose its selfe when vext / With ungentle flames, does shed, / Sweating in too warme a Bed". And as if expanding from this "too warme a Bed", the tear progresses to the vineyard: "This watry Blossome of thy Eyne/ Ripe, will make the richer Wine". The poem reaches a kind of culmination as the poet himself enters the picture in stanza six, carrying the famous pillow "stuft with Downe of Angels wing" to prevent the tear from falling in the dust. The moment evokes the mystery of the episode not as a moment of enlarged consciousness, but as a moment of ecstatic intensity, which is followed by the tear's upward pro - gress to the "Orbes" and to "Heaven". The pattern moves between colossal and diminutive rather arbitrarily, and the end of the poem returns to paradox with the small world of "Mary's eye" being more significant than the enormous realm of "Heaven":

> Yet I doubt of thee,
> Whither th'hadst rather there have shone
> An eye of Heaven; or still shine here
> In th'Heaven of Mary's eye, a Teare.

The numerous reversals between colossal and diminutive suggest the structure of a series of little hourglasses. The images move from the miniature: "jewel", "tear", "dew"--to the colossal: "star", "Sun", back to the miniature in the "tear", the "drop of dew" and the "pearl". The vistas then open up again to the rosebud and the vineyard. Again returning to the tear as a small "drop" about to fall, the movement finally expands upward to the "Orbes" and "Heaven". It finally ends focussing upon "Mary's eye". If there is a structure behind this movement from colossal to miniature and back again, this structure certainly serves a different end than in Donne's poems.

As Austin Warren has observed:

> In substance but few of Crashaw's poems are 'mystical'. If, in spite of that, the name has affixed itself to them and is felt to have at least vague relevance, it is that their aim seems to be the production of ecstasy, a poetic equivalent to the trance state of the mystics . [The reader's] attention on the sensuous object . . . lulls the critical intellect while the poet insistently repeats his motif.[1]

While Donne's inching progression from colossal to miniature had a structural role in support of the overall logical argument, in Crashaw's poem this movement appears to be more of a decorative design for the repetition of his "motif".

In "The Teare" the realms of the universal or the transcendental had been reached even before the poet entered the cosmos of objective reality. He evokes this 'upside down' world of the Supernatural when describing the unnatural qualities of the tear at the very beginning; the poem opens with the oxymoron: "moist sparke" and"watry diamond". The nature imagery serves only to describe the mystery in terms manifestly contradicting the laws of nature and the rational. The ritual of the meditation consists of the evocation of and the participation in the sacramental, supernatural, cosmos. The shift from diminutive to colossal does not alter the significance of the phenomena: at no point does it reverse the relationship between the separately held entities of Reason, the Subrational and the Suprarational. The various images evoking the mystery are all participating in the phenomena of a non-rational, 'upside down' world of higher reality: this realm is not only the normative, but the only extant level of reality within the poem.

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[1]Austin Warren, Richard Crashaw, p. 194.

This is not to say, however, that the shifting of the focus from diminutive to colossal has no function within the aesthetic experience offered by the poem. The constant variations between smaller and larger entities prepare the poet to render a graceful compliment: The exceptional quality of such small and fragile an object as Mary's drop of tear has, in the central drama of humanity, an importance far more significant than the whole cosmos of Stars, Suns and precious jewels. The somewhat play - ful movement between miniature and colossal is there to celebrate this pre-meditated conclusion: it renders more vivid an episode of the central, Supernatural drama.

In Donne's"Nocturnall" the imagery pattern follows the rigorous thought process which gradually annihilates the Natural Cosmos of external, objective reality, and then the subjective, internal universe, to the point of "None". After this turning point, the lens dilates again to move from "My Sunne", and from the "lesser Sunne" towards the Divine Sun, by making preparations to join the Beloved in her "long nights festivall". The small area of this newly enlarged vista (in the last stanza) is that of a reversed, supralogical and linguistic reversal. The characteristic metaphor that follows this reversal is the metaphor connecting polar opposites: the death of the Beloved as a "long nights festivall".

The last line of the poem is almost identical with the first line: "Tis the yeares midnight, and it is the dayes"—and"this / Both the yeares and the dayes deep midnight is". Yet, through this process, the 'meaning' of the first line has been emphatically reversed. Due to a consistent number-symbolism in the poem, the 'hourglass'-like structure of the total reversal could be demonstrated with almost geometrical precision. The

"midnight" hour of the first line is followed by the "scarce seven hours" of the day in which Lucy unmasked herself. Enumerating the miseries of this longest night, the images lead to the final reduction of all cor - poreality and all consciousness to "None". Deciding to "prepare" towards the Beloved, the mourner declares that this very hour of despair has been a "Vigill", and therefore a means for this "preparation":-- he leaves behind the deepeast point of despair and negation, and reaches now towards the "midnight" hour, in an act of affirmation. The movement from desperate negation moved from "twelve", through "seven", down to "None". Having arrived at a point of self-annihilation in "None", it is now reaching out again towards the "twelve" of the "deep midnight" as if in an act of pre - paration, thereby acknowledging that the midnight hour may be pointing towards high noon.

The analysis of Marvell's "Garden" could illustrate a somewhat similar hourglass-like structure: there is a movement of concentration or gradual contraction, up to the point of annihilation, which is followed by a movement of reversal, as if entering, by sudden expansion, into the realm of a new kind of reality.

Turning away from the "busie companie of men", from the "Society" of active life, the lens narrows to the world of "delicious solitude", the confined garden of contemplation. After having meditated upon the abundance of innocent Nature in the garden, it narrows even further: Leaving behind the garden, it begins to concentrate upon the world of the mind as it "withdraws into its happiness". This happiness consists of the ability to contain nothing or everything -- to mirror, as an ocean, the widest variety of the natural phenomena, and, in addition, to create, "transcending these, Far other worlds and other seas". Before such an expansion to the

transcendental vision, however, there is a moment in the poem which suggests the coalescence between perceiver and perceived, as the mind is "annihilating all that's made / To a green thought in a green shade". This point of annihilation is followed by the new splendour of illumination in the seventh stanza.

> My Soul into the boughs does glide:
> There like a Bird it sits, and sings,
> Then whets, and combs its silver Wings;
> And, till prepar'd for longer flight,
> Waves in its Plumes the various Light.

This climactic experience of Introversion leading to exaltation, is re - captured in the following stanza, not as a metaphor of double vision as in Donne's poem, nor as an oxymoron, as in Crashaw's poem, but in the form of the witty paradox.

> But 'twas beyond a Mortal's share
> To wander solitary there:
> Two Paradises 'twere in one
> To live in Paradise alone.

The vision that follows the point of reversal does not take the poet into a 'upside down' world of higher reality. The "sublunar Paradise" of the actual garden of contemplation is not so much the reversal as a recollection or anticipation of Paradise. The "two Paradises . . . in one" refer to the full cycle of Eternity, restored to unity in the larger context of Time which finally unite the two Paradises: the Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained. The contemplation of this unbroken cycle of Time is the purpose of those "wholsome hours" the poet spends in the garden. The realization of the "dial new", of the uninterrupted cycle of Eternity is the goal of the whole movement, expressed through the shifting of the focus from large to small, from the smallest to the most expanded vistas.

Similarly to Donne's and Crashaw's poems, the overall pattern of the images suggests the diagram of reversal, the structure of the hour - glass. Yet, in addition to this overall pattern, it is interesting to point out another probably equally characteristic structure of the reversal--the diagram of the concentric circle. Marvell represents the wide vistas of active life by a crown of "short and narrow shade"--and describes the physical confinement of the garden in terms of the ample magnitude of the "garlands of repose". Similarly, when in the sixth stanza the mind "with - draws into its happiness", the poet is spatially narrowing his focus, yet he implies an expansion of consciousness by the same movement. In the last stanza, the image of the "dial new" seems to unify the paradoxical movement between spatial and spiritual vistas:

> How well the skilful Gardner drew
> Of flow'rs herbes this Dial new;
> Where from above the milder Sun
> Does through a fragrant Zodiack run;
> And, as it works, th'industrious Bee
> Computes its time as well as we.
> How could such sweet and wholsome Hours
> Be reckon'd but with herbs and flow'rs.

The image of the "dial new" at the end of the poem unifies all the various movements between different vistas. As if in a concentric circle, the "dial new" keeps all the other circles of various diameter, together: it unifies the physically wide but spiritually narrow active world of the "uncessant labours"; the physically confined but spiritually enlarged garden of contemplation, "the garland of repose"; the smallest contraction of the mind to a "green thought in a green shade", and the expanded vistas of Eternity.

The imagery in the first part of Shelley's "Sensitive Plant" follows a pattern strikingly similar to this concentric circle:

> And the beasts, and the birds, and the insects were drowned
> In an ocean of dreams without a sound;
> Whose waves never mark, though they ever impress
> The light sand which paves it, consciousness;
>
> Only overhead the sweet nightingale
> Ever sang more sweet as the day might fail,
> And snatches of its Elysian chant
> Were mixed with the dreams of the Sensitive Plant.
>
> The Sensitive Plant was the earliest
> Upgathered into the bosom rest;
> A sweet child weary of its delight,
> The feeblest and yet the favourite,
> Cradled within the embrace of Night. (I, 103-114)

The whole garden is embraced by Night, in an "ocean of dreams"; the plant dreams within the garden; within the plant's boughs gestates the song of eternal vision, the "Elysian chant of the nightingale". The effect is that of 'container within container within container' until in the innermost vessel, the diameter of the smallest circle suddenly opens to embrace the largest: The sleeping plant dreaming about the chant of the nightingale suggests the poet's reverie or trance which, similarly to a process of blissful gestation, precedes the act of giving birth to the poem, the "Elysian"chant. Thus, the dream of the plant, so far the smallest among the concentric circles, opens up to include the whole of the garden, and the widest vistas of the all-embracing "Night".

To illustrate the close correspondence between aesthetic structure and vision of reality, one might mention that this Chinese-box effect of 'container within container within container' can be considered expressive of Shelley's Neo-Platonism, a mystical preoccupation with the "One in the Many and the Many in the One". Such an effect of 'container within container' usually ends by a reversal as its final conclusion , demonstrating that the innermost entity of the 'contained' will expand untill it will itself become

the 'container' --a reversal also characteristic of the 'hourglass'-type structure.

To demonstrate how strongly such a structure was embedded in Shelley's thought process, one might point out that the allegorical texture of the poem suggests various levels of interpretation, all fitting into this concentric pattern of relationships. If we read the poem as social allegory, the plant stands for the poet and the garden for society. If we narrow the circle, we might recognize the poem as psychological description of interior biography: the garden is reduced to the poet's Self and the plant represents the poet's mind. Narrowing our focus even further, the plant can be taken to be the representative of Imagination, a single faculty in the human mind. In this case, however, the significance of the Garden suddenly increases: the garden must encompass the whole of the Universe--as if an illustration of the Shelleyan notion that poetry is at once at the "center and the circumference of the circle." [1]

The concentric structure of relationships, as well as the inter - penetration of contracting and expanding circles seems a meaningful embodiment of the poet's notion of unity, and, closely related to the hour - glass structure;is equally expressive of mystical aspiration. Appropriately, this structure controls the interrelationship between various clusters of images throughout the first unit of Shelley's poem.

But,if one examines the poem as a whole, the pattern of images spells out a different structure. The vision of "illumination" (Parts I and II) is followed by the "Dark Night of the Soul" (Part III). The Con - clusion is an attempt to reconcile the two opposing visions and to create

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[1] René Wellek, Romanticism Re-examined in Concepts of Criticism,p.212.

a sense of equilibrium: it reflects the poet's conscious effort to end on a hopeful note. Yet, the overall pattern of images suggests a spiral movement from the "sublunar heaven" down to the final reaches of "living death", the "Dark Night" in Purgatorio. The upshooting arrow of hope is turned down by the thinness of the argument in the Conclusion --the pattern suggests an incomplete version of the hourglass-like structure.

Despite the many differences in temperament and philosophical background Keats's "Fall of Hyperion" comes to a conclusion similar to Shelley's poem. Once again, one can study the development of argument through the pattern of images. The dream vision begins with the "wide" garden scene of an Arcadia or of a deserted Paradise:

> Methought I stood where trees of every clime,
> Palm, myrtle, oak, and sycamore and beech,
> With plantane, and spice-blossoms made a screen. (19-21)

The next stage in his journey takes the dreamer to a horizontally more confined sanctuary:

> I look'd around upon the carved sides
> Of an old sanctuary with roof august
> Builded so high, it seemed that filmed the clouds
> Might spread beneath, so o'er the stars of heaven. (61-64)

> The embossed roof, the silent massy range
> Of columns north and south, ending in mist
> Of nothing; then to eastward, where black gates
> Where shut against the sunrise evermore. (83-86)

As the last stage of the progression, the lens is narrowed to the altar, and the vistas become gradually narrower as the hero ascends the stairs of the altar to confront the Goddess of Recollection. In the process of ascending, the weight of the task is expressed in images suggesting a desire to burst out from the finite vessel of the human body--the movement that anticipates the final expansion of consciousness

waiting for the dreamer at the height of his progress. He complains:

> I had no word to answer, for my tongue,
> Useless, could find about its roofed home
> No syllable of fit majesty . . . . . (228-230)

and he feels a "terror" that "makes (his) heart too small to hold its blood".

Finally, the Goddess Moneta reveals her face in what is the incarnation of the mystic oxymoron in its "blank splendour". The poet sees a face that can be described only in terms of the paradox:

> . . . . . a wan face
> Not pined by human sorrows, but bright blanched
> By an immortal sickness which kills not,
> It works a constant change, which happy death
> Can put no end to; deathwards progressing
> To no death was that visage; it had passed
> The lily and the snow; and beyond these
> I must not think now, though I saw that face. (257-263)

After the movement of painful ascension -- the painful progress of the purgative way--the dreamer receives a revelation in the form of the paradox. This paradox described the permanence of change, the impossibility of transcending Mutability. Having ascended the gradually narrowing vistas from the garden through the sanctuary and the altar -- the dreamer achieves a stage of union after Moneta's revelation. Having ached to see "what things the hollow brain enwombed", he now gains access to the scenes "swooning vivid" through Moneta's "globed brain". He descends to the "secret chambers" of the brain-womb, to the mystery that contains recollection of the human past. Yet, after the gradual movement of ascension the psycho - logical moment of union precipitates the dreamer's sudden descent from these heights: being allowed to enter the secret chambers and re-live the process of human history, the dreamer again finds himself at the very beginning of his progression; "Deep in the shady sadness of the vale / Far sunke from

from the healthy breath of morn". (294-295)

The poet reaches the climactic experience which should lead to the sudden expansion of vistas, to the contemplation of the Infinite. Yet, Moneta's revelation does actually lead to the breaking down of vision: it leads back, without a reversal, to the repetition of the whole quest from the very beginning. The fact that Keats left the poem unfinished carries the implications that even the possible repetition of an ascending pro - gression could not resolve the paradox of "constant change"; it could not lead the poet to a concept of Time which transcends the natural process of Mutability; he cannot complete the 'hourglass' structure of the total reversal.

The analysis of these two Romantic poems should not imply, however, that the paradox behind the Romantic vision must end inevitably in the breakdown of the poet's vision. Thus, Keats's "Ode to Autumn", according to many of his major critics, the most perfect among his poems, signals the poet's reconciliation to this paradox: it can be read as an affirmation of the natural process as the only possible way of conceiving of Eternity.

Yet, when trying to explain why many critics consider the "Sensitive Plant" and the "Fall of Hyperion" poems ending in the breakdown of structure, the answer points to a paradox unresolved by the poets within their own vision of reality. This unresolved paradox seems to be deeply imbedded in the Romantic vision of reality: the futility of finding the Transcendental within the confines of Nature is brought to its ultimate conclusion in these instances where the poet confronts the ultimate contradiction between the Time of Mutability and Eternity.

Moving between miniature and colossal, and shifting from contractions

to expansions, the pattern of the images follows the major pattern of the poet's thought process, namely a dialectical interaction between opposites. As an overall tendency in all five poems, one might discern a movement of gradual contraction, which turns, through a sudden reversal, to a movement of expansion. One can visualize this pattern as an hour - glass like structure.

Both Baroque and Romantic sensibilities are characterized by a dialectical thought process and seem to be defined by a tendency to polarize opposites. This tendency for contrast is motivated by an equally powerful desire for the fusion or unification of these opposites. The process is closely analogous to the spiritual progression of the mystic who moves, through the "dialectic of concepts", to an experience of union, the "coincidence of opposites".

In addition to recognizing this aspiration for unifying the opposites, a closer examination of the individual images might prove worth - while. The sensation of expansion, for example, is a characteristic feature in the religious mystics' accounts of the contemplation of the Transcendental. Most often the mystic accounts for these crucial moments are moments of "intuition in which the soul expands to the universal".

Such an expansion of consciousness is a significant feature in all types of mysticism. Yet, one has to realize,

> . . . the term expansion is a term for a moment of experience that may include very different elements. What is expanded? What is it that streches to the infinite? Where to does it expand? With what infinite content is it permeated by expansion? That is the question. This also applies to the definition: mysticism of the infinite. . . . The "infinite" can be used as a vessel to hold most diverse experiences.[1]

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[1] Rudolph Otto, Mysticism East and West, p. 94.

I find a great similarity in the mystical aspiration of Romantic and Metaphysical poets, insofar as they strive for unity, "in search for the unifying vision which is opposed to the multiplicity of the object".[1] As the analysis indicated, each poem reveals a deep concern with juxta - posing Eternity and Mutability, Time and Timelessness, Self and Absolute: Preoccupied with the Infinite, the poets reveal the mystical aspiration to "possess the infinite in the finite". This mystical aspiration explains the similarity between Metaphysical and Romantic poets, particularly in the context of the dialectical thought process and the juxtaposition of opposites. At the same time, however, the mystical aspirations are bound to take a different course in the Metaphysical and in the Romantic poet's framework of beliefs.

Let us examine, for example, the position of Donne's metaphor, the "long-short progresse" in the 'hourglass'-like pattern of the images. We find that the fusion of opposites signifies a logical reversal in the poet's argument: the metaphor is appropriate expression of a supralogical experience in which the soul makes an immeasureably long journey between heaven and earth in what we could consider an immeasureably short experience of time. Within the framework of Christian beliefs, Donne's notion of the Transcendental justifies this apparently illogical coupling of opposites: the incongruous verbal structure suggests the transcendence of the natural world in the supralogical experience. This experience is fully justified by the Christian notion of the Infinite: both the experience and the literary device which describes it have valid position and coherent ex - plication in the entire texture of the poet's vision.

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[1] Ibid., p. 61.

Within the Romantic vision, however, the case is different. The poet's passionate urge for the Transcendental (pursued through juxta - position of opposites), cannot reach a creative resolution (there is no "meaningful" fusion of opposites). The dialectical process does not attain its aim of transcending differences. The metaphorical coupling of opposites contains an aspiration which cannot be realized within the context of the Romantic vision, it embodies an unresolved basic contradiction inherent in the Romantic myth itself. The myth is based on the equation of Nature and Divinity, Nature and the Supernatural. This equation, however, cannot be justified when questioned by the Romantic poet's transcendental aspirations. The pattern of images spells out an incomplete fragment of the 'hourglass' structure.

In the next chapter I shall continue the comparison between Baroque and Romantic sensibilities. Through examining characteristic patterns of imagery I have established the leitmotif of the mystical aspiration as the pattern of a total reversal (the diagram of the 'hourglass', the 'X' or the 'concentric circle'). Now I wish to pursue this total reversal in terms of the entire structure of the poem, in order to illuminate further the metaphorical fusion of opposites, and to determine the 'meaning' of this type of metaphor in Baroque and Romantic sensibilities.

CHAPTER X

CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION: THE STRUCTURE OF THE POEM AND THE DRAMATIC REVERSAL

The similarities between Baroque and Romantic sensibilities could probably be best demonstrated by the typical objections raised by critics hostile to these periods.

In a rather disparaging account of Continental poetry in the early 17th century, Miss Odette de Morgues writes of the "distorted vision" of Baroque sensibilities which create a sense of deliberate confusion by "mixing senses and sentiment".[1] According to her, this deliberate con - fusion results in blurred, vague or ambiguous images instead of the sharp, neat, accurate vision of classicism. In his article on Romantic sensi - bilities, T. S. Hulme makes a similar charge against the Romantics "who cannot say that accurate description is a legitimate object in verse", because they cannot appreciate "poetry confining itself to the finite".[2] Irving Babbitt's criticism implies that this deliberate vagueness in the expansive Romantic vision might actually be seen as an attempt to evade fundamental ethical concerns. In Babitt's words, "the ideal of Romantic morality is altruism . . . (but) the real . . . is always egotism",[3] and he

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[1] Odette de Morgues, "The European Background to Baroque Sensibilities", in From Donne to Marvell, p. 96.

[2] T. S. Hulme, " Romanticism and Classicism," in Criticism: The Major Texts, p. 568.

[3] Irving Babbitt, "Romantic Morality: the Real," in Criticism: The Major Texts, p. 550.

declares that the inaccurate conception of fundamental moral questions makes the Romantic poet wanting in the "ethical wholeness" that should be the primary characteristic of great poetry.

Criticism of a similar nature has often been levelled against the ambiguity or downright hypocrisy of some Baroque sensibilities, which serve, allegedly, to cover up for an ambiguous moral position. Although he raises his objections on an entirely different basis than the school of New Humanism, the Freudian critic actually repeats the same charges of insincerity against both Romantic and Baroque sensibilities. Blinded by his own faith (faith in the mysterious operations of the Unconscious), the Freudian critic considers any expression of religious intensity with great suspicion. He would dismiss the artist's mystical aspiration as a feeble attempt to repress, sublimate or evade the only real issue. The most typical line of this kind of criticism takes Bernini's statue of Saint Theresa as the _locus classicus_[1] on which to demonstrate that an artist would make use of any opportunity to smuggle in a representation of sexual ecstasy, even if only in the disguise of religious rapture. The same kind of suspicion is implied in assessing the mystical elements in the poetry of Crashaw or Shelley. The criticism is directed against their in - sincerity or unawareness of the overriding importance of the sexual in any quest. The _Romantic Agony_ of Mario Praz seems to be a relevant example of this critical trend which would describe what it considers to be the major characteristics of Romantic poetry in terms of psychopathological labels. Offering an explanation of some particularly 'Romantic'

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[1] Wayland Young, _Eros Denied: Sex in Western Society_ (New York: Grove, 1964), p. 101.

sensibilities, Praz writes:

> The discovery of Horror as a source of delight and beauty ended by reacting on man's actual conception of beauty itself: The Horrid, from being a category of the beautiful, ended by becoming one of its essential elements, and the beautifully horrid passed by in - sensible degrees into the horridly beautiful.[1]

According to Mario Praz, the sadistic strain in French Decadent literature represents the Romantic sensibilities brought to their ultimate conclusion, as "Sadism and Catholicism . . . became the two poles between which the souls of neurotic and sensual writers oscillate".[2]

The common basis for all these objections seems to be the critic's inherent hostility or indifference towards all sensibilities suggestive of a mystical approach to reality, particularly as represented by the major poets both of the 17th and of the early 19th centuries.

In her survey of 17th century European sensibilities, Miss DeMorgues takes great pains to assert that, on the whole, English poetry managed to escape the "dark vistas of the Baroque":

> The tortured restless sensibility which led writers to distorted visions of the universe -- mystical, macabre or absurd, colossal or diminutive--- could be and was checked, or otherwise made harmless . . . We know that the English Metaphysical poets controlling their imagination and sensi - bility, achieved a perfect balance in a blend of passion and intellectual subtlety.[3]

Indeed, "we know", especially since T. S. Eliot coined the term, that the Metaphysical poets possess "unified sensibility". It seems an entirely different assumption, however, to consider this "unified sensibility" as

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[1] Mario Praz, The Romantic Agony (New York, Meridian, 1956), p. 27.

[2] Ibid., p. 307

[3] O. de Morgues, "The European Background to Baroque Sensibilities", in From Donne to Marvell, p. 96.

the product of the "controlling of the imagination" and of the success - ful "evasion" of the Baroque, that is the mystical, the macabre, the absurd.

When reading Donne's poetry, I believe that his "sensuous apprehension of thought" is conveyed very often through imagery that might easily be described as "mystical, macabre or absurd, colossal or di - minutive" -- in fact, these elements are indispensable ingredients of his characteristic thought process. As for his conceits, they connect the widest variety of experience -- including the coupling of polar opposites-- and certainly reflect more an exuberant, almost unbridled imagination, than a tendency for "controlling (his) imagination". When analyzing the back - ground of the Metaphysical poets' "unified sensibility" Professor Willey draws attention to the complexity of the poets' "divided and distinguished worlds":

> . . . what T. S. Eliot has called the "unified sensibility" of the Meta - physicals . . . was the offspring--perhaps unreproducible in different circumstances of a scholastic training blended with the expansive curiosity of the Renaissance. It meant the capacity to live in divided and distinguished worlds, and to pass freely to and fro between one and another, to be capable of many and varied responses to experience, instead of being confined to a few stereotyped ones.[1]

Instead of considering it an evasion of the issue of the "divided and distinguished worlds" of the age, the "unified sensibility" of the Meta - physical poets can be seen as a successful attempt at unifying widely disparate elements. For the Baroque mind,

> . . . Truth is complex. There are many modes of knowing, each with its own legitimacy. Some kinds of truths have to be stated by negation or calculated distortion . . . Truth about God may be expressed through

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[1]Basil Willey, The Seventeenth Sentury Background: Studies in the Thought of the Age in Relation to Poetry and Religion (Garden City: Doubleday, 1953), p. 97.

> analogical images (the Lamb, the Bridegroom); it may also be expressed through coupling of contradictories or contraries, as in Vaughan's "deep but dazzling darkness" [1]

"Negation or calculated distortion" seems a characteristic feature of the thought process which leads to the "coupling of contradictories". Such a tendency, basic to the mystical vision, is often distateful to the neo-classical mind which "likes clear distinctions and rational progression: metonymic movements from genus to species or particular to species. But the Baroque mind invokes a universe at once of many worlds, and of worlds all, in unpredictable ways, connected".[2]

One could go even further, and say that the metaphor which connects polar opposites is a relevant manifestation of the drive for unification, which is a fundamentally mystical drive, represented both in the Romantic and Metaphysical poets:

> The symbol of the coincidence of opposites, a universal symbol, betrays a nostalgia for a lost Paradise, a paradoxical state in which contraries coexist without opposing one another and where all multiplicities compose aspects of a mysterious unity. In the final analysis, it is the desire to recover this lost Paradise which constrains man to conceive the opposites as complimentary aspects of a mysterious unity.[3]

If the root of mysticism is the strong nostalgia fro a nonalienated state, the manifestation of a mystical strain in the representative poetry of the age is probably indicative of a strong sense of intellectual anguish and alienation in that particular period. Such an assumption seems to be supported by the evidence of the history of religious mysticism:

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[1] Wellek and Warren, Theory of Literature, p. 198. [2] Ibid.

[3] M. Eliade, Mephistopheles and Androgyne, p. 16.

> The great periods of mystical activity tend to correspond with the great periods of artistic, material and intellectual civilization. As a rule, they come immediately after and seem to complete such periods . . . When science, politics, literature and the arts--the domination of nature and the ordering life--have risen to their height and produced their greatest works, the mystic comes to the front: snatches the torch, and carries it on.[1]

The appearance of a mystical strain in literature seems to be a characteristic occurence after great periods of expansion. It springs from the desire to integrate all the new-fangled evidence of a suddenly expanded and, consequently, divided world. The violent intensity of Donne's dialectics attempts to attain 'mystical' certitude over the disquiting dis - coveries of the new philosophy that called all in doubt. The strong mystical strain in Donne's poetry might be considered an attempt to unify different strains and strata within the self, between the self and the world, as well as between the self and God.

The shocking incongruity of the Metaphysical conceit chooses to create a connection between widely different, or often opposite poles of experience, justifying Samuel Johnson's verdict that the Metaphysicals try to "yoke together heterogenous elements by force".[2] As the general tendency in Baroque sensibilities, the Metaphysical poets have indeed an enormous desire "to draw correspondances between heterogenous things and thereby reveal the unity of what appears fragmentary".[3]

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[1] E. Underhill, Mysticism, p. 453.

[2] Samuel Johnson, From "The Life of Cowley" in Criticism: The Major Texts, p. 218.

[3] Joseph Anthony Mazzeo, "A Critique of some Modern Theories of Metaphysical Poetry" in Seventeenth Century English Poetry, p. 69.

A desire for unity is also at the source of the " tendency in Baroque plastic art towards breaking down the barriers between arts to create a universal art", in an effort to "combine them all"; to reveal a "universal analogy".[1] The yearning for unity achieved through the breaking down of the barriers is expressed in images that combine elements in a way which seems to be distasteful or absurd to the classic sensibility. Crashaw's poetry presents relevant examples: The tears in "The Weeper" are "floating upwards" to be drunk by "Heaven's bosome", to be eventually turned into the "cream" of the "milky rivers":

> Every morn from hence
> A brisk Cherub something sippes
> Whose sacred influence
> Addes sweetnes to his sweetest Lippes.
> Then to his musick. And his song
> Tasts of this Breakfast all day long.

The effect of the metamorphosis between the sacramental tear and the cream of Cupid's breakfast is indeed disconcerting. It is somehow similar to the impact of the more extreme examples of Baroque church decoration. These, disregarding the distinct requirements of different media, begin as the plaster body of an angel, an element of the architecture, and end up with painted wings in the fresco.

The nonchalance about mixing media in the plastic arts is paral - lelled by indifference to literary genres and clear distinctions between high and low styles. Expressing this tendency for the "breaking down of barriers", the characteristic metaphor of the age fuses the widest variety of experience, mixing sacred and profane, high and humble, comic and sacramental.-- A similar disregard for genre is also a characteristic

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[1] Ibid., p. 64.

feature of Romantic poetry with its impetuous fusion of high and low styles, and the fusion, within the metaphor, of "grotesque and sublime".

When examining the speres of experience whence the poets draw material for their metaphor, we find that the mystical strain in literature does not necessarily bring about the exclusion of the world: Mystical aspiration does not manifest itself exclusively through spiritual in - wardness. Instead of refusing the rich heredity of the Renaissance, the Metaphysical poet is trying to bring it to its utmost conslusion. Similarly, the mystical strain in the Romantics does not mean an explicit negation of the classic equilibrium achieved by the 18th century. Shelley is much influenced by the philosophers of the Age of Reason, and Keats's whole vision is determined to a great extent by the scepticism of 18th century empirical philosophy. The Romantic urge to reach for the Transcendental is the 18th century brought to ultimate conclusion.

The strong classical strain in the Renaissance seems to be followed by a mystical re-statement in the Baroque, and the Neo-classical emphasis in the Age of Reason is followed by an emotional re-statement of mysticism by the Romantics. The manifestations of a mystical strain in poetry might often be considered as the poet's attempt to bring unity to a bulk of concepts inherited from the preceding period. The poetry of both periods conveys a strong sense of conflict, a strong sense of the dramatic, as the manifestation of spiritual turmoil and of the consequent desire for reaching an equilibrium: the integration of conflict.

Helen Gardner points out that "Metaphysical poetry is the great age of our drama", and Donne himself a "great frequenter of plays". He presents a strong dramatic sense through his poems in which "all faculties are

heightened as in drama".[1] Gardner emphasizes the dramatic effect inherent in Donne's most typical pieces, which begin with the "vivid imagining of a moment of experience or of a situation out of which the need to argue, or persuade, or define, arises".[2] The fact that Donne's poetry is so rich in dramatic effects, can probably be attributed to something else besides his participation in the rich theatrical life of the period.

I believe that the dramatic qualities of Donne's, Herbert's or Crashaw's poems could probably be best approached in the light of the meditative tradition shared by all these poets. As Louis Martz pointed out, the "Metaphysical poets, widely different in temper and outlook, are drawn together by resemblances that result, basically, from the common practice of certain religious meditation".[3] As an "intense, imaginative exercise", meditation "brings together the senses, emotions and intellectual faculties of man; brings them together in a moment of dramatic, creative experience".[4] Since it is aiming at such a dramatic experience all the way through, I suggest approaching meditation itself as an inner drama, or to use Donne's own words, a "dialogue of one".[5]

When examining a poem within the meditative tradition, one might generally observe that the poet proceeds by way of a dramatic articulation of conflict toward the emphatic resolution, that is, through the polarization

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[1]Helen Gardner, "The Metaphysical Poets," in Seventeenth Century English Poetry, p. 57.

[2]Ibid., p. 58.

[3]Louis Martz, The Poetry of Meditation, p. 2.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Donne, "The Extasie", Seventeenth Century Poetry, 74

of opposite elements, to the reorganization of the self according to a new center. When examining the structure of the whole poem in terms of such a dramatic structure, we might say that the various stages in the meditation are analogous to the 'involvement' which leads gradually to the dramatic 'reversal'. One might elaborate on the analogy between the meditative poem and the dramatic structure by pointing out that simultaneously with this dramatic 'reversal', the poet also reaches a moment of 'recognition': After the 'dénouement' of the entanglements encountered in the world of appearances (which is the dialectical exposition of conflict), the poet reaches his resolution as a new recognition of the 'real'.— The meta - phor of polar opposites occurs in the poem at such a climactic point of the dramatic reversal, which seems to indicate that the 'hourglass'-like structure of the dramatic movement that we observed in the entire poem, has close relevance of this type of metaphorical construction as well.

The structure of Donne's "Nocturnall" demonstrates the character - istics of a dramatic "dialogue of one". It might indeed be considered as a structure which bears resemblance to the structure of tragedy, aiming at a ritual of purification. The catharsis, in this case, is brought forth by the reversal of despair into affirmation, the expurgation of fear into the anticipation of grace. The dramatic movement of the whole poem, just as the pattern of images, reminds us of an 'hourglass'-like structure. The climactic point is the point of reversal, simultaneous with a kind of recognition. This point is established after the poem dismisses the whole world of objective reality as mere illusion--via the <u>reductio ad absurdum</u> of the whole world to "None". Following this point of annihilation, the vistas are expanded again as the result of the dramatic reversal reaching

towards the normative vision: 'reality' following the natural world of illusion (This is the upside-down section of the hourglass).

The metaphor of polar opposites occurs as the manifestation of this reversal, and it is the evidence of such a dramatic structure. When comparing death to a "long nights festivall", the poet makes an illogical connection. The reversal of logic, inherent in this connection, can only be meaningful in the context of a normative vision known to be the reversal of rational, natural, objective reality.

In the context of the rational rules of discursive logic, the meta - phor connecting polar opposites can produce either laughter or awe. The illogical situation represented by this type of metaphor can point either at the Subrational, as in Comedy -- or at a higher order of the Suprarational, as in Tragedy:

When, in "The Flea" Donne compares the flea to the "mariage bed and mariage temple", he connects polar opposites: he suggests analogy between the insignificant flea of miniature proportions and the vastly significant union of the lovers, described here in colossal proportions. The connection is to produce laughter: it presents a reversal of logic that points to the subrational, to the absurd. In relation to the rational order, the meta - phor expresses an 'upside down' situation that will have to be corrected by reverting to the natural realms of Reason. As if to perform this act of correction, the last stanza, back again to natural proportions, ends the poem with a metaphor based on logical analogy:

> Just so much honour, when thou yeeld'st to mee,
> Will wast, as this flea's death tooke life from thee.

Although the reversal between the absurd and rational suggests the characteristic movement of Comedy, this is not to say that the interaction between absurd and rational must always be the source of humor. When, in the "Nocturnall", Donne elaborates on his nothingness, he makes several 'absurd statements' which imply the mathematical absurdity that nothingness can be multiplied and increased: "For I am every dead thing, / In whom love wrought new Alchimie, / For his art did expresse / A quintessence even from nothingnesse", and, "I, by loves limbecke, am the grave / Of all that's nothing", or "I am . . . Of the first nothing, the Elixer grown".

Having reached the final point in his absurd progression, he makes a re-statement in form of a simple negation: "I am None". Due to the vehemence of grief, he comes to the subrational negation of all creation; by eliminating Nature, he reaches absurdity. Yet, it was through the process of this negation that he approached the Suprarational: The simple negative of "None" acts as a reversal from the absurd to the rational. This reversal to the rational, will, in turn "prepare" toward the Beloved, toward the Suprarational and Supernatural realm beyond her "long nights festivall". The peculiar gymnastics of Donne's wit perform a series of 'witty' reversals between absurd and rational, and between rational and suprarational, a series of gymnastics expressed through the recurrence of the metaphor connecting polar opposites.

I want to emphasize the exciting range of Donne's mystical dialectics, by pointing out the succession of reversals between Absurd and Rational, Rational and Suprarational, the swift alternation between comic and tragic, witty and serious reversals. My views on the mystical preoccupation behind this dialectic seems to be fully supported by C. S. Lewis. He finds that

Donne's dynamic thought process produces a unique effect "as though Donne performed in deepest depression those gymnastics which are usually a sign of intellectual high spirits".[1]

The dramatic structure of Crashaw's poem, and the structure of his metaphor differ significantly from Donne's. Similarly to the Mass which re-enacts the central drama of Christianity, Crashaw's meditations can be regarded as re-enactment of different episodes from the Passion. Instead of Donne's "dialogue of one", Crashaw's meditation reveals similarity to drama as religious ritual.

> Through the abolition of profane time, ritual always projects the concrete in mythical time . . . so that every ritual has the characteristic of happening now at this very moment.[2]

In "The Teare" for example, the metaphorical fusion of opposites occurs at the very beginning: Crashaw starts out with the abolition of profane time, the abolition of the rational realm of Nature. The 'dramatic reversal' between the natural world of 'illusion' and the 'reality' of the Supernatural takes place at the very beginning of the poem: the poet dismisses the natural order in favour of a higher reality, before even entering into the world of illusion. Through the figures of incongruity, he evokes a realm diametrically reversed to the rational realm of Nature and profane time. Based on an immediate refusal of objective reality, the poet uses his contempt for the natural order as stepping stone to reach the apex of his experience--a sense of personal participation in the sacramental drama.

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[1] C. S. Lewis, "Donne and Love Poetry in the Seventeenth Century", in Seventeenth Century English Poetry, p. 97.

[2] M. Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion, trans. by R. Sheed (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958), 392.

The deliberate reversal between Rational and Suprarational appears right at the beginning, and is being maintained consistently throughout the metaphors of "spiritual marriage", all of which are based on the connection of polar opposites. Throughout the poem, natural phenomena is used only to remind us of the non-rational, non-natural order of the sacramental Cosmos. The poem celebrates the divine design, the process of Love bending down to lift up humanity through the tear of Mary, the "Rose", and of Christ, the "Rosebud". Consubstantial with the tear shed by Christ, the Tear of the poem is like a "pearl", produced by suffering.

> Such a Pearl as this is,
> (Slipt from Aurora's dewy Brest)
> The Rose buds sweet lip kisses;
> And such the Rose its selfe when vext
> With ungentle flames, does shed,
> Sweating in too warme a Bed.

After various stages in its metamorphosis, the tear becomes "dew" again, to eventually turn into the blood of that "richer wine", the symbol of redemption. In this sense, the whole poem can be regarded as an ex - tension and celebration of the original statement that the "moist sparke", due to the mysterious operations of the Supernatural drama, can be indeed simultaneously a "moist" tear of sorrow, of purification--and the "sparke" of life, of heat, light and redemption.

The continuously recurring reversals between the natural, rational order and the suprarational produce a naive humour, but the 'wit' of the performance is always directed at our Reason: What the poet means to say, is that in relation to his normative vision, our rational, logical per - ception of Nature is absurd.

The dramatic structure behind Marvell's metaphor seems to be different from both Donne's or Crashaw's.

After the climactic point of "annihilating all that's made / Into a green thought in a green shade", the vistas open up again to include the experience of illumination:

> Casting the Bodies Vest aside,
> My Soul into the boughs does glide:
> There like a Bird it sits, and sings,
> Then whets, and combs its silver Wings:
> And, till prepar'd for longer flight,
> Waves in its Plumes the various Light.

Stanza 7 gives a 'witty', paradoxical summary of the whole ex - perience: "Two Paradises 'twere in One / To live in Paradise alone".

At first, the statement seems to imply the absurdity that Two is less than One, a mathematical absurdity which would place it into the realms of the Subrational. To make the statement 'meaningful' would assume the reversal between subrational and rational, a reversal usually accomplished by 'wit' which acts as a source of humour, a source of Comedy.

The seemingly capricious mathematics of the "two Paradises" refer to the Paradise Lost and the Paradise Regained. Had God allowed man to live alone, the cycle of Eternal life should never have been broken. The "two Paradises", in this case, could be still seen as "One". At the same time, and in line with this interpretation, the paradox also implies that contemplation reached in solitude creates in the poet a renewed confidence in futurity: This is a belief that the disrupted cycle will be restored to unity. The solitude of contemplation restored the self to unity, and thereby to a belief in Eternity: the uninterrupted cycle of the "two Paradises" is indeed contained in "One", in the Self.

The solution of the mathematical riddle will make the paradox meaningful on the rational level. Yet, this rational solution will, without further reversals, point uninterruptedly to the Suprarational:

the connection between the two realms of Nature and the Supernatural is mainly that of an extension and not a reversal. The structure of Marvell's paradox describes a world in which the Suprarational is not a reversal of the realm of Reason, only an extension of it: the "wholsome hours" the poet spents in contemplation become part of the eternal time cycle simply because they are hours well spent, well "computed".

Although types of dramatic confrontation and structure vary from poet to poet, all three Metaphysical poets manifest a strong sense of drama. The "wit" of the performance is often manifested by the dramatic reversal, inherent in the incongruous coupling of opposites. These occur either in the form of the paradox, the oxymoron, or the metaphor of double vision.

I introduced an analogy between poem and dramatic structure in order to explore the dynamism of the thought process that impels the poet to use metaphor. On the basis of this analogy, I have analyzed the nature of the 'witty' reversal that produces the illogical coupling of contra - dictories. As a conclusion to the comparison between Donne's, Marvell's and Crashaw's metaphor, one might say that in spite of the many differences in temper and outlook, the dialectics of their thought process move between three fairly distinct levels of the Absurd, the Rational and the Supra - rational. The thought process bringing forth the metaphor of polar opposites might be described as a momentary reversal between two of these three realms: Depending on the two realms connected by the reversal, the metaphor of polar opposites produces either awe, as the "watry diamond", or laughter, as Donne's analogy between the flea and the "mariage temple".

Although apparently an incongruous construction, the metaphor of polar opposites makes sense when examined in the full context of the poet's

framework of beliefs. As the analysis of Donne, Crashaw and Marvell indicated, the non-logical metaphorical construction is the appropriate embodiment of a certain mystical aspiration in the poet's vision. Moreover, it is precisely through the non-logical element that the metaphor is fully expressive and meaningful in its context.

The two Romantic poems also demonstrate that the coupling of polar opposites is a device to express mystical aspiration. Yet, this aspiration itself runs a different course within the entire framework of beliefs. The metaphorical connection of polar opposites did not lead, in these two instances, to the unity of the poem, nor can it suggest the multiple levels of 'meaning' as it did in the case of the Metaphysical poets. The weaknesses of the entire aesthetic structure are closely related to the fact that the paradoxical juxtaposition of opposites is not meaningfully resolved within the poet's own vision of reality: the metaphor itself cannot bring a resolution which can transcend the differences between opposite elements.

The problem of the unresolved paradox seems to be particularly relevant to the understanding of Shelley's "Sensitive Plant": the structure of the individual metaphor, the pattern of the images, and the overall dramatic structure of the poem carry salient manifestations of this very problem.

The structure of the poem consists of three seperate entities. The vision of the "sublunar Heaven" (Parts I and II) turns by a sudden reversal into the"living death" of the abandoned garden (Part III). The turning point between Paradise and Hell occurs at the departure of the Lady of the Garden. This is a point of dramatic reversal, described in terms of the eclipse of the moon and the rise of the new moon (III,4). In order to

resolve the contradiction between two diametrically opposed visions in the same poem, Shelley makes an attempt to reconcile the two opposites by introducing a third structural entity, the Conclusion. It is, however, in the Conclusion itself that one has to recognize the breakdown of the vision, the incongruity which is not resolved either on the ontological or on the psychological level.

Both the visions of the "sublunar Heaven" and of the "living death" are embodied in vitally metaphorical language, and are characterized by the abundance of metaphors of polar opposites. The metaphors of double vision in the first part are particularly memorable:

> And the wand like lily, which lifted up
> As a Maenad its moonlight-coloured cup
> Till the fiery star, which is his eye
> Gazed through clear dew on the tender sky.

A double exposure of the innocence and of the lily and the intoxication of the Maenad, the image also connects masculine and feminine: "the wand" and the "cup", as well as fire and water, in the "fiery star" and the "clear dew".

The second vision, that of the abandoned garden, the garden of Mutability, is also perceived in terms of polar opposites. The oxymoron of the "living death" and of the "crimson snow" are examples of the controversy between perfection and chaos, purity and pollution, Eternity and Mutability.

As if to resolve the paradox inherent in each vision, and also to bring the two diametrically opposed visions to a kind of unity, the poem ends with Shelley's afterthought, an attempt at reconciliation, the Conclusion. Worn thin in its vitally metaphorical substance, the Conclusion attempts to explain the paradox in the language of diadactic poetry, admittedly closest to that of logical discourse:

> For love and beauty and delight
> There is no death, nor change: their might
> Exceeds our organs, which endure
> No light, being themselves obscure. (III,134-137)

The non-figurative language of the Conclusion, although it appears to follow the laws of logical discourse, can make no more sense of the argument than the profusely figurative language of the earlier parts in the poem. According to this argument, the Absolute is removed from the natural world, yet it can be known through the revelatory moments of perfect joy, delight and diffusion with nature. On the other hand, though these visitations of delight and Inspiration are intimations of the Infinite, this Infinite has its sole existence in memory, that is in the human mind conditioned by finitude.

The vitally metaphorical language of the whole poem reveals an abundance of the metaphors of polar opposites, yet the argument breaks down by the desperate repetition of an unresolved conflict, an unresolved para - dox: The "sublunar Heaven" turns out to be only a "wreck of Paradise": the Infinite can be realized only through a moment of psychological ecstasy without an ontological framework to fall back on.

The chracteristically Romantic metaphor that links polar opposites might be considered a suggestive expression of the poet's psychological experience of ecstasy and union. Yet, at no point does it participate in the ontological nature of the ideal; it describes only her effect on the poet. Thus, in "Epipschydion", Shelley woes his ideal in terms of the traditional symbols of the Bible and Christian mysticism: "Thou Star above the Storm, Thou Wonder and Thou Beauty and Thou Terror". (28-29)

Describing his passion in such images of synasthesia as "in the soul a wild odour is felt beyond the sense", the connotations are reminiscent of Castiglione's "privy smell of right angelic beauty".[1] The effect is often felt to be jarring, as if the result of meaningless exaggaration. This is not due to the fact that we see the poet celebrating a mortal being in the traditional terms used to describe the Transcendental. More disturbing in the final analysis is the fact that the Romantic poet has no higher normative vision within which the apparent incongruity of the paradox could be eradicated. When taken to its ultimate conclusion, the recurrent connections between polar opposites, the absurdity of the incongruous element cannot be resolved meaningfully within the poet's own vision of reality.

The relative failure to reach a meaningful resolution of the paradox has something to do with the fact that, unlike the Metaphysicals, the Romantic poets do not move between three distinct levels of the Rational, the Absurd and the Suprarational. This phenomenon is demonstrated by the Romantic poet's particular lack of humour, his lack of ability to make a reversal between the serious and the incongruous. Having declared Imagination the Suprarational faculty, the bridge towards the Transcendental, the Romantic poet seems to turn against the entire realm of Reason with a certain degree of hostility. It often seems as if he could not afford a joke at the expense of non-Reason, since he can maintain no clear distinction between Absurd and Suprarational. In this context, the metaphor of polar opposites can never become a pure source of humour, which

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[1] B. Castiglione, "The Courtier", p. 706.

would suggest a comic reversal between Absurd and Reason. Neither can the metaphor suggest a sense of deliberate logical reversal even in those cases when it is to produce awe (this would suggest a reversal between Reason and Suprarational).

The identification between Nature and Divinity, Nature and Super - natural is brought to its ultimate conclusion in the poet's search for the Transcendental: If the quest ends in the breakdown of the poet's vision, the breakdown is also manifest in the relative 'meaninglessness' of this characteristic metaphorical construction in the context of the poem.

CONCLUSION

I began this thesis by introducing R. G. Collingwood's notion of poetry as a structure which combines both the "expressive" and the "meaningful" qualities of language, an experience which conveys "thinking in a certain way and then expressing how it feels to think in that way".[1]

I demonstrated the inextricable relationship between thought and emotion, meaning and expressiveness, by examining what seems to me a vital connection between the poet's use of figurative language and his characteristic vision of reality.

My argument is that poetic--or figurative--language is based on principles very similar to the language of communication, and I suggest that metaphor, being the "omnipresent principle" of language, is not the interruption but the extension of meaning. In this thesis I propose that one can draw significant conclusions about the poet's mentality, his whole vision of reality, by examining his way of making metaphorical connections, that is, by examining the type of relationships between tenor and vehicle. Looking at figures of speech according to the type of relationship between tenor and vehicle, we find that they fall into three broad categories. In the figures of metonymy and synecdoche the relationship is that of contiguity. In the next and broadest group, the relationship is that of similarity. In the third group, however, the relationship is that of incongruity, in figures such as the paradox, the oxymoron, the understatement and the hyper - bole--all characterized by the metaphorical connection of polar opposites.

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[1] R. G. Collingwood, The Principles of Art, p. 295.

I suggest that the characteristic metaphorical connection reveals some of the significant aspects of the poet's mentality and his whole approach to reality. As for the figures of contiguity and of similarity, I assume that these are the results of metaphorical connections, or associations which suggest the operations of a fundamentally rational mentality--a classical vision of reality. When, however, the author's style is characterized by the abundance of figures of incongruity, that is, by the metaphorical connection of polar opposites, I suggest that this incongruity in the verbal structure is indicative of a different vision of reality. I propose that the abundance of figures based on incongruity is the indication of a dialectical movement fundamental to the poet's whole vision of reality. Furthermore, I suggest that this dialectics is motivated by a mystical aspiration which moves through the polarization of opposites towards an apparently incongruous union and identification of these opposites.

I also suggested that Baroque and Romantic sensibilities show a close affinity with this typically mystical dialectic of concepts. I illustrated this postulate with five poems analyzed in terms of the dialectical process of polarization proceeding through significant reversal, to the fusion of opposites. I found that each poem revealed signs of a powerfully dialectical thought process, a process which could be described with almost graphic precision as an "hourglass" type structure, a structure which moves from concentration through reversal to expansion. I also found that this 'hourglass'-like structure, or the diagram of the total reversal, is equally relevant to the structure of the whole poem (the dramatic structure, and the dramatic reversal),

to the pattern of images (the reversal in the poet's argument, usually marked by a metaphor of polar opposites), and the construction of the individual metaphor.

The relevance of this 'hourglass'-like structure to various levels of aesthetic experience demonstrated the organic relationship between vision of reality and aesthetic structure. I also maintain that this diagram justifies my analogy between the progression of the dialectical thought process (which moves through polar opposites to a dialectical reversal), and the mystic's spiritual progression which leads through the confrontation of opposites to the mystical reversal.

In addition to resemblances due to the manifestations of the dialectical process, I also found significant differences between the three Metaphysical and the two Romantic poems. The Metaphysical poet's use of the metaphor of polar opposites indicated that the incongruity of the verbal structure is to be resolved by a kind of reversal between the absurd and the rational. Due to the Romantic framework of beliefs, such a re - solution proved impossible for the Romantic poet.

In one instance--where incongruity is to create a purely humourus effect--Donne identifies the insignificant flea with the enormous significance of the "mariage bed and mariage temple". Here the reversal occurs between the rational and the sub-rational--the absurd. The humor of the situation stems from the fact that there is a reversal made between rational and absurd, and the incongruity of the relationship between tenor and vehicle draws attention to the absurdity of the speaker's argument which is thus the comic reversal of rationality.

It is interesting, however, that even in those cases where incongruity is merely a device to convey the high seriousness of the Supralogical, we are still aware of a mild sense of humor, usually apparent as the 'wit' of the performance creating reversal between rational and non-rational realms. As the poems of Donne, Marvell and Crashaw illustrate, such a mild sense of humour seems to be inseparable from the figures of incongruity, even though they are primarily to convey a highly serious, mystical aspiration. In these cases the situation--expressed through the paradox, the oxymoron, the understatement and the metaphorical fusion of opposites--conveys a sense of the incongruous in the form of self-conscious artistry. The apparently twisted, surprisingly incongruous connection tends to be relevant when considered within the poet's own framework of beliefs. Thus, the incongruity of the "long-short progresse" is actually no longer incongruous within the context of the religious experience. The seeming absurdity of the verbal structure points to the Supralogical: In this case, incongruity presents a situation which is the reversal of our normal, natural, rationally explicable experience, and the poet implies that it is precisely this rationality which is an absurd reversal of a higher reality.

As for the two Romantic poets, their tendency for contrast, for dialectical polarization of extremes, for juxtaposing polar opposites is an equally conspicous feature of poetic temper, mentality and vision of reality. There is, however, a curious absence of humorous effects in these two poems, and, in fact, in Romantic poetry in general. It seems that the paradox or the oxymoron are being taken at face value; we are aware that there is no possibility to resolve incongruity, no ontological

possibility for a situation in which the apparent incongruity could be radically eliminated. Consequently, the incongruous verbal structure conveys only a fragmented experience, and the metaphorical connection of polar opposites fails as a literary device for a unified structure.

To conclude, I examined the mentality which finds its characteristic expression through figures of incongruity, through the metaphorical connection of polar opposites. I found that these figures indicate a dialectical thought process spurred towards confronting and resolving incongruity. I also found that the conspicuous manifestations of the dialectical thought process almost inevitably indicate a mystical aspiration, an aspiration for the unification of opposites. I believe that the analysis of the five poems justifies my assumption that the tendency for the metaphorical fusion of opposites is indicative of this desire for union, which is to say that the ultimate purpose of mystical dialectics is also the overall concern behind the metaphor of polar opposites.

I illustrated that there is a consistency in the way the dialectical reversal is becoming manifest in an 'hourglass'-like structure throughout the various levels of the aesthetic experience. The unity between the structure of the whole poem, the pattern of the images and the individual metaphor, indicates the vital connection between the aesthetic experience and the poet's vision of reality. This unity also proves the vital connection between "expressiveness" and "meaning" in the poet's use of figurative language.

As I have indicated in the Introduction, the proof of my thesis is not the scientific proof of logical syllogism, but proof by association. If I succeeded in indicating that there is a correlation between the meta - phor of polar opposites, the dialectical process, and the mystical aspiration behind this process--I also supported the underlying assumptions about the unity of meaning and expressiveness, vision of reality and aesthetic structure--and thereby justified my critical approach. As mentioned earlier, this critical method is itself a dialectical process: it works by deducing the poet's vision of reality from the aesthetic structure, and uses this insight for the further exploration of the strengths and weaknesses of this aesthetic structure.

The dialectic of the critical method seems to be appropriate to the exploration of the creative process, itself modelled on the dialectical interaction of technique and creative intuition. Through its involvement with the Metaphysical and the Romantic poet's thought process, my critical method also has a connection with the dialectical process characteristic of the mystic's progression; fittingly it reveals a self-perpetuating set of correspondances highly appropriate to a study of the mystical vision of reality.

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