THE THEME AND CRAFT OF HERMAN MELVILLE: THE FINE HAMMERED STEEL

By

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AN ABSTRACT

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Placing Melville as an anti-idealist and pragmatist, this study suggests that Melville is the focal figure in the turning point of American letters in the general breakdown of, roughly, two thousand years of western, Platonic metaphysics under the impact of contemporary science and naturalistic thought.

The study proceeds by analysis of the four novels which illustrate most conveniently the development of Melville's thought, Typee, Mardi, Pierre, and Billy Budd. Typee adumbrates Melville's use of symbol, setting up patterns of color in contexts which reappear in later books, setting up oppositions of land and sea, western and primitive existence, mind and body, isolation and communication, and setting up some of the conditions necessary for control of human history. Although much of Typee's manipulation of language may have been a product of "unconscious feeling," Mardi consciously explores the historic suicide and genocide made by the quest which is oriented toward otherworld and individual vision rather than toward earth and community. Pierre carries the exploration of quest to its logical extreme, widening the emphasis upon God and Fate as definable entities in Melville's cosmos. Billy Budd comes as a capstone to the entire structure, not as a statement of acquiescence and resignation (as so often has been thought), but as the most discernible piece of pragmatism which can afford to dispense with the problems of the quester, and which at the same time recognizes the limitations of mortality that make impossible a complete control of man's conditions. The ultimate irony of

Melville's works is that whatever element of control and of moral and political value exists in the universe exists in man and his realizations, and that the traditionally revered element of complete control and value, God, is only the omnipresent and eternal blankness and zero of Time.

In attempting to describe Melville's techniques, this study finds specific and widening areas of meaning for such debatable figures as Yillah, Hautia, Isabel, Pierre's father, and Baby Budd. Whatever meanings emerge from study of technique always work consistently in a development of unified theme and tone that is common to everything Melville wrote. In brief, Melville never changed his mind and "resigned": he intensified. And in the intensification of theme, his quarrel was not properly with a non-existent conventional God as much as it was with man for his blindness and delusion and tactical errors, which result in a history of incremental crime and error, each act pragmatically emerging as a consequence of every other act.

This thesis finds that, despite some stylistic atrocities, which were as much a part of the age as of Melville's lexicon, Melville not only exposed the most important philosophical bases of speculation that gave birth to naturalism, but perhaps better than any writer of the time reflected the societal actualities that gave birth to those philosophical bases of speculation; in the differences between adherents of God and man, the idealist and the tactician, Melville takes his place with man and tactician.

And in the very nature of this choice, Melville was unable to write real tragedy, but rather wrote magnificent prescriptions for human conduct in a world abandoned of absolutes; prescriptions which, ironically, needed only a "program," the one impossibility for Melville, to make them thematically affirmative instead of essentially negative. In any case, Melville emerges as the American artist who is still unsurpassed in examination of a conflict of orientations and values that is reaching a height today and that bids fair to determine the next two thousand years of human thought.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to provide an approach to a definitive statement about the meaning of Melville's writings. The word "meaning" has been so belabored that it needs redefinition in almost any context. Specifically, what I here intend by the word is a series of statements about the prescriptions for human behavior that are found by analysis of the way in which Melville put his books together.

In one sense, the meaning of Melville's books is out of keeping with the mainstream of thought of his own times. Melville was writing in an age that emphasized individualism, either economic or transcendental. What is not immediately apparent is that Melville basically emphasized society rather than the individual. He simply utilized the plight of the very pronounced individuals in his books to show that a personal disregard of the world dictated by the desire to follow one's own heart or mind is sterilizing, suicidal, and murderous. Except for Billy Budd, Melville's books take as a central character the individual who makes a spiritual and philosophical voyage, symbolized by a physical voyage. The spiritual voyage is a search for a paradisiac better world, as adumbrated in Typee and only incidentally in Omoo, which is the least important of Melville's books. Or it is a search for an ideal, an absolute perfection, as presented in Mardi. Or it is a search for a past and an identity as presented in Whitejacket and Redburn. Or it is a search for ultimate truth and being, a final perspective of man's cosmic position as presented in Moby Dick.

Or it is a search for the possibility of behavior according to the other worldly and ideal responses of the human heart, as presented in Pierre. Or it is a search for the establishment of faith and confidence as presented in The Confidence Man and Clarel. Of course these statements are oversimplifications, for at best they can merely suggest convenient categories. The books all share in each other's problems, and the richest of the books embrace all the problems. Generally, the totality of the books presents a man's search for God, a search which is at once unnecessary and futile.

The man who searches may seem to have Promethean characteristics: he submits himself to agonies for the advancement of the race. But again what is not immediately apparent is that ultimately he is selfish. His submission to the inner dictates becomes a challenge of all outward circumstance. His search becomes a satisfaction of his own selfwill and idealism, which predispose him toward the search even before circumstances activate the will and idealism. Generally, it has been overlooked that this central man who searches is given a predisposition for his quest either at the opening of the book, or later in the book by revelations that imply the predisposition as having always existed. By always, I mean just that—the central searcher's characteristics have been formed before the book begins.

Generally, students of Melville have agreed to be content with calling the central character the "isolato"—a term conveniently supplied by Melville himself. Yet the term is too inclusive. It

characterizes, for instance, men like Pierre's Plinlimmon and Billy Budd's Claggart, who have long since withdrawn from a search. "Isolato" must be pinned more concretely to the Melvillean character who, for any number of reasons, has withdrawn from the world and who no longer has any desire to communicate with humanity. The first half of this definition applies to a central searcher like Pierre departed from Saddle Meadows and withdrawn into his symbolic room in New York. But it does not apply to Pierre the author. To differentiate the central searcher from the rest of Melville's isolatoes, I have used the term "quester." All questers are isolatoes, but not all isolatoes are questers.

The quester must feed upon himself. He is his own vulture to his own Prometheus. He cannot regenerate himself. He can only drive himself with increasing fury until the quest becomes what Melville himself calls a monomania, a monomania which becomes not only singleness of purpose but also singleness of self. And so the quest becomes sterilizing, for once withdrawn from the world, the quester can no longer hope for sustenance from the world. Nor can he sustain the world or bring his own plans to fruition. The constant irony of Melville's books is that the other-world towards which the quester drives also will not offer sustenance because either it is a world that does not exist or it is a world in which the quester can not be operative.[1] Regarding the sterility of quest the fact, for instance, that Ahab fathered a child is in keeping with nineteenth century sentiment, to which Melville was slightly more prone than we could desire—the reader is asked to

consider that the hard, dark man gives up young wife and newborn babe. But it is badly out of keeping with the general characteristics of the quester.

Moreover, the quester is embarked upon a hopeless voyage. Either the consequences of his actions kill him, so that he effectually commits "suicide," or else he deliberately removes himself from life, which for him has been one history of error. Melville piles up events to an impasse: the quester's only possible alternative is to remove himself from his human history. And the only possible means at hand is death. Perpetuating a history of error, the quester still refuses to admit the impossibility of his quest, and still searching sails beyond the reef that separates life from death, world from otherworld. Or else he takes poison from the very cause which activated his quest. The quester demonstrates that following one's own bent in disregard of world and time is suicide.

Yet more. The very separation of self from world and time demands deceit. The quester is invariably a liar who deceives himself as well as the members of his human community, so that at the outset his very method defeats the ideal he pursues. The actions of the quester become a series of events which are a pragmatic view of history. Intentions are irrelevant. It is only the act and the consequence of the act that are important, and the two cannot be divorced. It is this that is Melville's inexorable figure Fate: the development of human history.

Paradoxically, man's free will can be operative

only if it is controlled and insightful, only if it chooses the kind of inexorable Fate which is the consequence of the act of free will--which in turn has been dictated by the acts and consequences of previous history. All of Melville's works are a picture of the sound and the fury, a tale told by a woe-smitten man looking at history created by idiots.

Finally, of course, the quester must be a murderer. The consequences of his acts are out of his hands. The humanity he has deceived and coerced are party to the consequence, and the sin of one man is the sin of all. The symbol of all humanity is sunk by the impossible object of the impossible quest, and goes down with all hands aboard but one. Or if the effect is not so far reaching, at least the quester is responsible for the death of his goal, as is Taji, and is also responsible for the murder of the history of his house, as is Pierre.

The quest motif certainly is not unique to Melville. As a motif which opens inevitable statements about all human history, it is as old as human thought, part and parcel of all the myth and ritual of the world. However, Melville's use of the technique, while again not unique, is particularly modern. The quest does not result in purgation of world and time, does not result in a rebirth, a clean slate. It simply "ends" in a never ending continuum of human history, with the quester necessarily defeated with no lessons learned, with even the one real hero, Captain Vere, murdered by the very forces which continue man's history of crime and error. In short, it is part of the purpose of this

study to show that Melville did not write tragedy. His works differ from classical tragedy and from myth and ritual in that there is no pause, no moment of communal wisdom, no clean point of perspective from which man takes a deep breath, blinks, and rests before he plunges down to begin the whole bloody cycle all over again. This statement of Melville's cyclic continuum is to be central to his view of history, his attitude toward the quester, and his position as a political classicist who yet embraces cultural democracy and relativism. For his works, as a totality culminating in Billy Budd, champion the need of imposition of order by the few complete men who understand history, while at the same time the works champion the statement that all men of every social, economic and ethnic condition are truly equal brothers for they are all subject to the limitations of their common mortality, and must all bear the burden of the history they create.

The being which activates the quester I have chosen to call the lure. The lure does not exist in all the books, and only by implication in some. In Typee the lure is release from the duty-ridden and sterile bondage to the brutal order of a technological western world. In Redburn the lure is more concretely symbolized in Wellingborough's father's "prosy old guide book." In Mardi there is Yillah, in Moby Dick there is the whale, in Pierre there is Isabel. Briefly, the lure is a representative of the otherworld corporealized in this world. It appears in two forms. Either it is the actual embodiment of the ideal absolute for which the quester strives, as Yillah is to Taji, or else it is a direction to the attainment of the ideal absolute as Isabel is to Pierre and as the whale is to

Ahab. The lure always points toward the otherworld, the realm of ideal absolutes, in short, toward God. This study will attempt to demonstrate that the lure is not a false front, since it truly has either the hunger for or the characteristics of the otherworld of God, but rather that it is a false direction. For Melville's pragmatism is heavily allied with a realistic empiricism that denies the existence of the otherworld as conventially conceived. When he does create a symbolic Christ, he does so to demonstrate that this embodiment of otherworld ideal is murderously inoperative in this manofwar world of actualities. Could Ahab have struck through the whale, he would have found only an infinite and eternal blind forehead of dumb, white, blankness. I will attempt to define this creature, this God, this zero thing that, blank and nothing itself, yet offers to man all the possibility for making stink or perfume, light or blackness, heaven or hell on earth--and on earth only. I hope to demonstrate fairly conclusively that this being Melville defines as blank Time--nothing more and nothing less. I believe that this definition is most important for placing Melville in an overview of American literature. In his insistence that the universe is blind and indifferent and morally patternless, and that blind and limited and physically living man must impose his own patterns and control his own destinies (Melville's figure, "Fate"), he is, among other things, America's first naturalistic author. And he holds a deep and abiding anti-idealism in common with his later brothers.

The lure points toward this God as a basis for human

behavior, which it is not. It suggests, either by love or by malice in the mind of the quester that this God is the answer to the enigmas of human history. Which it is not. The quester believes, and driven by predisposition, activated by lure, he tries to strike through the mask to the ultimate, never realizing what he is striking to, never realizing that in abandoning man and man's world for the otherworld of ideal, he is abandoning the very God, the very answer he seeks. The lure, as representative of otherworld (the lure, when human, also never really understands the true nature of the otherworld) is either a dumb ubiquitous brute, or is a human significantly inexperienced in this world, unable to communicate with this world, steeped in fantastic legend and ancestral memory of an otherworld which--the height of irony--always turns out to be a creation of human history. In short, the lure, by the very nature of its function, cannot be completely earthly or human. And of course the great white ubiquitous whale becomes Melville's single best symbol.

There are two more basic characters to be added to the quester and the lure. They are the western world and the primitive world, which is usually symbolized by south seas peoples. As Typee foreshadows, man can not change worlds. The fact of western man is his western world, and the two worlds are contrasted not as ethnic groupings (all men are brothers), but as levels of development in man's history. The western world is the present level of intellection, the world of the deracinated man trying to to find his human soul. It is a world of artificialities and it

is the world of mind. Here too, Melville becomes a focal beginning point for most of our own contemporary literature. The primitive world is the world of the senses and the heart. Its inhabitants are childlike, trusting (they have the confidence for which the western man searches), they are physical (characterized by an enormous ability for sleep and by beautiful physiques) and they are mindless. The primitive world is the elemental, unartificial world of the child. The primitive is inoperative in the complex, adult world of the west, and the western man is inoperative in the spontaneous world of the primitive.

But Melville sees certain things common to both worlds, and what is held in common is the irreducible that becomes Melville's statement about the nature of general man. Both worlds are belligerent. Both worlds are blind to their own mortality and the nature of God and history. Although in the western world man must struggle to conquer nature and in the primitive world man easily submits to and integrates with nature, in both worlds man's own nature is anarchic. And it is the final view of man as anarchic that underlies the political classicism of Billy Budd. The classicism, which I attempt to demonstrate in Melville's last book, needs a brief definition. As would be expected, it is antiromantic. But unlike the antiromanticism of a speculator like T. E. Hulme, Melville does not see man's potentialities as limited. In the idea that man makes his own history all by himself there is an implication of limitlessness. Rather, Melville sees man's nature as limited. Man is too blind to his common mortality and

to his need of subordination of individual goal to group harmony. He cannot advance unless he advances gregariously. But he cannot advance gregariously because he is anarchic. In short, Melville's world cannot break the vicious cycle unless and until most men are like Melville, and Melville's world shows no direction to the attainment of that goal. As Plinlimmon's pamphlet suggests, the reaching of that goal is heaven. When all men are like Melville then man will not have to break the cycle because it will be broken. Briefly, I hope to demonstrate that the very unprogrammatic quality of Melville's work, a quality that usually saves books from being blatant propaganda tracts, is paradoxically what prevents Melville from creating anything positive. The end result is that the cycle of human history is self-perpetuating and that the simplest thing that can be said is that it will not break until it breaks. The beauty of it all is that in the tremendous artistry with which Melville creates such a statement, there are countless rich prescriptions for human behavior, all of them positive in themselves. It is simply inescapable that in approaching Melville's works the critic must recognize the difference between the artist and the moralizer or system-builder--and this study is not to be interpreted as a statement that the two cannot be joined.

Both primitive and western worlds, then, are caught in the endless cycle of the history created by man's anarchic nature. In Typee, Melville explores what happens to the western man who tries to adapt himself to the primitive. Then, as if realizing that this was not the most fruitful direction for books written for his own

society, he switched his emphasis—but not before getting Omoo out of his system as a popular work, the success of which so amazed and excited him. In Pierre, he explored the would be redeemer-quester who brings the ideals of pure, childlike heart to bear on the western world to which he emerges. It is for reason that Saddle Meadows is presented as a bit of primitive Typee set in the west. It is for reason that Pierre is so often referred to as a child. And this redeemer-quester goes through all the steps of withdrawal, deceit, a sterile relationship (as Pierre points out, Isabel's breasts hide poison, not milk for infants), murder, and suicide. The redeemer-quester becomes the hater-quester. The idealistic Christ figure becomes satanic. Actually, Pierre is the more comprehensive protagonist than Ahab. Pierre goes from love to hate to the final realization that brings neutrality, to suicide. We see Ahab only after Christ and Satan have merged, and Ahab never changes. Billy Budd, too, is pictured as the childlike barbarian, the pure creature whose inner experience is only the experience of his own inner purity and ideality. His spontaneous responses are those of the heart, not the mind. And this Christ figure too deceives by his silence, finally becoming a murderer and thereby causing his own death. Billy, no quester, is himself the lure which Vere painfully rejects with all the insight created by Vere's own understanding of history. For he finally understands Claggart as Satan just as he understands Baby Budd as Christ. But Vere's one overriding fact is the fact of the western manofwar world and he cannot choose Christ. And Claggart himself is no more than the

other side of Budd. Budd is the ideal; Claggart is the consequence. Claggart is the quester who finally became completely satanized, who no longer quests, but merely hates the false direction of the ideal's appearance with all the monomania that characterizes any of Melville's questers. Thus it also becomes the intention of this study to demonstrate the singleness of Christ and Satan as one entity with a dual face, and to demonstrate that the dualities of Melville's works all unite in a single entity--the flow of history in Time. Although the two worlds of west and the primitive prey on one another (the west is by far the more predatory) and cannot mix except by the destruction and change of one of the worlds (always the primitive world changes, for mind always destroys heart), they are both united in the mortality which constitutes history. In summary, this study attempts to define the relationship Melville creates for man, world and God.

So much then for the thematic material I will attempt to demonstrate.

The study proceeds by an examination of four books, Typee, Mardi, Pierre, and Billy Budd. These are the four books which best demonstrate the development of the thematic material into a unified whole, so that all the books become as one book. This is not to be construed as an evaluation of quality, for Moby Dick, the best single book Melville wrote is not included here because it was earlier created in embryo in Mardi and was later expanded in new directions in Pierre. Unfortunately, it is not as basic

as the others to a study devoted to the development of Melville's prescriptions for behavior.

Typee certainly is not the same consciously symbolic construct that the later books are. But in this very first book of Melville's career is a wonderful adumbration of the materials Melville will use. There are the quester, the lure, the two worlds. Larger considerations of God and man's relation to God do not enter yet, but the patterns of imagery with which such exploration will be made are also adumbrated in Typee. Use of color, relationship of worlds, use of description of the human body, height, depth, land, sea, as symbolic imagery exist in this first book. Also, Typee sets up a constant in the relationships between the four basic characters. Throughout all the books, the relationships between characters do not change, although the symbolic meanings of the patterns of imagery do change.

Mardi is Melville's central book and one of his least--if not the least--unified. Still exploiting the south seas setting, Mardi simply places a western world story in costume. The central characters are all western men, as the geographic allegory alone makes plain. Picking up character-relationships and patterns of imagery where Typee left off, Mardi is Melville's first determined attempt to tell the story of the quest as a symbolic history of civilization.

Pierre replaces Taji, whose will and mind kill heart, with a quester whose predisposition is based upon the demands of the heart. Like Taji, Pierre also kills his own heart, but now the story is

stripped of unsuccessful allegory that was as obtrusive as Mardi's was, and the action is set in the western world which was to be the recipient of Melville's highly symbolic messages. Pierre carries the quester to a realization of his untenable position (which Mardi and even Moby Dick had not done), and with Pierre's death the story of the quest is complete. What remains is to create a hero.

The questers were not heroes. They were all incomplete, being pared down to the incompleteness of self-willed selfishness. Thematically, they were all villains. What would happen if there were a man who did manage to combine heart and mind, who was not blind to history, and who also had a political or social position which would allow him to become socially operative? What if this man were exposed to a choice between this crime-filled manofwar world and the pure ideal?

Captain Vere is the man created for this purpose. His rejection of a beautiful impossibility in favor of the ugly reality, his decision to force his position of command to do what his head dictates and his heart detests is his acceptance of this world as the only possible world. It is not, as critics have tried to demonstrate, an acceptance of God and a submission to Fate. It is quite the opposite. Vere decides to remain unwithdrawn, to accept the responsibility of the human community by accepting the responsibility of command. His decision to maintain order in the face of the anarchy of man's nature is his sacrifice of self to the necessities of moral responsibility. He is the polar opposite of the

quester, and the recognition of Satan-Claggart as a dead serpent is Melville's final statement about the basic villainy of the individual who is isolato, or quester, or obsessed with individual self. In Billy Budd the characters change: the quester drops out and the hero takes his place. And the lesson of the hero's sacrifice is lost. The lesson of Baby Budd's final realization of the rightness of Vere's action is lost. The world gains not social insight but myth, and the cycle continues.

The texts used for this study are not the standard Constable Edition. Rather I have used texts which are most easily available and which are relatively inexpensive. Farrar Straus-Hendricks House had begun a new standard edition, but only a few works were published before the enterprise was discontinued. Those few volumes are all out of print, and almost as difficult to obtain and as expensive as the Constable edition volumes. Except for Pierre, which is practically unavailable, and then in almost no edition but the Constable or Hendricks House, the Hendricks House volumes have not been used. Because of the age of the standard Constable editions, some of the more recent editions provide better texts. For instance, the modern Library Giant ed. of Typee includes not only the text of the first edition, but also the sequel Story of Toby and the Appendix of the English edition. Because of the deplorable lack of a new and complete standard set of Melville's works, there is no real need to be bound by the outdated Constable edition when cheaper and more available copies are to be had from various publishers.

For my part, I could wish every reader to return to Melville with the intention of being his own critic. For Melville was trying to tell America and the world what the correct and incorrect courses of action are. For Melville's position in American letters is central. If it can be said that 2000 years of western idealistic systems ever broke down, they began to break down in the 19th century under the impact of a new science, a new politic, a new sociology. Melville was the greatest spokesman of the breakdown. To briefly define his central position in American letters, it is accurate to say that he rejected the American 17th and 18th century systems of thought in terms of 19th and 20th century thought. With the possible exception of the Penn Warren of All The King's Men (which has some startling similarities to Melville's works) Melville successfully embraces a wider time quality and a deeper thematic quality than any other American writer, and he is the American focal point for one of the most profound changes in western history. His warning buoys were placed in the Sargassos and icebergs of much that was and is dear to an entire society. In a large sense, most of what the man wrote would today be considered "dangerous" by many who are unwilling to abandon sailing grounds which to Melville were filled with hidden reefs of wreck and ruin. That I find "dangerous" themes in Herman Melville's books is not a question of my agreement or disagreement with such themes. Rather, if this partial restatement of theme can continue and contribute even a little to the tradition Melville saw as the great human necessity for unconfined thought

within confined and controlled action, then the debt is paid to the old voyager, who still gives sustenance to those who believe that he has indeed found one way to place man's hands "among the unspeakable foundations, ribs, and very pelvis of the world." And this is still a fearful thing.

NOTES

1. I use the term "other-world" in the sense that it is presented by Lovejoy in The Great Chain of Being: the ideal and absolute realm of God.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL

I

When a transcendentalist reviewer wished to tell his readers about a new book called, Typee, the Narrative of a Four Month's Residence among the Natives of a Valley of the Marquesas Islands: or a Peep at Polynesian Life, he wrote of the Marquesas which Melville had visited as

> ...these gems of the ocean, in which Nature...has hinted the extent of her possibilities...perfections which she shall possess in infinite and universal variety when, through the combined industry and wealth and power of a united Race, she shall have become but the image and expression of the Kingdom of God abiding in the souls and societies of Man...[1]

The reviewer goes on to explain that the secret of the good social state is abundance; that, contrary to Victor Cousin's beliefs, man must have more than good precepts; that industrialized America, with a more equitable social order of production and distribution, can have a stronger peace and more profound good will than have the Typees. When the writer touched upon the issue raised by Melville's treatment of the missionaries, he said that

> It is proper to say in behalf of the author that he does not impeach the...Christian character of the missionaries in general. He merely avers that their designs have often been injudicious and that other influences than that of the New Testament have operated on the natives, which are undoubtedly the facts...We do not presume to

> condemn.../the missionaries/...individually, but in God's name we condemn a social order which is founded on such contradictions of the Divine laws, and which devotes to a hopeless and miserable existence so large a majority of human creatures.[2]

In one important manner, this pronouncement is typical of the reaction of the nineteenth century reviewers: it interprets the book according to its own predetermined findings, and uses the "charming travelogue" as a point of departure into its own advocations. Curiously enough, the Harbinger notice touches however slightly upon some of the book's basic themes, at least those of universal human brotherhood, the aspects of western civilization which are inhuman, and the obvious discrepancies between the preachments and actions of militant Christianity.[3] I emphasize the obviousness because Typee is a fairly obvious book, especially for Melville. But the significance of the Harbinger review (as of most of Typee's contemporary reviews) lies in the suggestion that when it does touch upon the book's themes, it does so almost unconsciously, accidentally, and indirectly. The obverse of this significance is that the reviews did not come to grips with Typee's underlying implications. The implications create a starting point for the relationship between the primitive and western worlds, as well as a starting point for the relationship between the quester, the lure, and both worlds. The apparent vehicle for discussion of those relationships is the occasional treatment of the results of contact between Christianity and the Marquesans. The more important and less apparent vehicle is an opposition of mind and body, mind and heart, communication and lack of communication. The

discussion of such oppositions and relationships builds a basis for the larger, more complex structures of the later books.

There is no way to prove that Melville consciously set out to create such a discussion. I am tempted to say that he was not conscious of Typee's symbolic construct because it was his first book, because he was still a young man (he was twenty-five when he wrote the book, twenty-six when it was first published), and because he was writing one of those narratives of travel so popular in the first half of the nineteenth century. But I am more strongly tempted to say that he was conscious of what he was doing because the age of the novice does not preclude artistry, because the vehicle of a piece of literature—in this case the vehicle of travelogue—certainly does not preclude conscious working of levels of meaning, and because the consistent contriving of motifs is too persistent for that contriving to be dismissed.[4]

Moreover, the themes arising from Typee's consideration of human communication and the opposition of "mind" and "body" fit too well as a point of embarkation for Melville's philosophical voyage. Again and again, as he dives into the depths of his later books, he is to hook by the nose these minor thematic leviathans, subject them to the try works of his mind, and boil every last drop of suggestion out of them—they are, in short, very definite and provable themes within the totality of Melville's writings.

At any rate, Melville's reviewers were not accustomed to find in contemporary American literature the methods and meanings which Melville was to put into it. The central point is that as early as

the publication of his first book, after which he was, for a while, a very successful and popular young author, Melville was "misunderstood."[5] Indeed, almost without exception, the literal minded critics considered his book in terms of whether or not it was authentic (some even going so far as to wonder if there was any such person as Herman Melville), or in terms of enchanting escapism, or in terms of whether he was to be praised, tolerated, or jailed for his treatment of the missionaries.[6] By the time of this writing, however, contemporary scholarship makes it increasingly clear that it is less and less possible to deny the actuality of the symbolic experience in Melville's early books.[7]

As little as we know about Melville's own feelings and stated intentions, there is some slight biographical evidence that he was not as interested in factual reporting of his experiences as he was in what he could accomplish artistically using those experiences. After almost nine pages of parallel quotations from sections of Typee and sections of C. S. Stewart's A Visit to the South Seas,[8] one student comes to the conclusion that the "significance of the discovery of this source material lies in the fact that it constitutes another step in solving the problem of the relationship between Melville's technique of composition and the use of his source materials...At times he borrowed extensively without alteration; at other times he made significant alterations for the purpose of producing a dominant mood or impression...again, he seems to be deliberately planning to throw us off the trail."[9] When we look at Tommo, we see that in his desires and sensibilities, he is isolated

by being his difference from the wretched and debauched crew and from the natives.[10] Indeed, in Typee the crew of the Dolly is painted in heavily uncomplimentary colors. Tommo voices to the reader extreme dissatisfaction with the crew and with his lot aboard ship at sea. Yet, in a letter to Lemuel Shaw, in which Gansevoort Melville relays news from Herman during the factual period of Herman's real trip to the Marquesas aboard the whaler Acushnet, Gansevoort says:

> I am in receipt of a letter from my brother Herman dated August 1841 at Santa Martha, coast of Peru—He was then in perfect health, and not dissatisfied with his lot—the fact of his being one of a crew so much superior in morale and early advantages to the ordinary run of whaling crews affords him constant gratification. By the paper I see that his ship—the Acushnet—Pease—/the captain/—was spoken in Dec last—at sea—all well...[11]

There is no special reason to believe that Herman wrote the truth to his family. In fact, I suspect that Herman disguised his true thoughts from his family as well as from his readers. Yet there is no reason to believe that this letter does not speak truth, at least as of August, 1841. In the long run, these pros and cons cancel out; what is germane is that there is no reason to doubt that even at this early date, Melville was consciously prepared to utilize experience in a sacrifice of fact for thematic purpose. As the London Athenaeum put it, "...si non e vero e ben trovato...We vouch for the verisimilitude, but not the verity."[12] True or not, we must go to the story itself; Typee is the best source for the scope of Typee.

II

In the Preface, the author makes a statement about the author:

> In his account of the singular and interesting people among whom he was thrown, it will be observed that he chiefly treats of their more obvious peculiarities; and, in describing their customs, refrains in most cases from entering into explanations concerning their origin and purposes. As writers of travels among barbarous communities are generally very diffuse on these subjects, he deems it right to advert to what may be considered a culpable omission.[13]

The author must be twitting the author; whatever sins he may have had, Melville was never guilty of sparseness or humility in his books. But this bit is not a joke as much as it is a statement of conscious organization, and it must be considered doubly. First of all, as Melville himself intimates, whenever we read the popular travel books of the time, we find that the aspiring writer looking for markets crammed his book with as much detail as possible.[14] Yet in his utilization of event, Melville rejects the limitation of factual and chronological exactness of detail, even though his age considered him to be an anthropologist of sorts and an expert concerning the Marquesas.[15] There can not be much argument that Melville was necessarily concerned with the reception of his south seas books as works of "ethnological value," for after he was fully aware of the reception of his two south seas books (Typee and Omoo, which were his most popular), he proceeded to write Mardi, a "south seas" book which sacrificed ethnological detail of any kind whatever for theme.

Secondly, if, as the Preface says, much detail has been

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deleted, the questions of what has been retained, and why, remain. There are repeated instances wherein the Typee natives are described in pure animal imagery; Melville is willing to sacrifice historical detail, and yet he is willing to make profuse reiteration. There are many instances wherein Melville repeats statements about the physical beauty of the islanders' bodies. Repeatedly he reinforces the images of greenness and vegetative luxuriance of the Typee valley. In direct juxtaposition to these reiterations, which occur systematically as "body" motifs, there are repeated segments of motifs pertaining to western civilization, religion, cultural relativism, consciousness-unconsciousness and communication and isolation.

Whether we approach the book according to what has been deleted or according to what has been reinforced, the answer comes out the same: we are forced to the conclusion that Typee must be approached as a creative construct rather than as a haphazard piece of reporting or a tale which is merely a picaresque adventure.

The Preface says, "The conclusions deduced from these facts [about the missionaries] are unavoidable, and in stating them the author has been influenced by no feeling of animosity, either to the individuals themselves or to that glorious cause which has not always been served by the proceedings of some of its advocates."[16] Melville has just said that he has found it easy to avoid certain other facts and details. Yet not only in Typee but in other books we are to find charge after charge against the inhumanities of "that glorious cause" of militant or coercive religion, with some

animus reserved for the glory of the cause itself. So it seems very clear that Melville's preface is a good liar: the craftsman does select which of the "unavoidable facts" he will avoid. Further, Melville says, "The great interest with which the important events lately occurring at the Sandwich, Marquesas, and Society Islands, have been regarded in America and England, and indeed throughout the world, will, he trusts, justify a few otherwise unwarrantable digressions."[17] Those "unwarrantable digressions" turn out to be none other than parts of the theme of human behavior in contrasting civilizations.

III

Melville adjusts the thematic progress of Typee as of all his books by means of four basic techniques: The first, contrast, is utilized to indicate the relationship between two opposing worlds or characters (as in the contrast of western and savage civilizations in the behavior of Mowanna's queen juxtaposed upon the behavior of the French Commodore and officers during the military review in the bay of Nukuheva),[18] or to introduce a new motif by its sudden injection in relationship to one already developed (as in the mention of the green Marquesas immediately after a description of the sterility of sea life).

The second, reinforcement, is the mere repetition of similar details in order to create a motif, such as, say, isolation. The reinforcement works hand in hand with contrast in order to create a reflexiveness of detail in which the relationships of motifs are adumbrated—and sometimes stated.

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The third technique develops out of the first two just as the second develops from the first. This third technique of circular reflexion, is the contrast and joining of reinforced details so that the last association suggests the first, closing the circuit of relationships in a complete circle. For instance, after a paragraph on the intricacies of the Typee language, the narrator adds:

> The intricacy of these dialects is another peculiarity. In the Missionary College at Lahainaluna, or Mawee, one of the Sandwich Islands, I saw a tabular exhibition of a Hawaiian verb, conjugated through all its moods and tenses. It covered the side of a considerable apartment, and I doubt whether Sir William Jones himself would not have despaired of mastering it.[19]

Intricacy of dialects recalls the motiff of impossibility of communication, which in turn suggests isolation, which in turn recalls the conflict of western and primitive worlds. The best examples of this technique occur in Mardi. The effect of the technique can best be suggested by a metaphor, that of a set of facing mirrors which reflect an image backward and forward into numberless, receding distances. And, as we shall see, as the books become more complex, the patterns of images become alternately inverted, and will represent in one book the opposite of what we have seen in others. But the mirrors never change. To repeat, while patterns of imagery shift, relationships do not. This incremental reinforcement allows the critic to test his analysis at any given moment by comparing his interpretation of a particular point in the novel with all that has gone before and that comes after.

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not think that Tommo's and Toby's descent into the valley can be made to symbolize man's Fall from grace because this theme is not created within the rest of the novel itself.[20] There is no posterior or anterior use of the image of descent in connection with such a theme. As a statement of method, I may say that the test for explication in this study has been a simple one: are the examples chosen refexively used, or are they not? the shuttling back-and-forth of meaning which, in turn creates new levels of meaning, all reflexive to each other and all related to the same set of references which encloses them all in an expanding globe, becomes the kind of entity which D. H. Lawrence hinted at when he said that allegory is Mr. Looking-Both-Ways, but that symbol is--well, who can define Janus? It is also this Einsteinian "expanding globe" of meaning which precludes the treatment of Melville's writings on the level of allegory chiefly.

The fourth major technique is the multiple-view. A constant is reacted to by different elements, and in the multiple reaction those elements reveal themselves. Taking the French as a constant created by direct statement of the narrator, we are shown the natives in panic and submission to the French. There is revealed here an implication about the relationships of two areas of existence in conflict. Then the technique of contrast immediately shows the reaction of another westerner, Mrs. Pritchard, the British Consul's wife, in her view of the French. The natives respond in submission and bewilderment. Mrs. Pritchard responds in rebellion and she knows exactly how to handle the lieutenant of the

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French fleet. The natives are conquered. Mrs. Pritchard is unconquered. Part of the theme of cultural relationships emerges here: consciousness versus unconsciousness ends in route; consciousness versus consciousness ends in conflict and dominance for whoever displays the greatest amount of will. Herein Typee is completely adumbrative, for it is will that is the basis of the quester's control of his crew or his fellows. Perhaps the best example of this technique is the chapter in Moby-Dick wherein the crew members and Ahab study the dubloon nailed to the mast. Revelations are made about every member, as well as about the tension of the novel itself. Contrast, reinforcement, circular reflexion all work in the multiple-view; and just as one motif grows from another, just as one symbol revolves in related orbits about all others, so the techniques themselves grow out of one another and recall one another. Thus the art of Melville's fiction becomes a self-generative thing, and it is this generation which gives the reader the impression that he watches a mind drive toward a conclusion that is determined and implied in the beginning. It is the reason that Melville's books, as they expand thematically one from the other, can be treated at all as a developmental totality, which, I am convinced, they are.

The double view not only makes disparate elements reveal themselves in that frozen moment of audience-perception which is one of the bases of comedy (interestingly, Melville almost always unites this technique with humor), but it also draws the reader into the progress of the narrative by forcing him, although he may never realize it, into comparing and making ultimate judgments. The

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drawing-in of the reader, however, depends upon a double view whose components will be reinforced and explained on the narrative level. When the components are in themselves symbols which have not, in some way, been stated on the narrative level, there is not enough interest to maintain the reader's evaluative participation. It is for this reason, I think, that many readers whom I have known, readers who are acute and certainly not lazy, have never been able to force themselves to complete a reading of Moby Dick, and if this reason is valid, the failure here is partly Melville's. Strangely, in this area, Typee succeeds better than its later and much greater brother. The reader is immediately related to the symbol by narrative, the simplest and first level of contact, and perhaps unconsciously he is forced to a conscious partaking in the tensions of the book. What happens is that when the reader makes judgments based upon the revelations occasioned by the double-view, he also makes revelations about himself, and the technique makes language's workings three dimensional: it relates within the book in width and depth and also relates outwardly to the reader's consciousness. It is this combination of techniques which is Melville's secret for his approach to that which every creator seeks: a relationship between artist and viewer without which no work of art can be said to "succeed." Like theme, then, this plunging of the reader into the work also grows from technique. The multiple view is what the other voyager, Conrad, is to do later with point of view, wherein he filters objective action through two, three or four intelligences. With

Melville the point of view remains mostly constant, less complex, for even during the multiple-view, perspective is focused through the sight of the narrator. The narrator never really loses control of perspective (even when the narrative center in Moby Dick, for instance, shifts from Ishmael to Ahab) because he constantly intrudes with directions for interpretation of the thematic statements arising from action and dialogue. However, this narrator is not as obtrusive as the typical narrator of nineteenth century didactic literature, because either he himself has a stake in the problems of the book and becomes an added complexity of character, or else his directions and guides are themselves symbolic and reflexive to what must first be interpreted on its own terms. The narrator's chief concern in guiding the readers perspective, however, always remains centered in directing attention to theme rather than to form. In Melville's books, form and structure become not a preoccupation for their own sake, but are the creators of "message" which is Melville's chief concern, and this is one of the few points at which Melville is one with his literary age.[21] Technique is neither intentional complexity per se nor is it the private complexity which degenerates into obscurantism. Neither is it privatistic, for Melville uses the symbols of the society to which he communicates.

The narrative level upon which contact between symbol and reader exists is usually a double level. Melville invests the incidents and objects within the progression of the novel with dichotomies.that always arise either from opposition of character

to character, character to world, or world to world. In the later books the facing mirrors of circular reflexion gives these dichotomies dual interpretations from which arise the famous (and to some critics infamous) ambivalences or ambiguities of Melville's symbolic method. The task is simplified, however, by the simplicities of Typee. The dichotomies exist almost in pure state in this first book.

NOTES

1. Unsigned review of Typee, The Harbinger, II (April4, 1846), 263. I suspect the author is C. A. Dana.

2. Harbinger, 266.

3. There is not much point in reopening the arguments about the nineteenth century missionaries in Polynesia. After reading many of the attacks and defenses, I am inclined to believe that Melville's view was at least justifiable and not necessarily limited to personal animus. One interesting item, a letter from one H. R. Hawkins, Honolulu, December 10, 1849 to his father, Captain Esek Kawkins, Jr., of Lansingburgh, New York, sheds some light, but it is only one item among many of divergent views: "...All that Melville ever told about the missionaries in this part of the world, you may take for gospel..." Quoted by William Gilman in "A Note on Herman Melville in Honolulu," AL, XIX (1947), 169.

4. In the final argument, I prefer to submit to the strongest temptation and say that it does not matter. The themes themselves are there substantially in the book.

5. For a discussion of the favorable public acceptance of Typee, see two articles by Charles Anderson, "Contemporary American Opinions of Typee and Omoo," AL, IX (1937), 1-25; and "Melville's English Debut," AL, XI (1939), 23-38. An earlier attempt at the same kind of evaluation is O. W. Riegel's "The Anatomy of Melville's Fame," AL, III (1931), 195-203.

6. For discussion of these critiques, see Anderson, "Melville's English Debut;" and unsigned review of Typee in Douglas Jerrold's Shilling Magazine, III (April, 1846), 380-383; and Daniel Aaron's "Melville and the Missionaries, NEQ, VIII (1935), 404-408.

7. One good example is William Gilman's Melville's Early Life and Redburn (New York, 1951).

8. New York, 1831 (2 vols.).

9. Thomas Russell, "Yarn for Melville's Typee," PQ, XV (1936), 27.

10. For an excellent discussion of apartheid, see R. E. Watters, "Melville's 'Isolatoes'," PMLA, LX (1945), 1138-1148. In periodical publication, Mr. Watters' articles are as keen and insightful and accurate as any that can be found and more so than most. See also, "Melville's 'Sociality'," AL, XVII (1945), 33-49; and "Melville's Metaphysics of Evil," Univ. of Toronto Q., IX (1940), 170-180.

11. Datelined New York, July 22, 1842. (Lemuel Shaw Collection, Massachusetts Historical Society)

12. 988 (Oct. 3, 1846), 419. This simple fact that the reviewers, who were skilled in reading contemporary travelogue, were concerned with Melville's authenticity (althought their concern went no deeper than the question of vraisemblance) should provide the hint indirectly that fact may have been altered and utilized for more than a report by a "light-hearted raconteur of picaresque travel fiction."

13. Typee. In Selected Writings of Herman Melville, Modern Library ed. (New York, 1952), 457. This text is an artificial assembly which makes it complete as any text available. The story itself follows the text of the first, unexpurgated edition. It appends the Sequel of the second American edition (it may be the third American edition: see Bernard De Voto's "Editions of Typee," SRL, V (1928), 406) and also the Appendix of the second English edition. It is, therefore, inclusive. All references to Typee are to this text.

14. There is no doubt that Melville was received by his contemporaries as just such an author. One review, correctly groping for the secret of Melville's selection of detail, and incorrectly reckoning the extent and purpose of his art, summed up an attitude thus: "Doubtless we shall hear more of the author's adventures [this is a review of Omoo]: — for, though the vraisemblance of history is well preserved, there are in the style and about the narrative indications of romance that suggest a power of prolonging these adventures to any extent for which a public shall demand them." (The Athenaeum, London, 1015 [April 10, 1847], 384.) Recognizing the difference of Melville's treatment of fact, a friendly magazine, in a notice of Omoo said, "Treating as they do on familiar topics...that we thought had been exhausted by other authors, we are agreeably delighted to find so much of what is positively new in Omoo. There is a freshness and novelty in the graphic sketches of society as it now exists in these islands, that we look for in vain in the writings of other travellers. Mr. Melville contrives to throw around his personal adventures all the interest and charm of fictitious narrative. Omoo and Typee are actually delightful romances of real life, embellished with powers of description, and a graphic skill of hitting off characters little inferior to the highest order of novelist and romance writers." (Albion, New York, n.s., VI (May 8, 1847), 228.

15. The best study of Melville's books' authenticity in reporting his stay in the Pacific is Charles Anderson's Melville in the South Seas (New York, 1939). Also, Robert S. Forsythe spent much time and effort to prove that Melville was in the T'aipi valley for four weeks rather than four months. After a painstaking tracing of the true chronology of events, Mr. Forsythe concludes that "... Melville

confidently believed [that criticism] would seriously impair the success of Typee as a genuine narrative. The maintenance of the credit of the volume as a true account of its author's experiences seems to be the object of Melville's solicitude... He rather innocently extended the term of his stay among the Typees in order to make his account more effective...And I do not suppose...that the literary seaman, Herman Melville, was deterred by any scruples concerning the veracity of a sailor's yarn from making his narrative more appealing or more dramatic through taking liberties with the time involved in it." ("Herman Melville in the Marquesas," PQ, XV (1936), 1-15.)

Arthur Stedman, in a review of Melville ("Melville of Marquesas," Review of Reviews, IV [1891], 428-430) which appeared two months after Melville's death, said, "A reference to Typee as 'Melville's Marquesan Islands' under which title the book first appeared in England [actually this was the title of the second, expurgated edition], was given in the Popular Science Monthly as recently as two weeks before the author's death, and shows the ethnological value of the work." (429.)

16. Typee, 458.

17. Typee, 458.

18. Typee, 471-2.

19. Typee, 744.

20. See below,

21. What Croce said of De Sanctis' History of Italian Literature can be said of Melville: "Form for De Sanctis was not the 'form' pathologically felt by aesthetes and decadents: it was nothing else than the entire resolution of the intellectual, sentimental, and emotional material into the concrete reality of the poetic image and word, which alone has aesthetic value." Quoted by F. O. Matthiessen, American Renaissance (New York, 1941).

CHAPTER II

TYPEE

Immediately after an extended passage on the barrenness of sea-life, a new passage begins with this:

> The Marquesas! What strange visions of outlandish things does the very name spirit up! Naked houris--cannibal banquets--groves of cocoa-nut--coral reefs--tatooed chiefs--and bamboo temples; sunny valleys planted with bread-fruit-trees--carved canoes dancing on the flashing blue waters--savage woodlands guarded by horrible idols--heathenish rites and human sacrifices.[1]

Not only are the land images in direct opposition to the sea images which opened the book, but they all concentrate on two facets of the Polynesian life which fills the book: one is the physicalality and fertility of Marquesan life, the other is the italicizing of the primitive qualities, barbaric enough to serve as an image of the most basic, pristine human life. The Marquesas are the very beginnings and first curve in the human life cycle:

> The group for which we were now steering (although among the earliest of European discoveries in the South Seas, having first been visited in the year 1595) still continues to be tenanted by beings as strange and barbarous as ever.[2]

Typee, which is set off yet further even from this primitive group of peoples, becomes--by the narrator's insistence upon its isolation and lack of intercourse with other peoples--the delineated

symbol, the laboratory test case, from which is universalized a statement about man's primitive life of nature in general. The sea, as that part of the dichotomy opposed to primitive land-life, is representative of consciousness and quest, especially as introduced by western civilization, and it is presented in a picture of sterility. The single-level existence of western consciousness is given the characteristic of sterility in much the same way that the quester of the later books is sterile. The opposition of this to fertility and sheer animal-vegetable level of Typee existence is the fundamental tension in Typee both in theme and in the rising action of the conflict. In Typee the missionaries play the same role as do the French. They represent a unilevel value of conquest which clashes with the unilevel value of blissful animal existence led by the islanders. For convenience, and to define terms, I have grouped the two opposing factions into divisions of "head" or "mind," and "body" which top their lists of related minor motifs as given in the following simplification:

Head, Mind (WESTERN CIVILIZATION)	Body (MARQUESAS, ESPECIALLY TYPEE)
1. little heart	1. much heart
1. conquest	1. submission or ultimate doom
2. quest, mobility	2. staticity, immobility
3. consciousness	3. unconsciousness
4. sterility of environment	4. fertility of environment
5. sea	5. land
6. communication with outside world	6. inability to communicate with outside world
7. inability to communicate with Typee	7. spontaneous, childlike, meaningless chatter among selves
8. sparse food, little sleep, technology	8. physical gratification, somnolence, primitivism
9. planning, scheming, foresight	9. spontaneity of animal spirits
10. attempt to conquer natural environment	10. integration with natural environment
11. artificiality, complexity	11. naturalness, simplicity

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What Melville has to do, once the oppositions are settled upon, is to tie the narrative level of action to the symbolism of the motifs, and this he does in Typee as in all of his books: through the plight of the protagonist and the observations of the narrator. Melville must first indicate the relationship of the narrator to both sea and land. Tommo opens his observations with a wish to be rid of the sea. He follows this up immediately with observations about the land. When he thinks of the sunny valleys planted with bread-fruit groves and of the heathenish rites, he immediately says, "Such were the strangely jumbled anticipations that haunted me during our passage from the cruising ground. I felt an irresistable curiosity to see those islands which the olden voyagers had so glowingly described."[3] He is in a state startlingly similar to that of Ishmael, who, before he set foot on the Pequod, was haunted by the image of a humped and hooded phantom like a snow-hill in the air. Compulsively, he is drawn beforehand to the objects of tension before the particulars of that tension are introduced either to him or the reader. However tempting Tommo is as an example of the isolato with a driving predisposition, this discussion must await our meeting Taji, Melville's first real quester.

Tommo offers a legalistic argument for abandoning ship. Although the picture he gives of the captain and the conditions aboard ship is part of the thread of deceit which runs throughout the book, the legalities are to be treated here as inoperative and irrelevant. In terms of what happens following Tommo's

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jumping ship, the legal niceties have nothing to do with the realities of Tommo's desires or the consequences of his actions. Tommo is offering a surface rationalization, and his argument only touches upon its strongest basis--the simpler and more elemental urge for reintegration in the animal and vegetable aspects of human life. The deceit of the captain has reduced Tommo's living situation to the business of elementary survival, where each man must realize that his own future is contingent upon his own choices and actions under a despotism far removed from the western civilization where polite deceits are necessary to the maintenance of that civilization. But before Typee is introduced, life for Tommo has already been reduced to the most elementary terms:

> [The captain's] prompt reply to all complaints and remonstrances was--the butt end of a handspike, so convincingly administered as effectually to silence the aggrieved party.
>
> To whom could we apply for redress? We had left both law and equity on the other side of the Cape; and unfortunately, with a very few exceptions, our crew was composed of a parcel of dastardly and mean-spirited wretches, divided among themselves, and only united in enduring without resistance the unmitigated tyranny of the captain.[4]

Obviously the legalities of Tommo's argument do not apply. They are only an appearance, and the need to change worlds is the reality. So the course of the book's actions is implied before the action begins. The end of the book, with Tommo back at sea, but with a different level of realization, imparts a spiral structure to the book's form. Tommo rejects and escapes from the ahumanity of quest (the sea, whaling) and the inhumanity of western

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man (the dominance of the captain) in order to submerge himself in a reintroduction to humanity in the unconsciousness of its very beginnings (Typee). At the end he is to reject the limitations of Typee and return to his western world of actualities and quest.

But why does Tommo abandon his own world in the first place? The very first chapter introduces a note of parched living which is devoid of any of those aspects of nature which are necessary for life on the animal or vegetable levels. A foreshadowing of Melville's view of the sea as the home of the deep questings and yearnings of the human mind--questings and yearnings which will be equated with suicide and murder--is implicit in the imagery. There may be food for the mind in the ocean (this theme is not developed in Typee), but there is no food for the completeness of life which includes the human body and the human heart. The subheadings begin, "The Sea--Longings for Shore--A Land-Sick Ship..." and the introductory paragraph continues the motif: "Six months at sea!... six months out of sight of land...the sky above, the sea around, and nothing else! Weeks and weeks ago our fresh provisions were all exhausted. There is not a sweet potato left; not a single yam. Those glorious bunches of banannas which once decorated our stern and quarter-deck have, alas, disappeared! and the delicious oranges which hung suspended from our tops and stays--they, too, are gone! Yes, they are all departed, and there is nothing left us but salt-horse and sea-bisquit."[5] The very food of life offered at sea is equated with departure from land and world. Tommo describes the prodigious preparations for sailing, during which

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quantities of stale bread, poor meat and roachy water are stored in the hold; and as long as the stores last, the ship remains at sea.

> But not to speak of the quality of these articles of sailors' fare, the abundance in which they are put on board a whaling vessel is almost incredible. Oftentimes, when we had occasion to break out in the hold, and I beheld the successive tiers of casks and barrels, whose contents were all destined to be consumed in due course by the ship's company, my heart has sunk within me.[6]

Immediately following this is a story about the good ship Perseverance, whose skipper simply touched at port for food and then headed back to whaling grounds. The ship became a tangible Flying Dutchman, always questing, never returning to world and time. Moreover, Tommo adds, even the meals of salt-pork and sea-biscuit are scanty so that the stores will last longer.

At the outset Tommo rejects sea and quest and sterility. "Is there nothing fresh around us? Is there no green thing to be seen? Yes, the inside of our bulwarks is painted green; but what a vile and sickly hue it is, as if nothing bearing even the semblance of verdure could flourish this weary way from land."[7]

What the sea tells us at the beginning of Typee is that like the world of body, this life of quest and mind as limited to a monotone existence is a cannibal life. It fattens off its opposite member, the land world. In its exploitation and scorn of the more elementary levels of natural, animal living, it kills and devours, sucking life and sustenance from land. The spoilation and cannibalism are introduced directly after Tommo bewails

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the lack of green things. "Even the bark that once clung to the wood we use for fuel has been gnawed off and devoured by the captain's pig; and so long ago, too, that the pig himself has in turn been devoured."[8] Tommo and Toby, when they fight and conquer nature in their struggle to reach the secluded valley life, must also live, like the pig, on the bark they can chew off twigs: the provisions and foresights of the western man do not work in Typeean nature. The natives also rape nature, but nature willingly allows the defloration. Her Typeean seducers never attempt to conquer her. The Dolly, however, like the Perseverance will continue to sail until the last symbol of land and animal life, Pedro the rooster, is devoured—and then the ship will touch land again, taking from it the provisions for life which it never replaces in the eternal cycles of growth.

This kind of single-level existence represents the world of western civilization. All the men who come to the Marquesas from the sea are alien. They are always whalers, traders, conquerers; they are always Frenchmen, Englishmen, Americans, and they come to exploit either the resources of the waters or the peoples or the land. They display behavior values which become represented by a restless quest for conquest, a quest summed up on the philosophical level by Taji and Ahab and on the narrative level in Typee by the missionaries and Admiral Du Petit Thouars. Totally, this quest is the attempt to extend human power, by means of will and mind and the fruits of will and mind, over all of creation. The basic tension in Typee forecasts the later books to come from Melville's

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In Typee mind is objectified in the physical object of the human head, just as mindlessness is objectified in the human body. Reflexively a minor motif is used interchangeably with its major heading, so that when a particular of human behavior is mentioned an entire world is recalled by that one particular. The Typees, on the other hand, are always feasting, and the basis of their meals is a combination of freshly cooked fresh fruits and vegetables, or freshly killed and freshly roasted pork. Melville develops the land-sea dichotomy painstakingly, making motifs even out of such things as food and sleep.

When the alien western sailors approach the vicinity of the Marquesas, the "mindishness" of technology and sea-consciousness also become alien and are lulled into virtual disappearance. Animal existence and somnolence become the order of the day.

> We abandoned the fore-peak altogether, and spreading an awning over the forecastle, slept, ate, and lounged under it the live-long day. Every one seemed to be under the influence of some narcotic. Even the officers aft, whose duty required them never to be seated while keeping a deck watch, vainly endeavored to keep on their pins; and were obliged invariably to compromise the matter by leaning up against the bulwarks, and gazing abstractedly over the side. Reading was out of the question; take a book in your hand, and you were asleep in an instant.[9] (Italics mine.)

The tokens of somnolence are not the only characteristics of Typee. Melville finds that any isolated position, be it that of body or mind, or heart is untenable. Land in itself is not to be equated with safety—[10] the Melville of a story like "The Lightning-Rod Man," for instance, envisions the inevitability of fate as

equally embracing whether one is in a howling on-shore gale or in the comfort of his easy chair. And particularly, in terms of Typee existence, the luxury of land and body alone is bloody murder, a process or rot, and a practice of cannibalism. The first visible signs of land, almost immediately contrasted with somnolence, are the sea fowl led by "That piratical-looking fellow, appropriately named the man-of-war's hawk, with his blood-red bill and raven plumage..."[11] The land is also corrupted by the invasion of inapplicable western mores.[12] The first human who comes aboard ship from the land combines both blind unconsciousness and the effect of the conflict of the two worlds. He is a drunken old vagabond who "was utterly unable to stand erect or to navigate his body across the deck," yet he is what mind has imposed upon body. He is the man civilization has appointed to navigate the microcosm of an entire world into communication with another. He is the official pilot of the bay of Nukuheva! ! Caught between both worlds, man suffers the ravaging attacks of both when he is integrated with neither. This is not to be the first time that Melville will suggest that the oppressor becomes more debased than the oppressed he debases. The process becomes an inevitability which no one can escape except by application of the realizations of cultural relativism and human brotherhood.[13] The natives are represented, in their debased condition, as victims not to be held accountable for the <u>visitation</u> of sin; as in their relationship with nature, their agency in relation to the world of mind is passive, not active. Moreover, the natives never had the old vagabond-pilot's background of sea-consciousness and western

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civilization, corrupted and vitiated as it now is. They are introduced not in any connection with deep-sea ships, but in the bringing of vegetables and animal gratification. The Typeeans are as much at home in the water as on land, but this is an indication of integration with physical nature rather than an indication of quest. Their water is land-locked lake or inland stream, it is not sea. The Typees prefer sea-fish and sea-salt and seaweed as the three unusual delicacies they prize above all else. Yet Tommo emphasizes his surprise that for some reason excursions to the sea for these abundant delicacies are surprisingly rare. Women, who more in Typee than in any other Melville book, are representatives of land and land values (particularly "body" and safety) are not permitted by native taboo to enter a canoe. It is Tommo the western alien who effects the beginning dissolution of native order by effecting the change which allows his mistress Fayaway to break the taboo.

The natives are creatures of a world of values wherein there is no opposition of head and body; they are introduced in complete terms of body. The male natives swim up to the Dolly surrounded by rings of floating coconuts. The two features of this picture presented by the narrator are that at first the heads of the natives are indistinguishable from coconuts, and that the use of the head is—to physically push the coconuts through the water. The native females are at first indistinguishable from so many shoals of fish, and when they climb out of the water, they are described in terms reminiscent of frolicking, cavorting animals.

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The total action, description and effect is that of body and the interaction of the two worlds is concluded in a manner prepared by the introduction of the drunken old pilot:

> We were still some distance from the beach, and under slow headway, when we sailed right into the midst of these swimming nymphs, and they boarded us at every quarter; many seizing hold of the chain-plates and springing into the chains; others, at the peril of being run over by the vessel in her course, catching at the bob-stays, and wreathing their slender forms about the ropes, hung suspended in the air. All of them at length succeeded in getting up the ship's side, where they hung dripping with the brine and glowing from the bath, their jet-black tresses streaming over their shoulders, and half enveloping their otherwise naked forms. There they hung, sparkling with savage vivacity, laughing gaily at one another, and chattering away with infinite glee. Nor were they idle the while, for each one performed the simple offices of the toilette for the other. Their luxuriant locks, wound up and twisted into the smallest possible compass, were freed from the briny element; the whole person carefully dried, and from a little round shell that passed from hand to hand, anointed with a fragrant oil: their adornments were completed by passing a few loose folds of white tappa, in a modest cincture, around the waist. Thus arrayed they no longer hesitated, but flung themselves lightly over the bulwarks, and were quickly frolicking about the decks. Many of them went forward, perching upon the head-rails or running out upon the bowsprit, while others seated themselves upon the taffrail, or reclined at full length upon the boats. What a sight for us bachelor sailors! how avoid so dire a temptation? For who could think of tumbling these artless creatures overboard, when they had swam [sic] miles to welcome us?
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> Their appearance perfectly amazed me; their extreme youth, the light clear brown of their complexions, their delicate features, and inexpressibly graceful figures, their softly mounlded limbs, and free unstudied action, seemed as strange as beautiful.
>
> The 'Dolly' was fairly captured; and never I will say was vessel carried before by such a dashing and irresistible party of boarders! The ship taken, we could not do otherwise than yield ourselves prisoners, and for the whole period that she remained in the bay, the 'Dolly', as well as her crew, were completely in the hands of the mermaids.
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> In the evening after we had come to anchor the deck

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> was illuminated with lanterns, and this picturesque band of sylphs, tricked out with flowers, and dressed in robes of variegated tappa, got up a ball in great style. These females are passionately fond of dancing, and in the wild grace and spirit of their style excel everything that I have ever seen. The varied dances of the Marquesan girls are beautiful in the extreme, but there is an abandoned voluptuousness in their character which I dare not attempt to describe.
>
> Our ship was now wholly given up to every species of riot and debauchery. Not the feeblest barrier was interposed between the unholy passions of the crew and their unlimited gratification. The grossest licentiousness and the most shameful inebriety prevailed, with occasional and but short-lived interruptions, through the whole period of her stay. Alas for the poor savages when exposed to the influence of these polluting examples! Unsophisticated and confiding, they are easily led into every vice, and humanity weeps over the ruin thus remorselessly inflicted upon them by their European civilizers. Thrice happy are they who, inhabiting some yet undiscovered island in the midst of the ocean, have never been brought into contaminating contact with the white man.[14]

The crew surrenders to the savage which is in all men, and the savage in the civilized character is not purity as it is in the natives. What Typee represents is not peculiar to the Marquesas alone; it becomes a universal for all men. Typee is isolated not because it is different, but because it serves as an unvitiated example of the universal. The Marquesans are the epitome of unsophisticated confidence, and they are doomed in pure and isolated state. It is only a matter of time until the French have their troops and gunboats on the lovely bay and valley, and what has been presented in the extended quote above will occur all over again.

In the purity of Typee terms, the main tasks of body seem to be the avoidance of conflict and the integration with nature. For Ahab, in his departure from nature, the area of conflict is imaged

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in the depths of the ocean. For Pierre, in his departure from nature, the area of conflict is epitomized in the scaling of the mountain. The Typees scarcely go to ocean or mountain. Conflict is in ocean, whence come intruders and invaders, and is in mountain, where there is none of the nature which gives sustenance and where there is the chance to meet death and hostile tribesmen. The Typee existence is so diametrically opposed to conflict, quest and consciousness that its limitations preclude any hope of human aspiration in western terms. "The mountainous tracts which separated their respective territories remain altogether uninhabited; the natives invariably dwelling in the depths of the valleys, with a view of securing themselves from the predatory incursions of their enemies, who often lurk along their borders...I several times met with very aged men, who from this cause had never passed the confines of their native vale, some of them having never even ascended midway up the mountains in the whole course of their lives, and who, accordingly, had little idea of the appearance of any other part of the island, the whole of which is not perhaps more than sixty miles in circuit. The little space in which some of these clans pass away their days would seem almost incredible."[15] When the contrasts in Typee are scrutinized, it becomes more apparent that the book is the natural starting point for themes which will illuminate men who would see and know not only all the known world, but the infinities beyond it.

The Typees have very little use for infinities. Earth and body are their whole domain. Tommo reiterates his descriptions of

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the wholeness, wholesomeness and unmarred magnificence of the islanders' bodies, and in contrast, the conscious and injured isolato describes the "mindlessness" of the islanders. They cannot communicate with or understand the rest of humanity from which they are isolated. They can hear news from outlying valleys only through the agency of itinerant and taboo "communicados" like Marnoo and Jimmy. They can not even talk the language of the representatives of consciousness, nor can those representatives understand the Typee tongue. When the Typees talk--as they always do chatter chatter chatter--it is always spontaneous, unplanned, childlike and inconsequential. The only meaningful, or important communication is always in terms of continued isolation, protection and withdrawal, as when the human telegraph system of natives shouting from tree to tree, from the beach to the inmost glen of the valley, announces invasion from either mountain or sea. Always, except in its own, primitive terms inapplicable to Tommo's life, Typee can neither see, talk, nor hear; it is mindless and blind. When Tommo does escape to the sea, his greatest opposition comes from a warrior chief, Mow Mow, who is characterized by a gigantic and powerful body and by the fact that he has--only one eye. On the other hand, the leader of the faction which would allow Tommo to leave unharmed is old Marheyo, who, with his daughter Fayaway, are among the few Typees who understand Tommo's plight to the point of compassion. It is true that others (Mehevi, the chief, and Kory Kory, the valet) also have affection for Tommo, but when the values of Typee conflict with Tommo's values, these others refuse Tommo's

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wishes, with few exceptions. When they do grant his wishes it is because they believe that his injured body will make him ineffectual in the attainment of his goals. Fayaway has pity for Tommo because she is his lover. But it is Marheyo who has the compassion of understanding, and he is the only native aware that there may be in non-Typeean worlds values which also have claim upon human behavior. When Tommo tries to escape, Marheyo leads those who see Tommo as a human being--they have been able to make that much of an extension beyond their own world. Those who wish to head Tommo off see him from the ahuman perspective of a single, isolated world. They want him for sacrifice. To them, Tommo is not a human being, he is an object of cannibal rites. The priests and Mow-Mow shout the word Roo-ne! Roo-ne!, which--in its effect upon Tommo--must be a reference to cannibalistic ritual which Tommo must not be allowed to escape. "In the midst of this tumult old Marheyo came to my side, and I shall never forget the benevolent expression of his countenance. He placed his arm upon my shoulder, and emphatically pronounced the only two English words I had taught him--'Home' and 'Mother'. I at once understood what he meant, and eagerly expressed my thanks to him."[16] Marheyo is suddenly the only Typeean who can enter any communication in the tongue of the alien, and this point of departure from Typee is the only time in the entire book that he does speak the words he knows or that the reader knows of Marheyo's ability. The Typeean Marheyo of the Typeean social group could not have been at all sentimental or lugubrious in his evocation of home and mother--an

entire chapter was devoted to pointing out that family relationships among the Typees were extremely loose and flexible, and that homes were only houses, open to all. It is all of Typee and Typee only that is home to the Typeeans.

Marheyo's sorrow when he takes leave of Tommo represents many things. His loss of Tommo is on the literal level the loss of a friend and a son. His loss of Tommo is also a yielding to consciousness, and is a realization of doom. The world moves on beyond Typee, and here is the first intimation for Marheyo that there may be greater areas of being which impinge upon Typee. The loss of Tommo becomes a barely shadowed realization of the loss of comfortable mindlessness. As in the climax of all Melville novels, important characters and incidents take on added significance in the suddenly quickened tumble of events, and here Marheyo, a harmlessly puttering old savage who does not even have the technology to build a tiny hut, almost becomes a figure of transition. Marheyo and Fayaway, in their tearful aid to Tommo's escape, cast off the isolation of body and mind only because they realize the claims of and their isolation from a larger, predatory outside world that kills their desires. Tommo's recognition of their actions and love is in the form of a reward. He gives them, and Kory Kory, his faithful valet, the cloth and musket which was to be used by his deliverers to ransom him. But he does reject the single level of Typee existence which shouts "Roo-ne" rather than "Home" and "Mother," and he must yet make the physical act of will which is active renunciation before his deliverance is complete. Mow-Mow

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swims out to the boat in which Tommo escapes in order to capsize the vessel. Melville could not have chosen a better representative as the last real obstacle between Tommo and a new change of worlds.

> After a few breathless moments I discerned Mow-Mow. The athletic islander, with his tomahawk between his teeth, was dashing the water before him till it foamed again. He was the nearest to us, and in another instant he would have seized one of the oars. Even at the moment I felt horror at the act I was about to commit; but it was no time for pity or compunction, and with true aim, and exerting all my strength, I dashed the boat-hook at him. It struck him just below the throat, and forced him downwards."[17]

Tommo's action of will is an acutely conscious action, rather than a merely physical action. At the height of action he weighs worlds and action, compassion or boat-hooks. He is aware of his horror—his action is not spontaneous on every level as is that of the islanders. Also, by this time, Tommo's bad leg had almost made him a cripple, in contrast to the "athletic idlander" who opposed him, but the excitement of conscious will overcomes his disabilities. "The strong excitement which had thus far kept me up, now left me, and I fell back fainting into the arms of Karakoee."[18] Clearly, what Tommo rejects here is the isolato, or at least the symbol of that which isolates. His horror is on the personal level of human action, a level on which Mow-Mow could not conceivably experience such an emotion relating to Tommo. What makes Melville's meaning especially clear is the clinching detail of Tommo's salvation. He is rescued finally, not by a Typeean, not even Marheyo or Fayaway. He is saved by Karakoee, a tabooed

communicado, who can communicate with both worlds.

Communication and isolation, as shaped by the literal characteristics of Marquesan geography, is concentrated in the story of Tommo's and Toby's attempt to reach an inland valley of Nukuheva. The secondary character in these chapters (VI-IX) is nature, who battles the intruders every inch of the way. On the other hand, the captain of the Dolly had offered rewards to the natives for the capture of the two renegade sailors. Tommo and Toby were doubly isolated. The individual who attempts a transfer of worlds is met with rebuffs on every hand. The new world to which he flees will not have him (and when it does, it must be unconditional surrender), and the world from which he flees will not let him go.[19]

Tommo and Toby have brought some slight provisions with them, but these provisions turn out to be almost useless in the new environment. The net result of the escape is that Tommo is hurt in body--body which is the only meaning of the world to which he flees. To hurt the body is the only weapon of that world; in the new world Tommo's consciousness is not only of no help, but it is a danger. Whenever he begins to feel a sharp awareness of his isolation in Typee, whenever he longs to return to his own world, at that moment Melville always reintroduces the injured leg, which becomes more and acutely inflamed. The failure of Tommo's body is symbolic of his entire plight. The changeling is the isolato and can count on no sustenance anywhere. This adumbration in Typee is cast in deeper, longer and blacker shapes in Pierre, and is one of

the keys to an understanding of that book. The world is not integrated, and when man who is conditioned to exist in one segment tries to transfer to another, every segment (valuing its own ethics more than any others), all the world unites only in the act of turning against him. Tommo's plight sounds the call to integration. Body needs consciousness (Tommo can strike a Lucifer match, but Kory-Kory must struggle to produce a flame) and consciousness needs body (Kory-Kory must carry Tommo) lest man become an invalid in the world of animal nature or a childlike animal in the world of the human mind. Suicide is dual: it is visited upon society by the individual when he tries to reinform the world in the image of his own individual disintegration, and it is visited upon the individual by the world because the disjoined world itself tries to deny border-crossing. I believe that it is this which is the thematic stimulus for Melville's insistence upon universal brotherhood, cultural relativism, and social democracy.[20] These considerations and their intricacies must await the later books, but in Typee we have the beginnings of the dualized dichotomies. In Typee the duality is best realized in the scene wherein Admiral Du Petit Thouars, western conqueror of the Marqesans, meets the chief of the natives of Tior, which clan has just capitulated to the French.

> It so happened that the very day I was in Tior the French admiral, attended by all the boats of his squadron, came down in state from Nukuheva to take formal possession of the place. He remained in the valley about two hours, during which time he had a ceremonious interview with the king.
>
> The patriarch-sovereign of Tior was a man very far

> advanced in years; but though age had bowed his form and rendered him almost decrepid, his gigantic frame retained all its original magnitude and grandeur of appearance. He advanced slowly and with evident pain, assisting his tottering steps with the heavy war-spear he held in his hand, and attended by a group of grey-bearded chiefs, on one of whom he occasionally leaned for support. The admiral came forward with head uncovered and extended hand, while the old king saluted him by a stately flourish of his weapon. The next moment they stood side by side, these two extremes of the social scale,—the polished, splendid Frenchman, and the poor tattooed savage. They were both tall and noble-looking men; but in other respects how strikingly contrasted! Du Petit Thouars exhibited upon his person all the paraphernalia of his naval rank. He wore a richly decorated admiral's frock-coat, a laced chapeau bras, and upon his breast were a variety of ribbons and orders; while the simple islander, with the exception of a slight cincture about his loins, appeared in all the nakedness of nature.
>
> At what an immeasurable distance, thought I, are these two beings removed from each other. In the one is shown the result of long centuries of progressive civilization and refinement, which have gradually converted the mere creature into the semblance of all that is elevated and grand; while the other, after the lapse of the same period, has not advanced one step in the career of improvement. "Yet, after all," quoth I to myself, "insensible as he is to a thousand wants, and removed from harassing cares, may not the savage be the happier man of the two?" Such were the thoughts that arose in my mind as I gazed upon the novel spectacle before me. In truth it was an impressive one, and little likely to be effaced. I can recall even now with vivid distinctness every feature of the scene. The umbrageous shades where the interview took place—the glorious tropical vegetation around--the picturesque grouping of the mingled throng of soldiery and natives--and even the golden-hued bunch of banannas that I held in my hand at the time, and of which I occasionally partook while making the aforesaid philosophical reflections.[21]

What is important here is not the flip philosophy about the undressed savage as a happier man than the beribboned admiral. This bow to the cult of the noble savage is partly serious, partly--mostly—tongue in cheek, not only in the context of Tommo's total relations with the savages, but even in the context of the very tone

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of the passage--which is always a good clue from Melville.[22] Tommo chews banannas while he philosophizes; he is not greatly bowed under the weight of his thought. What does emerge from this passage is the total image of the contrast again, the two disjoined segments of the world under analysis at the moment. The duality makes a statement about more than the relationships between the civilised and uncivilized world. There is a contrast between the Englishman Paulet (which is somewhat extrinsic, appearing in the Appendix, 778 ff.) and the French Thouars. The Appendix continues the theme of impingement of worlds. Paulet introduces civilization to primitivism in terms of the primitive world which is to be affected--he attempts to understand, not merely control this aspect of human existence. Thouars and the missionaries prove that control without understanding is not control, but chaos. It is a denial of the very consciousness which made control possible. It is merely a transposing of the technology and mores of the western world to a world which cannot cope with it, and it becomes a mirror of civilization's basic sin. Control must deny mere conquest and utilize human consciousness for human goals--as early as Typee there is insight into the horror of Moby Dick and the limited triumph of Billy Budd. Typee hints that the complete human being must not deny the Typee within him its right to autonomous existence; rahter he must shape it and utilize it (the emphasis should be on utilization) by means of civilization, by means of the culminative and cumulative racial consciousness of all of mankind. In a most basic sense, then, the natives are not divorced from western

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of the passage--which is always a good clue from Melville.[22] Tommo chews banannas while he philosophizes; he is not greatly bowed under the weight of his thought. What does emerge from this passage is the total image of the contrast again, the two disjoined segments of the world under analysis at the moment. The duality makes a statement about more than the relationships between the civilized and uncivilized world. There is a contrast between the Englishman Paulet (which is somewhat extrinsic, appearing in the Appendix, 778 ff.) and the French Thouars. The Appendix continues the theme of impingement of worlds. Paulet introduces civilization to primitivism in terms of the primitive world which is to be affected--he attempts to understand, not merely control this aspect of human existence. Thouars and the missionaries prove that control without understanding is not control, but chaos. It is a denial of the very consciousness which made control possible. It is merely a transposing of the technology and mores of the western world to a world which cannot cope with it, and it becomes a mirror of civilization's basic sin. Control must deny mere conquest and utilize human consciousness for human goals--as early as Typee there is insight into the horror of Moby Dick and the limited triumph of Billy Budd. Typee hints that the complete human being must not deny the Typee within him its right to autonomous existence; rahter he must shape it and utilize it (the emphasis should be on utilization) by means of civilization, by means of the culminative and cumulative racial consciousness of all of mankind. In a most basic sense, then, the natives are not divorced from western

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man. The reader is allowed to pick up and weave in its proper place the implication created by the suggestion that the crew of every western ship displays a kind of Typeeism, and by Tommo's description of the Typees in terms which are obviously intended to make them universal. The young men lounge around trying to avoid work. They are interested in weapons, athletics and girls. The girls are interested in cosmetics and flirtations. The men at the bachelor quarters are interested in eating, smoking, talking current events and general men's talk. The description of Tinor is the description of any good middle-class Lansingburg or Albany or New York or Berkeshire housewife--although, in conformity with the life symbolized by Typee, Tommo takes care to point out that old Tinor is the only hard worker in the valley! Melville describes characteristics in these instances as typical not of natives particularly, but as typical of their youth, their sex, their marital status, their office. Except on the literal, narrative level, the Typeean does not emerge as a segment of savagery unconnected with the you's and me's of Melville's and Tommo's other world. Symbolically he emerges as that part of all men which is unconsciousness, which is comfortable but which is ultimately murderous. Like the life of the sea-ship, it too robs land for sustenance, although on a different level and in a different way. The Typeean never plants or plans, never enters into conflict with nature in order to grasp the control over the world which the quest figure constantly seeks. There are times when the breadfruit trees do not bear food, and only the stored fruits of

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past crops sustain the natives in those times—or else they go hungry. This unconsciousness is a luxury which can be afforded in the limited area of existence wherein man can allow himself to be submissively integrated with nature. Like Tommo's legal arguments at the beginning of the book, the unconsciousness is inapplicable. It is a fortuitous thing, like the Typeean attributes of Mrs. Glendinning's riches. The unconsciousness is necessary to the functions of body and is a necessary part of man's relation to nature—a part which cannot be omitted in a successful relationship. But this unconsciousness is at war with consciousness and conflict and aspiration.

In his praise of the islanders and their happiness, and to the extent that he insists upon a human integration with physical nature, Melville agreed with the Rousseauism that appeared in so many modified and contradictory forms during the era of the transcendentalists. But his agreement is not a back-to-nature movement by any means. Nor is it a doctrine in agreement with Thoreau in its insistence that cultivation of body must not preclude cultivation of mind. Melville's area of concern is that of <u>social</u> integration; given that, the cosmic will follow—at least for man. Technology is not forgotten. The integration of western world and south seas must result in a unified world of healthy people with an <u>earth-based</u> <u>consciousness</u>, an ability to see, to extend, to understand, and it is this integration and cultivation of sensibilities which becomes the goal of Melville's insistence on brotherhood and cultural relativism. The rejection of Typee is the flight

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from the unmodified animal level of man's existence. Yet, at the beginning of the book, Tommo had rejected for exactly similar reasons the unmodified conscious level of man's existence: he will accept neither the complete and constant consciousness of a Henry James herione or villain nor the strong-loined elemental character of a D. H. Lawrence hero. Then why does Tommo ache to return to the western world, one of the incomplete halves of the dichotomy?

The answer to this is three directional. First of all, part of the answer lies in the character of Tommo himself. Secondly, we must recognize that Typee does not contain within itself any completed set of ideas about human society. The discussion of the problems of unaided consciousness is the core of the later books. Thirdly, there is evidence in Pierre and Billy Budd that man must leave Typee existence in order to fulfill other of his potentialities. This does not mean that Melville chooses one-half of the dichotomy over the other: either kind of isolation leads to the cannibalism of murder or suicide. It means that man must step above unconsciousness and elemental living yet must not abandon the earth-bound world. There is yet to come the thematic construction of the statement that integration must be made in terms of the world we know, and it is this which brings us circularly back to the character of Tommo.

Tommo is an exponent of conscious will. He reviews alternatives and makes a choice about his destiny. Then he activates will and leaves the Dolly. It is he who forces himself to an act he

cannot physically sustain when he uses his body to crush the barriers of physical nature as he and Toby labor through the reed-tangles on the slopes. It is Tommo who conceives the plan for use of body in the first place. Even when compared to Toby, who is himself a representative of western rather than Typee world, it is always Tommo who prevails in council. It is he who decides where they shall camp, which path they shall follow, which valley they shall descend. Toby prevails in action, in unplanned physical endeavor, and he does not communicate to Tommo except in those terms. Whereas Tommo discusses alternatives with Toby, Toby simply moves when the next move is up to him: he falls off the cliff into the palm tree in the last descent into the valley, leaving the startled Tommo behind. It is Tommo who first communicates plans for desertion to Toby, who had been harboring similar thoughts in silence, telling no one.

There are, of course, ample instances of Toby's conscious will. After all, he too is alien to pure Typee existence. But in the relationship between the two, it is Toby who is best fitted for existence in Typee and therefore it is he who can be the most operative, who can be mobile, who can escape. Moreover, his conversion would not prove the value of Typee ethics as much as would Tommo's conversion; the natives are willing to part with Toby, but they will not even allow Tommo to glimpse the sea.

The barrier to the sea presented by Typee highlights the difference between Tommo as embryo quest-figure and Typee as limitation; this difference is intensified in the double-view of Tommo's

and Kory Kory's different reactions to the effigy of the dead warrior chief in the death-canoe.

> In one of the most secluded portions of the valley...was the mausoleum of a deceased warrior chief. Like all the other edifices of any note, it was raised upon a small pi-pi of stones, which, being of unusual height, was a conspicuous object from a distance... The sanctity of the spot appeared never to have been violated. The stillness of the grave was there, and the calm solitude around was beautiful and touching. The soft shadows of those lofty palm-trees!--I can see them now--hanging over the little temple, as if to keep out the intrusive sun.
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> On all sides as you approached this silent spot you caught sight of the dead chief's effigy, seated in the stern of a canoe, which was raised on a light frame a few inches above the level of the pi-pi. The canoe was about seven feet in length; of a rich, dark coloured wood, handsomely carved and adorned in many places with variegated bindings of stained sinnate, into which were wrought a number of sparkling seashells, and a belt of the same shells ran all around it. The body of the figure--of whatever material it might have been made--was effectually concealed in a heavy robe of brown tappa, revealing only the hands and head; the latter skillfully carved in wood, and surmounted by a superb arch of plumes. These plumes, in the subdued and gentle gales which found access to this sequestered spot, were never for one moment at rest, but kept nodding and waving over the chief's brow. The long leaves of the palmetto dropped over the eaves, and through them you saw the warrior holding his paddle with both hands in the act of rowing, leaning forward and inclining his head, as if eager to hurry on his voyage. Glaring at him forever, and face to face, was a polished human skull, which crowned the prow of the canoe. The spectral figurehead, reversed in its position, glancing backwards, seemed to mock the impatient attitude of the warrior.[23]

The warrior is recognizable as the model of all quest figures and the antithesis of Typee. His body is muffled, his head demands notice. He is voyaging. He is impatient. He is water-bound, sea travelling, surrounded by and ornamented with sea shells. He is Taji in his canoe. He is Ahab furiously staring into the ever

mocking mask of the white whale. He is Pierre struggling to complete the rebellious journey of Enceladus. He sees no heaven, no God, no Answer--as long as he quests he sees nothing but the symbol of time: mortality, transiency, death. But how does Tommo react to this known quantity?

> Whenever in the course of my rambles through the valley I happened to be near the chief's mausoleum, I always turned aside to visit it. The place had a peculiar charm for me; I hardly know why; but so it was. As I leaned over the railing and gazed upon the strange effigy and watched the play of the feathery head-dress, stirred by the same breeze which in low tones breathed amidst the lofty palm-trees, I loved to yield myself up to the fanciful superstition of the islanders, and could almost believe that the grim warrior was bound heavenward. In this mood when I turned to depart, I bade him, "God speed, and a pleasant voyage." Aye, paddle away, brave chieftan, to the land of spirits! To the material eye thou makest but little progress; but with the eye of faith, I see thy canoe cleaving the bright waves, which die away on those dimly looming shores of Paradise.[24]

Tommo sympathizes; he understands the everlasting trip to another world; he himself is a changeling. But in his discussion with Kory-Kory and his comments on Kory-Kory's reaction, Tommo discloses himself as someone who is himself not a complete quest character. He does not wish to plunge beyond the human world, but wishes only to return to the world of human consciousness. Kory-Kory, however, is not at all sympathetic. He is matter-of-fact, materialistic, and his vision of the warrior and his voyage is cast completely in terms of body and limitation.

> When I first visited this singular place with Kory-Kory, he told me--or at least so I understood him--that the chief was paddling his way to the realm of bliss, and bread fruit--the Polynesian heaven--where every moment the bread-fruit trees dropped their ripened spheres to the ground, and where there was no end to the

> cocoa-nuts and banannas: there they reposed through the live-long eternity upon mats much finer than those of Typee; and every day bathed their glowing limbs in rivers of cocoa-nut oil. In that happy land there were plenty of plumes and feathers, and boars'-tusks and sperm-whale teeth, far preferable to all the shining trinkets and gay tappa of the white men; and, best of all, women far lovelier than the daughters of earth were there in abundance. "A very pleasant place," Kory-Kory said it was; "but after all, not much pleasanter, he thought, than Typee." "Did he not then," I asked him, "wish to accompany the warrior?" "Oh, no: he was very happy where he was; but supposed that some time or other he would go in his own canoe."
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> Thus far, I think, I clearly comprehended Kory-Kory. But there was a singular expression he made use of at the time, enforced by as singular a gesture, the meaning of which I would have given much to penetrate. I am inclined to believe it must have been a proverb he uttered; for I afterwards heard him repeat the same words several times, and in what appeared to me to be a somewhat similar sense. Indeed, Kory-Kory had a great variety of short, smart-sounding sentences, with which he frequently enlivened his discourse; and he introduced them with an air which plainly intimated, that, in his opinion, they settled the matter in question, whatever it might be.
>
> Could it have been then, that when I asked him whether he desired to go to this heaven of bread-fruit, cocoa-nuts, and young ladies, which he had been describing, he answered by saying something equivalent to our old adage—"A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush?"—if he did, Kory-Kory was a discreet and sensible fellow, and I cannot sufficiently admire his shrewdness.[25]

That Tommo is not the complete quest figure, that his orientation is this-worldly, is clear in his interpretation of Kory-Kory's remark. But the Typeean far exceeds the American in accentuating earthliness and in confining all areas of being—divine, spiritual, conscious—to the limitations of body.

> On the whole, I am inclined to believe, that the islanders in the Pacific have no fixed and definite ideas whatever on the subject of religion... In truth, the Typees, so far as their actions evince, submitted to no laws human or divine—always excepting the thrice mysterious taboo. The "independent electors" of the

valley were not to be brow-beaten by chiefs, priests, idols, or devils. As for the luckless idols, they received more hard knocks than supplications...

...Walking with Kory-Kory through the deepest recesses of the groves, I perceived a curious looking image, about six feet in height, which originally had been placed upright against a low pi-pi, surmounted by a ruinous bamboo temple, but having become fatigued and weak in the knees, was now carelessly leaning against it. The idol was partly concealed by the foliage of a tree which stood near, and whose leafy boughs drooped over the pile of stones, as if to protect the rude fane from the decay to which it was rapidly hastening. The image itself was nothing more than a grotesquely shaped log, carved in the likeness of a portly naked man with the arms clasped over the head, the jaws thrown wide apart, and its thick shapeless legs bowed into an arch. It was much decayed. The lower part was overgrown with a bright silky moss. Thin spears of grass sprouted from the distended mouth and fringed the outline of the head and arms. His godship had literally attained a green old age. All its prominent points were bruised and battered, or entirely rotted away. The nose had taken its departure, and from the general appearance of the head it might have been supposed that the wooden divinity, in despair at the neglect of its worshippers, had been trying to beat its own brains out against the surrounding trees.

I drew near to inspect more closely this strange object of idolatry; but halted reverently at the distance of two or three paces, out of regard to the religious of my valet. As soon, however, as Kory-Kory perceived that I was in one of my inquiring, scientific moods, to my astonishment, he sprang to the side of the idol, and pushing it away from the stones against which it rested, endeavored to make it stand upon its legs. But the divinity had lost the use of them altogether; and while Kory-Kory was trying to prop it up, by placing a stick between it and the pi-pi, the monster fell clumsily to the ground, and would infallibly have broken its neck had not Kory-Kory providentially broken its fall by receiving its whole weight on his own half-crushed back. I never saw the honest fellow in such a rage before. He leaped furiously to his feet, and seizing the stick, began beating the poor image: every moment or two pausing and talking to it in the most violent manner, as if upbraiding it for the accident. When his indignation had subsided a little he whirled the idol about most profanely, so as to give me an opportunity of examining it on all sides. I am quite sure I never should have presumed to have taken such liberties with the god myself, and I was not a little

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shocked at Kory-Kory's impiety.[26]

Besides the references to head, body and the relationship of the two disclosed in this passage, there is also another hint of the universal. Kory-Kory is the simple, earthbound, unphilosophical Ahab furiously seeking vengeance against any god who would crush him, for to him all is physical. But in his Typee life his reactions are stimulated and gauged by body alone. Significantly, it is Kory-Kory who, as a representative Typee, respecting nothing pertaining to voyage or other-worldliness, and who as the friendly valet and warden of Tommo, is the man assigned by the islanders to keep Tommo from breaking taboos or from walking toward the sea.

When Karky the tattooer wishes to practise his craft on Tommo, the American refuses in horror. At first his refusal is based upon a literal-level fear that his face will be ruined for western society. It is important that Karky will not be satisfied with a commission to work on Tommo's arm—he wishes to attack Tommo's head. The Typee tattoos of the face all include a line which runs across the eyes (either horizontally or vertically, like <u>prison bars</u>—Melville's image—or diagonally as part of the two inclines of an equilateral triangle with the base line running across the <u>mouth</u>). The Typee designs for tattoo of the head all include a hiding of the agents of communication and understanding. The designs for the <u>body</u> are, of course—animals, or vegetable growth. When all the natives, even the highest chief Mehevi and Kory-Kory evidence their strong desire to have Tommo's

face tattooed, and when all the priests join in the assent, Tommo realizes that the basis of their desire is conversion. No one can understand why Tommo refuses the tattoo--they are amazed that the values, symbols and commitments of Typee can be refused by anyone. So there is a more basic meaning to Tommo's fear that his head will thereafter be unfit for western society. It is the tension between mind and mindlessness. And at this point Tommo's desire to escape mounts almost to a panic. Again the point is made that Tommo is inoperative in Typee. His body cannot compete. His will and mind are useless because they cannot communicate or else communicate only to betray his wish to escape. Or, symbolically, his will and mind will either be altered by the overlay of Typee values or else they will be consigned to death. The book has already set up the proposition that no society willingly lets one leave the limits of its own world. And the further proposition has also been constructed that the limits of primitivism are too deadly and too confining for the civilized human. Moreover, each society believes its own values are the best for human behavior. The plight of Tommo in the death-trap of alien values is summed up in a bit of dialogue with Marnoo. When Tommo again pleads with Marnoo to try to get him out of the valley--thus endangering Marnoo's life as well as his own--Marnoo cuts him short. "Kannaka [natives] no let you go no where," he said; 'you taboo. Why you no like to stay? Plenty moee-moee (sleep)--plenty ki-ki (eat)--plenty whihenee (young girls)--Oh, very good place Typee! Suppose you no like this bay, why you come? You no hear about

Typee? All white men afraid Typee, so no white men come'."[27] (Italics mine.) The statement of isolated body values is immediately followed by the revelation of reality beneath appearance: "'Me no hear you talk any more; by by Kannaka get mad, kill you and me too. No you see he no want you to speak to me at all?—you see—ah! by by you no mind—you get well, he kill you, eat you, hang you head up there like Happar Kannaka!...'"[28]

Jealousy for the possession of Tommo is a concentration of the conflict and isolation of the two worlds; Tommo has plunged back down into the primitive beginnings of human order only to find that man of the conscious, technological world has travelled too far beyond that point to find operation, completion or even existence on that primary level. Marnoo, who is operative, and who does connect both levels with his own broken communication, is not limited or physically debilitated like Tommo. Moreover, his tattooing sets him apart from the Typeeans: his head and face are clear of any tatto. His body tattoo is not a collection of isolated items, like those of the Typeeans—his is one complete and integrated picture, and Tommo points this out quite emphatically. His level of existence is a transition, a between-time hovering below the western world and above the Polynesian. In a chronological sense, Marnoo comes close to the integration of values that will characterize the complete man. The curve of a cycle is segmented, and as always, almost all incident in Melville returns, at one point or another, to distances of time.

There have been attempts to interpret Tommo's and Toby's

literal descent and final fall into the valley as a parallel to the Fall from grace. I rather think that the parallel exists as an epiphany of Tommo's voyage in Typee: the plunge from the world-time of civilization to the world-time of unconsciousness. It is a plunge back to Eden, an Eden which hides a deadly paradox of limitations. The barriers of waters, mountains and ravines are startlingly similar to the traditional barriers between worlds in the literature of Christian mythology.[29] The difficulty of the journey is the typical difficulty for the Melvillean protagonist in the change-of-worlds. The plunge here is a descent in time. Another concentration of image at the beginning of the book traces the same idea in terms of the physical nature of the two worlds. Tommo dived from the sterile, parched heat of the sea-sun into Polynesia's verdure, which allows oblivion and relief from the perspiration of quest and conflict with nature:

> I had come from Nukuheva by water in the ship's boat, and when we entered the bay of Tior it was high noon. The heat had been intense...The sun's rays had expended all their fury upon us; and to add to our discomfort, we had ommitted to supply ourselves with water previous to starting. What with heat and thirst together, I became...impatient to get ashore...I rushed forward across the open ground in the vicinity of the sea, [italics mine], and plunged, diver fashion, into the recesses of the first grove that offered.
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> What a delightful sensation did I experience! I felt as if floating in some new element [italics mine], while all sort of gurgling, trickling, liquid sounds fell upon my ear. People may say what they will about the refreshing influences of a cold-water bath, but commend me when in a perspiration to the shade baths of Tior, beneath the cocoa-nut trees, and amidst the cool delightful atmosphere which surrounds them.[30]

The constant reference to verdure recalls the symbolic function of the color green in Pierre, where the color there too

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stimulates the theme of time. In Typee, too, green is related to vegetable decay and to time. The first close view of land that Tommo and the crew have is the bay of Nukuheva, which is described in language vitally cognizant of the time motif.

> Nothing can exceed the imposing scenery of this bay. Viewed from our ship as she lay at anchor in the middle of the harbour, it presented the appearance of a vast natural amphitheatre in decay, and overgrown with vines, the deep glens that furrowed its sides appearing like enormous fissures caused by the ravages of time.[31]

More striking in its application to humanity as well as land is the following use of decayed green under the subheading (Chapter XII) "Timeworn Savages":

> As we advanced further along the building, we were struck with the aspect of four or five hideous old wretches, on whose decrepit forms time and tattooing seemed to have obliterated every trace of humanity. Owing to the continued operation of this latter process, which only terminates among the warriors of the island after all the figures stretched upon their limbs in youth have been blended together--an effect, however, produced only in cases of extreme longevity--the bodies of these men were of a uniform dull green color--the hue which the tattooing gradually assumes as the individual advances in age. Their skin had a frightful scaly appearance, which, united with its singular color, made their limbs not a little resemble dusty specimens of verde-antique.[32]

The application of greeness and time has been made to man and nature; all that remains is to find the same applied to the divine. The use of green-rot is made in just such a relationship in the description of the idol beaten by Kory-Kory. The description here is reinforcement for the picture of the verde-antique natives at the Ti--they always sit motionlessly like idols. Later, at the Feast of the Calabashes, Tommo discovers that they are priests.

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Everything, including religion and man's conceptions of God himself, is subject to Time, the only God. This theme is carried out much more completely and startlingly in Pierre, where it is cast in terms of western civilization; it is, I believe, the basis (which has so far escaped the notice of critics) of a real understanding of Melville's view of history, religion, and Christ. It is for this reason, for instance, that Melville can dismiss Christian ministers and missionaries with the same amusement, the same devastatingly ironic tone, the same emphasis on futility that he employs for pagan religion. Each religion, like each world, looked upon as timeless and permanent by its followers becomes an isolated caricature of other religions. The best example of this can be found in an incident which demands an extended quote. The flippancy and sarcasm of the tone in which the incident is related are couched in noticeable amusement.

> Mehevi and the chieftans of the Ti have just risen from their noontide slumbers. There are no affairs of state to dispose of; and having eaten two or three breakfasts in the course of the morning, the magnates of the valley feel no appetite as yet for dinner. How are their leisure moments to be occupied? They smoke, they chat, and at last one of their number makes a proposition to the rest, who joyfully acquiescing, he darts out of the house, leaps from the pi-pi, and disappears in the grove. Soon you see him returning with Kolory [a chief priest], who bears the god Moa Artua in his arms, and carries in one hand a small trough, hollowed out in the likeness of a canoe. The priest comes along dandling his charge as if it were a lachrymose infant he was endeavoring to put into a good humor. Presently, entering the Ti, he seats himself on the mats as composedly as a juggler about to perform his sleight-of-hand tricks; and with the chiefs disposed in a circle around him, commences his ceremony.
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> In the first place he gives Moa Artua an affectionate hug, then caressingly lays him to his breast, and, finally,

whispers something in his ear; the rest of the company listening eagerly for a reply. But the baby-god is deaf or dumb,--perhaps both, for never a word does he utter. At last Kolory speaks a little louder, and soon growing angry, comes boldly out with what he has to say and bawls to him. He put me in mind of a choleric fellow, who, after trying in vain to communicate a secret to a deaf man, all at once flies into a passion and screams it out so that every one may hear. Still Moa Artua remains as quiet as ever; and Kolory, seemingly loosing his temper, fetches him a box over the head, strips him of his tappa and red cloth, and laying him in a state of nudity in the little trough, covers him from sight. At this proceeding all present loudly applaud and signify their approval by uttering the adjective "mortarkee" with violent emphasis. Kolory, however, is so desirous his conduct should meet with unqualified approbation, that he inquires of each individual separately whether, under existing circumstances, he has not done perfectly right in shutting up Moa Artua. The invariable response is "Aa, Aa" (yes, yes), repeated over again and again in a manner which ought to quiet the scruples of the most conscientious. After a few moments Kolory brings forth his doll again, and while arraying it very carefully in the tappa and red cloth, alternately fondles and chides it. The toilet being completed, he once more speaks to it aloud. The whole company hereupon show the greatest interest; while the priest holding Moa Artua to his ear interprets to them what he pretends the god is confidentially communicating to him. Some items of intelligence appear to tickle all present amazingly; for one claps his hands in a rapture; another shouts with merriment; and a third leaps to his feet and capers about like a madman.

What under the sun Moa Artua on these occasions had to say to Kolory I never could find out; but I could not help thinking that the former showed a sad want of spirit in being disciplined into making those disclosures, which at first he seemed bent on withholding. Whether the priest honestly interpreted what he believed the divinity said to him, or whether he was not all the while guilty of a vile humbug, I shall not presume to decide. At any rate, whatever as coming from the god was imparted to those present seemed to be generally of a complimentary nature: a fact which illustrates the sagacity of Kolory, or else the time-serving disposition of this hardly used deity.

Moa Artua having nothing more to say, his bearer goes to nursing him again, in which occupation, however, he is soon interrupted by a question put by one of the warriors to the god. Kolory hereupon snatches it up to

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> his ear again, and after listening attentively, once more officiates as the organ of communication. A multitude of questions and answers having passed between the parties, much to the satisfaction of those who propose them, the god is put tenderly to bed in the trough, and the whole company unite in a long chaunt, led off by Kolory. This ended, the ceremony is over; the chiefs rise to their feet in high good humour, and my Lord Archbishop, after chatting awhile, and regaling himself with a whiff or two from a pipe of tobacco, tucks the canoe under his arm and marches off with it.
>
> The whole of these proceedings were like those of a parcel of children playing with dolls and baby houses.[33]

All the unconsciousness motifs unite in this incident. Except for the simple deceit which Kolory practices upon his parishioners—the same simple and transparent deceit which the natives practise upon Tommo—there is no disguise, no attempt to pierce through appearances, no intellection. When Moa Artua is denuded in punishment he is revealed as nothing more nor less than what we are led to believe he is—a piece of wood. Most important, there is absolutely no connection between divine and human, and absolutely no real communication. There is only the credulity, spontaneity and unconsciousness of childish primitivism. A few pages later, in order to reinforce the universality of religion as a human institution which demands either submission (the early statements about the missionaries) or unconsciousness (Kolory and Mao Artua), Melville closes the chapter with a comment on Kory-Kory's beating of the rotting idol:[34]

> ...When one of the inferior order of natives could show such contempt for a venerable and decrepit God of the Groves, what the state of religion must be among the people in general is easily to be imagined. In truth, I regard the Typees as a backslidden generation. They are sunk in religious sloth, and require a spiritual revival. A long prosperity of bread-fruit and cocoa-nuts

> has rendered them remiss in the performance of their higher obligations. The wood-rot malady is spreading among the idols--the fruit upon their altars is becoming offensive--the temples themselves need re-thatching--the tattooed clergy are altogether too light-hearted and lazy--and their flocks are going astray.[35]

We know from the tone of this passage that a sarcasm which negates the surface statement is at work again. Especially when Tommo's sympathy for a certain Typee aspect of materialism, pragmatism and empiricism is remembered, we can not believe aversion to Typee on <u>these</u> ground. Moreover, the "long prosperity" and the "backslidden generation" could easily be a reference to the western--particularly American--world of Melville's day. The suspicion arises that this is one of the places where Melville uses Typee not as a separate ethnic or geographic grouping; that Typee is an arch-<u>Type</u>; that the islander becomes part of all men, and the isolated concretization is again used to make a universal. In the largest terms Typee is not alone open to charges of decay. Time has affected all, as it will the western world. It has reduced the civilization which erected the monumental stone piles of the Typee valley into a memory confused by superstitions, an echo of other great conquerors of nature whose works are now literally reduced to a level of support for a later, unconscious race. The crumbling stones as a symbol is to reappear in greater force in <u>Pierre</u>.

The problem of isolation itself does not exist as an unmodified theme in <u>Typee</u>. It is presented in modified terms of communication and consciousness and geographic inaccessibility, but it embraces a subsidiary problem when the two worlds are pictured

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in conflict; this consideration is an obvious extension of the comparison of Paulet and Thouars and all that they represent. Imposition of values is either incongruity and farce, as when the visiting native queen of Mowanna, king of Nukuheva, in the midst of the splendor and pomp of a military review, hoists her skirts to display her own splendor in the form of her brightly tattooed hindquarters, or it is death as brought on by the ravages of venereal disease introduced by the western invaders, or as introduced by the missionaries with their shifting laws and mores, or as introduced by Typee in cannibalism.

The statement emerging from the incidents in Typee pertinent to this theme is that no one aspect of human ethics and behavior is by itself superior to any other single aspect. The stage is set for the creation of the only hero, the complete man who can embrace the trinity of mind and body and heart. Melville is eclectic rather than Platonic. He will have none of the absolutes in any way whatever. (There will be larger indications of this in later books.) Ahab should have some of Queezueg's characteristics; Queequeg should have some of Ahab's. Hence the cultural relativism and democracy. Neither Tommo nor any Typee emerges as the hero who can resolve opposites. The ordering of human behavior must await the hero. In this view and in this cultural relativism, Melville's insight into the world pierced through the confines of his age and swept a huge part of the future.

The lushness and storm of Melville's style is confused with romantic thought. Melville's thought is anti-romantic. He insists

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that man must not tire of his world only to scorn it Byronically from an isolated mountain peak or to hide from it in the depths of an isolated valley. (Before Tommo jumps ship he delightedly envisages the former and after he jumps ship he lives the latter.) Tommo, after retirement, can not wait to rejoin his world; his weltschmertz is a thing of the past, and he will try to overcome any obstacle between himself and his reintegration with the realities of his own present, western point of development in civilization.

Insofar as it can be agreed that Melville's entire literary output is a cohesion and that when we read a simple story of a man going to sea or to land we must be careful to balance that story against the totality of Melville's work, we can find in the structure of Typee a picture of the structure of Melville's prose output. Tommo begins in antithesis to Ahab, Ahab ends in antithesis to Starry Vere, Starry Vere begins in similarity to Tommo in his need for humanity, but with a greatly increased store of realizations.

The beginning and end flow into each other and the most complex of Melville's books each becomes an epiphany of the totality of all the books. I use the word epiphany in the same sense that the theologian uses it to describe the sight of God. The epiphany is the object which creates the sudden, encompassed view, the frozen moment of perception which embraces the primal beginning and the final end. seeing that both beginning and end are one in a single source. It is most spectacular that any of Melville's

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books should so serve, for they all drive at a theme of Time which creates and absorbs all the human action of which Melville writes.

One suggestion must be added before we leave Typee. The element of heart has been mentioned, but only casually because it does not occupy much place in Typee. It is one of the casual insertions, one of the foreshadowings of the other books in which Typee so richly abounds. Heart, in Melville's books, is generally (but not at all consistently) related to the Typee world rather than to the western world, to the female rather than to the male, to the healthy body rather than to the self consumed and driven man. It is noticeable that as Taji becomes more and more fevered in his quest, as Ahab does in his, as Pierre does in his, and as their bodies waste away that their hearts harden. Even Tommo, who is not as defined a character as the others, steels himself away from the heart-ties he has formed in Typee as his leg becomes worse and worse and his need for home increases. The complete-man-hero will emphasize neither heart nor mind, but will subordinate either or both to the necessities and realities of his world. Mardi's Media will sacrifice selfish luxuries; Captain Vere will submit to the necessity of committing an act which his heart detests. But, like Typee itself, this suggestion can only be an adumbration.

Typee is the beginning of Melville's voyage. It is a book of craft and profundity that has been all but overlooked. The narrator enters different worlds, always retaining the consciousness of his

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original orientation, which is that of the western Christian culture. Focused through this constant consciousness the views of Melville are expressed in Tommo's awareness.

Consciousness itself has not yet been explored. It has been glimpsed only in impingement upon primitivism, which is the perspective point and central problem of Typee. The realm of primitive human existence has been explored, and its values--in isolation and unconsciousness--have been rejected, although its aspects of naturalness, simplicity and pragmatism have been favorably reported as necessary to complete life. From this beginning in time and ethical values, Melville, Tommo, and the reader point once again to the open sea, wherein the next stops will be made for the ever growing explorations of civilization and consciousness that await the reader.

NOTES

1. Typee, 467-468.

2. Typee, 468.

3. Typee, 468.

4. Typee, 487.

5. Typee, 465.

6. Typee, 488.

7. Typee, 466.

8. Typee, 466.

9. Typee, 473.

10. Often Melville scatters bits of reminders about the cannibals. The reminders on the one hand bolster the sharpness of contrast between appearance and reality (the Happars are supposed to be friendly, and they almost kill Toby; the Typees are supposed to be killers and they befriend the wanderers), and on the other hand they strengthen the view of land as a danger in itself, too. A representative selection is this: "I had heard too of an English vessel that many years ago, after a weary cruize [sic], sought to enterthe bay of Nukuheva, and arriving within two or three miles of the land, was met by a large canoe filled with natives, who offered to lead the way tp their place of destination. The captain, unacquainted with the localities of the island, joyfully accepted to the proposition -- the canoe paddled on and the ship followed. Seen she was conducted to a beautiful inlet, and dropped her anchor in its waters beneath the shadows of the lofty shore. That same night the perfidious Typees, who had thus inveigled her into their fatal bay, flocked aboard the doomed vessel by hundreds, and at a given signal murdered every soul on board." (493-494.)

11. Typee, 474.

12. In a sentence too casual to be intentionally intended as such, Melville writes an epitome of the contrasting civilizations as well as his major imagery: "...Far off, the lofty jet of the whale might be seen, and nearer at hand the prowling shark, that villainous footpad of the seas, would come skulking along..." (474.) The fragment is an exquisite miniature that expands to Melville's total theme.

13. Like the deceitful beachcomber, Jimmy, this alien to Typee existence loses all humanity. He Loses "mind" in the animal gratification of body (liquor), and yet cannot maintain himself in the world of

body except by his ties with the world of mind, which is out of place even though it is the dominating power. Jimmy lives in both worlds, but retains his hold on "mind" only in the corrupted utilization of consciousness for purpose of deceit. He is a parasite leeching on both worlds. He can only deceive Toby. He effects no rescue, for the Typees are willing to lose Toby, but Jimmy cannot rescue Tommo. However, the natives Karakoee and Marnoo can go from primitivism to consciousness (they can communicate with both worlds), and they gain power thereby. Marnoo is no seaman, is too close to Typee to be effective. He can communicate truth and can initiate a rescue, but cannot effect it. Karakoee has developed further than Marnoo. He is a native who is also a sea-sailor. He deceives no one, and he does rescue Tommo. The implication of theme is the obverse side of the coin which shows the regression and death involved in plunging from the conscious to the primitive, which becomes a denial of the possibilities of human civilization. The characters can reach completion and effectiveness only by travelling from the primitive to the conscious, and although primitive and conscious both have good and bad within them, this is the basic dichotomy of worlds in Typee.

14. Typee, 480-481.

15. Typee, 496-497.

16. Typee, 772.

17. Typee, 777.

18. Typee, 777.

19. Melville's characters all must either slink away from their original worlds (Tommo, Ishmael, Pierre), or they are jerked out of their worlds against the world's will (Billy Budd).

20. I emphasize social because Melville had many reservations about political democracy which are implicit in almost everything he wrote and which are explicit in the Vivenza section of Mardi wherein the anonymous pamphlet is read.

21. Typee, 498-499.

22. Tone is one of the most important clues for interpretation of Melville's books. Note, for instance, how the early love scenes in Pierre had annoyed critics for so long until their satiric qualities were pointed out by more recent scholars, particularly William Braswell.

23. Typee, 678-680.

24. Typee, 681.

25. Typee, 680-681.

26. Typee, 687-689.

27. Typee, 762.

28. Typee, 763.

29. Howard Rollin Patch, The Other World (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), passim.

30. Typee, 497-498.

31. Typee, 481-492.

32. Typee, 579-580.

33. Typee, 683-685.

34. I do not expect the reader to be convinced, at this point, that this is an accurate statement about Melville's view of religion. The attitude certainly exists demonstrably in Typee, but its more pronounced development and specific direction is left for the later books.

35. Typee, 689.

CHAPTER III

MARDI

When Melville wrote Mardi, he wrote about a subject that was to be the center of most of his greatest writing: the plight of the quester in relation to the world and to his goal. With Mardi, Melville gave himself both his first treat and his first real literary headache. Supposedly, it was to be another "south seas" book. But Melville offers his own little mask in the "Author's Preface":

> Not long ago, having published two narratives of voyages in the Pacific, which, in many quarters, were received with incredulity, the thought occurred to me, of indeed writing a romance of Polynesian adventure, and publishing it as such; to see whether, the fiction might not, possibly, be received for a verity: in some degree the reverse of my previous experience.
>
> This thought was the germ of others, which have resulted in Mardi.

All we have to do is compare the book itself with the preface, and let our conclusions as to what are "verities" base themselves on what we find. In this preface too, lurking under the surface of the apparently guileless preface is that cunning liar, the artist, ready to fix the gullible swimmer upon the sharkishly sharp teeth of his words. For purposes of theme, Mardi is as much a "verity" as Typee; for purposes of rationalization, excuse or

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deceit, this brief preface does its job admirably. The "germ" of Mardi was as much in the man who wrote Typee as in the man who wrote Mardi.[1] The writing of his cosmic vision, I maintain, was always in the back of Melville's mind, and Mardi was his first self-indulgence. It is most obviously a self-indulgence because Typee and Omoo had not yet taught him how to make the closely and consciously sought symbol arise from the suspenseful surface of a well written story, and Mardi became the "botch" that later books are not.[2] Surely, Melville must have learned more from Mardi than from any other book he ever wrote, except, possibly, his first.

I call Mardi a self-indulgence because in my view, Melville the man is not completely heroic. I see him as a man who was very conscious of patronage, popular taste and popular values. I see him as a man who wrote because he was "bestirring himself to procure his yams," a man who would delete, change, and prettify truth as he saw it in order to sell his books.[3] What kept him from becoming the hack that Melville the man might have been was the devil-in-the depths, the artist, the man with vision, who lurked in Melville as Azzageddi lurked in Babbalanja—and probably causing as much pain.[4] That deceiver, liar, devil-shark-artist was too honest, deep-diving, all-consuming and insightful for the real world of Mardi. The view of Lombardo writing the Koztanza was Melville's heroic picture of himself; but it did not become the true picture until Moby-Dick and after.[5]

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Mardi's "world of mind" is neither as simple nor as unified a narrative as Typee's world of body. Seizing "consciousness" in Mardi is seizing the phantom great white squid; the holder is himself twisted by the pull and suction of many tentacles, and just when it seems that this hold or that will result in grasping the Damned Thing's central core, the whole mass sinks out of sight in a sea of sloppy construction, artificial action, and shifting points of narration. There is one major area of difficulty encountered in an analysis of Mardi, a difficulty which must be examined before any comprehensive idea of what the book is about can emerge. The difficulty is simply that structurally Mardi is a very bad book. I think it is demonstrably the worst book Melville wrote. By no means does this mean, however, that it is the least important (a distinction I reserve readily for Omoo),[6] but rather that its narrative level is unforgivably gnarled and snarled. In fact, it is not one unified story, but rather a combination of three parallel tales. These three tales are (1) the introductory "factual" stories of the Arcturion, Chamois and Parki, (2) Taji's story, and (3) Babbalanja's and Media's story.[7]

It is, in fact, the structural disorganization of the narrative level which makes Mardi a "difficult" book. It is silly to hold forth as a new opinion the idea that Mardi is a disorganized book—that would be whipping the ghost of a dead horse. But there is yet much room for a definition of Mardi's disorganization. Generally, the attack has been that the allegory's symbolism is obscure, that the allegory itself is wild and unintegrated, and

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that thus Mardi becomes a "whaling story gone wrong," a possibly good story made dead and artificial by a cluttered symbolism.[8] However, it is quite the other way around. It is the simple surface narrative, the "story" itself which is wild and unintegrated, thus hurting a beautifully consistent body of symbolism by a cluttered narrative progression. The symbolism is not opaque, and the allegory is sometimes actually transparent. There are plenty of statements and actions which give the careful reader keys to definite meanings for Yillah, Hautia, Taji, et al.

But the disintegration of narrative structure at times makes it impossible to know just who is narrating the story, whose words are to be taken as a value-standard, and whose words are revelation of character. In short, before explication is possible, it is necessary to examine Mardi's structure in order to reveal the book's different centers.[9] This examination may well begin with a brief glance at the book's language.

In addition to strong parallels in situation, there are strong hints within the book that the "factual" opening foresees all the rest of the allegorical continuation.[10] The "break" in story is so worked that it can be said not to exist. For instance, among many other instances of preview, the end of Chapter XXVII ("In Which The Past History of The Parki Is Concluded") says:

> And such, in substance, was the first, second, third and fourth acts of the Parki drama. The fifth and last, including several scenes, now follows.[11]

Three chapters later, as the "several scenes" continue, Taji (not yet named Taji) says:

> At times, I mounted aloft, and lounging in the slings of the topsail yard—one of the many snug nooks in a ship's rigging—I gazed broad off upon that blue boundless sea, and wondered what they were doing in that unknown land, toward which we were fated to be borne.[12]

It is not only the several hints of looking ahead which prepare the expectations later satisfied, but also the language itself ties the "factual" beginning to the allegorical consequences. The fight with Aleema and his sons (at this point the Parki drama has ended, and the "break" may be said to have occurred) is in no way different from the appearance of factual adventure which invested the desertion from the Arcturion and the adventure of the Parki; the language shows no change from "adventure" to "allegory."

For instance, here is the desertion:

> "Man overboard!" was now shouted from stem to stern. And directly we heard the confused tramping and shouting of the sailors, as they rushed from their dreams into the almost inscrutable darkness.
>
> "Man overboard! Man overboard!" My heart smote me as the human cry of horror came out of the black vaulted night.
>
> ..."Heave the ship to, and hold fast everything," cried the captain, apparently just springing to the deck. "One boat's enough. Steward! show a light there from the mizzen-top. Boat ahoy!—have you got that man?"
>
> No reply. The voice came out of a cloud; the ship dimly showing like a ghost. We had desisted from rowing, and hand over hand were now hauling in upon the rope attached to the breaker, which we soon lifted into the boat, instantly resuming our oars.
>
> "Pull! pull, men! and save him! again shouted the captain.
>
> "Ay, ay, sir," answered Jarl instinctively, "pulling as hard as ever we can, sir."
>
> And pull we did, till nothing could be heard from the ship but a confused tumult; and, ever and anon, the hoarse shout of the captain, too distant to be understood.
>
> We now set our sail to a light air; and right into the darkness, and dead to leeward, we rowed and sailed

> till morning dawned.[13]

And here is the saving of the Parki:

> The boat still gaining on the brigantine, the muskets were again reloaded. And as the next shot sped, there was a pause; when, like lightning, the headmost Cholo bounded upwards from his seat, and oar in hand, fell into the sea. A fierce yell; and one of the natives springing into the water caught the sinking body by its long hair; and the dead and the living were dragged into the boat. Taking heart from this fatal shot, Samoa fired yet again...
>
> Enough: darting past the ill-fated boat, they swam rapidly for land, followed by the rest; who plunged overboard, leaving in the boat the surviving Cholo—who it seems could not swim—the wounded savage, and the dead man...
>
> At length both Cholo and savage fell dead upon their comrades, canting the boat over sideways, till well nigh awash; in which manner she drifted off.[14]

The meeting with Aleema is the first scene of the allegory, and yet there is no difference in tone or atmosphere. Even the murder of Aleema is not attended by any change of language:

> The knife before dangling in Samoa's ear was now in his hand. Jarl cried out for us to regain the boat, several of the Islanders making a rush for it. No time to think. All passed quicker than it can be said. They closed in upon us, to push us from the canoe. Rudely the old priest flung me from his side, menacing me with his dagger, the sharp spine of a fish. A thrust and a threat. Ere I knew it, my cutlass made a quick lunge. A curse from the priest's mouth; red blood from his side; he tottered, stared about him, and fell over like a brown hemlock into the sea. A yell of maledictions rose on the air. A wild cry was heard from the tent, Making a dead breach among the crowd, we now dashed side by side for the boat. Springing into it, we found Jarl battling with two Islanders; while the rest were still howling upon the dais. Rage and grief had almost disabled them.[15]

From this point, however, as the allegory builds, the language does change. We have only to turn to the end of the book, where the allegory has just about ridden itself—and the reader—out, to

see the difference:

> And now, their torches held aloft, into the water the maidens softly glided; and each a lotus floated; while, from far above, into the air Hautia flung her flambeau; then bounding after,—in the lake, two meteors were quenched.
>
> Where she dived, the flambeaux clustered; and up among them, Hautia rose, hands full of pearls.
>
> "Lo! Taji; all these may be had for the diving; and Beauty, Health, Wealth, Long Life, and the Last Lost Hope of man. But through me alone, may these be had. Dive thou and bring up one pearl if thou canst."
>
> Down, down! down, down, in the clear, aparkling water, till I seemed crystallized in the flashing heart of a diamond; but from those bottomless depths, I uprose empty handed.[16]

In the passage on the death of Aleema, the priest is a brown hemlock, an image unified to both the literal and symbolic levels. He is a dark Islander, and he is also an image of death, poisoning the water and Taji's life with guilt and pursuit. The image of Hautia as a meteor is also unified to both levels. She is hotly and flashily attractive, and she also burns out into nothing when Taji tries to seize the promise of her appearance. The language does not change because of a higher charge of symbolic content. It changes because it embraces all the highly stylized artificialities of allegory. In the Aleema passage a torch would be a torch, not a flambeau. No one in the Aleema episode would glide into the water floating lotuses: the energy of the language would arise from narrative action rather than from the fixed diction of traditional stylization. And in the Aleema passage, rage and grief, symbolic as they are, are rage and grief, not Rage and Grief. The <u>creation</u> (but <u>not</u> the interweaving) of symbol is cheapened in the artificialities. In fine, there is more contrast between the beginning and

end of the allegory than between the "factual" adventure and the allegory.[17]

As bad as the stiltedness of the allegory is, Melville adds it skillfully, taking the reader from "another south seas book" into the world of Mardi, and he prepares and builds the change slowly. At no point can the reader put his finger on the page and say, "The change is here." It is not until after the disappearance of the "factual" introduction that the reader realizes a break has occurred somewhere along the line.

By the time Taji, Jarl and Samoa get Yillah ashore at the introductory stop in Mardi, allegorical action and language have been built up to familiarity in Chapters XLII to LIII. It is in this latter chapter that a "break" does occur, but it is no sudden change of language or style. The break is simply the transfer of emphasis from tale I, the introductory adventures, to tale II, the development of Taji's story. The question is not, "Why does Melville suddenly change stories in the middle of the book?" but rather, "Why has he taken so much time introducing the allegory he knew he was writing?"[18] There is no continuation weaving the narrative of the "factual" beginning into the narrative of Taji's quest story. The introduction is forgotten, relegated to the mechanical needs of introducing the major action. It is only the symbolism which saves the introduction from being completely extraneous.

The second tale is Taji's. Yet this tale exists in only about thirty-six chapters, or, roughly, only twenty percent of the total

book.[19] The second tale is in turn fragmented into three sections. The first is a group ot twenty chapters clustered between Chapters XXXIX and LXIV, and this group comprises the introduction to the Taji-Hillah tale.[20]

The second is a group of about seven chapters interspersed throughout the book. In these chapters Aleema's pursuit and Hautia's allurements are interjected in a series of mechanical reminders that there is an underlying purpose for the voyage. But there is no special pattern in which these reminders occur. It seems that in the grinding act of composition, with his mind preoccupied with thinking out what he wanted to say in Mardi, Melville simply waited what he thought were decent intervals and reinserted the trappings of Taji's particular quest approximately once every fifteen chapters without any special structural rhyme or reason. As a result, the reintroductions of the three avengers and the three heralds of Hautia are highly fortuitous and unlike the bulk of Melville's writing which utilizes juxtaposition and proper timing with the uncanny accuracy characteristic of a really good writer. Each of the reminders is monotonously similar to every other. The occupants of Media's canoe are startled by a patter of three arrows intended for Taji. They look up in time to see the avengers' canoe rush away in the distance. Immediately, Hautia's three heralds appear, displaying flowers to Taji. Yoomy interprets the meaning of the flowers (generally: your hope, Taji, is dead; come fly to Hautia's joys). Taji makes a grim avowal of eternal quest for Yillah and scorn for Hautia. And away they all

sail, unbothered by similar interruptions for another fifteen chapters or so.

The third fragment of this second book is the last nine chapters of Mardi. This fragment sees the quester doomed to failure as he plunges out of the world in pursuit of his phantom. Ironically, the only thing which tends to save the narrative level of this allegory (although it does not quite save it) is the very fragmentation which intermixes the Taji story with the third tale, the Media-Babbalanja story and thereby lends the two tales a minimal appearance of narrative unity.

The intermixture itself, in turn, sheds light upon the intentions and skeletal structure of Mardi. The fact that these latter two stories continue on together, independent of the tale which introduced them, is a further indication that the allegory was the real story in which Melville was interested all along.

The third tale of Mardi is what the second should have been. Babbalanja's and Media's story is the major portion of the book, in bulk as well as in terms of a resolution of the problems raised. The first thirty-eight chapters have been exempted for the "factual" beginning. Thirty-six chapters more go to book two. That leaves just a little less than half of the total one- hundred and ninety-five chapters for Mardi's third story. Ostensibly, Mardi is about Taji's quest. In resolution, it is actually about the quest and education of the king and the philosopher. As they all voyage, the inhabitants of the canoe all seek Yillah, but they all define her differently. Babbalanja learns to reject Yillah

(Odonphi, Astrazzi, or any of the jargon-terms satirically intended) for an earthly value. Media takes a journey, almost imperceptibly, from isolation to membership in the human community.[21] Media and Babbalanja find the same basic answer to the problems of human behavior, and characteristically each one applies the answer according to his own personality and social function. They become the only truly rounded, developing characters in the book, surrounded by a stableful of allegory's puppets. The parallel between the Taji story and the Media-Babbalanja story exists on the symbolic level more coherently and fully than it does in the narrative progression. Interestingly enough, the overall definition of Yillah is given in the parallel. That definition is the sum total of that which each of the voyagers seeks. The voyage throughout the Archipelago tells us where Yillah will <u>not</u> be found, and each land visited is an implication about what kind of behavior will not yield her. There is a hint of this the moment Taji admits that Yillah is really gone and that he will have to hunt through the world for her:

> But hereafter, <u>in words</u>, little more of the maiden, till perchance her fate be learned.[22]

The voyage itself serves two functions. It makes a negative comment on Taji's quest and provides background which makes the quest's symbolism meaningful. At the same time it allows Melville to get down on paper all the Swift-isms he had wanted to write concerning human society and his own western civilization.

In commenting upon the various behaviors seen during the

voyage, Babbalanja and Media carry the burden of the book's development. Had Taji been Babbalanja, and had he rejected the Serenian vision, still wishing to enter the ultimate heaven by escalade, then Mardi would have been a far more unified book. But this great portion of Mardi's pages does not belong to Taji on the narrative level except by the almost gratuitous indirection of his being in the same canoe with the commentators, Babbalanja and Media. Therefore, throughout a large portion of the book, the symbolism surrounding the Taji story, though not difficult, is unconnected with the narrative progress and it becomes obscure.

As Matthiessen pointed out, it is artificial symbolism.[23] But Matthiessen is not wholly correct in attributing this artificiality to an indiscriminate borrowing from many authors, including the peach-juice stylizers of the ladies'-magazine third raters. It is primarily artificial because it is imposed from without; it does not grow from the literal level through an imposition of order upon the raw material of incident; it acts as a closed unit, leading only back to the Taji story, which is the symbolic center of Mardi, but which certainly is not the narrational center.[24]

The separation of these centers becomes inevitable in the forced fragmentation of the book. It may be that forced is the word, for during the discussion of Lombardo's Koztanza, fragmentation is championed by the sympathetic character, Babbalanja, and condemned by the heartless and thoughtless King Abrazza:

ABRAZZA.—...But, Babbalanja, the Koztanza lacks cohesion;

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> It is wild, unconnected, all episode
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> BABBALANJA.—And so is Mardi itself: —nothing but episodes; valleys and hills; rivers, digressing from plains; vines, roving all over; boulders and diamonds; flowers and thistles; forests and thickets; and, here and there, fens and moors. And so, the world in the Koztanza.
>
> ABRAZZA.—Ay, plenty of dead-desert chapters there; horrible sands to wade through.[25]

The "Mardi" in Babbalanza's speech refers to the book as well as the archipelago. Melville seems to have found verbalized in Shakespeare a concept he himself embraced, the concept that art should follow nature.[26] He extended the concept into a belief in an unconscious following of the creative impulse: "Call it what you will, Yoomy, it was a sort of sleepwalking of the mind. Lombardo never threw down his pen: it dropped from him; and then, he sat disenchanted: rubbing his eyes; staring; and feeling faint—sometimes, almost unto death."[27] However, we can not say that Melville was critically unconscious merely on the strength of this one passage. In fact, the recognition of the unconscious approach to creative composition accounts for Melville's realization that the uncritical upwelling of creative vitality brings froth as well as deep-sea creatures to the surface: "My lords,.../geniuses/ abound in.../trash/! more than any other men in Mardi. Genius is full of trash. But genius essays its best to keep it to itself; and giving away its ore, retains the earth; whence, the too frequent wisdom of its works, and folly of its life."[28] Moreover, Lombardo and Babbalanja make statements which are highly cognizant of critical necessities. Babbalanja, speaking for Lombardo, says,

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"For I am critic and creator; and as critic, in cruelty surpass all critics merely, as a tiger, jackals."[29] For himself, Babbalanja adds, "...Lombardo never presumed to criticize true critics; who are more rare than true poets. A great critic is a sultan among satraps; but pretenders are thick as ants, striving to scale a palm, after its aerial sweetness."[30] And Lombardo is quoted as saying, "Who will read me? Say one thousand pages—twenty-five lines each--every line ten words—every word ten letters. That's two million five hundred thousand a's, and i's, and o's to read![31] How many are superfluous?"[32]

These passages are at once a revelation of creative method and a rationalization, a bit of forearming against criticism which, at this point, Melville was sure would be obvious.[33] What is important is that Melville recognized the fragmentation, yet tried to justify it rather than correct it. In this sense too, Mardi is Melville's supreme piece of self-indulgence. Finally, a confusion of art and life would hardly be the best defense for the man who had scoffed at the verity-seekers among the readers of Typee and Omoo. This confusion would not be a good defense for the man who had obviously recognized the craftsman's uses of selection and intensification in Typee. Least of all is this confusion a defense for a man who writes allegory unconcerned as Mardi is with mere verisimilitude or slice-of-life reality.

Because the fragmentation breaks up successful progression of any single story, there is a jarring inconsistency in the delineation of the narrator.[34] The first book is clearly in the first

person, and the narrator is clearly Taji-not-yet-named-Taji. This narrator, by implication, is definitely within the world at present, safe, looking back upon his past adventures after the book is finished:

> Good old Arcturion! Maternal craft, that rocked me so often in thy heart of oak, I grieve to tell how I deserted thee on the broad deep...
>
> Old ship! where sails they lone ghost now? For of stout Arcturion no word was ever heard, from the dark hour we pushed from her fated planks...
>
> By quitting the Arcturion when we did, Jarl and I unconsciously eluded a sailor's grave...And for myself I am almost tempted to hang my head, that I escaped the fate of my shipmates...[35]

Yet at the end of the book we know that the narrator is not possibly in any such position implied by the point of view.[36] We might say that immersed in the introduction, Melville paid no attention to a need for consistency with the end of the book. Yet, some two hundred pages later, already deep into the allegory, the narrator again adopts the same point of view:

> As in dreams I behold thee again, Willamilla! as in dreams, once again I stroll through the cool shady groves, oh fairest of the valleys of Mardi! the thought of that mad merry feasting steals over my soul till I faint.[37]

There are other disturbing features about this narrator. Although the general narration is in the first person (usually plural), there are scattered passages wherein Taji is relegated to a third person with no indication of who is now doing the talking:

> Seeing all these indications of hard roystering; like a cautious young bridegroom at his own marriage merry-making Taji stood on his guard. And when Borabolla urged him to empty a gourd or two, by way of making room in him for the incidental repast about to be served, Taji civilly declined; not wishing to cumber the

floor, before the cloth was laid.[38]

To further confuse matters, Taji is sometimes referred to in the third person, but with clear indication that it is Taji talking about himself:

> This recital filled Taji with horror.
> Who could these avengers be, but the sons of him I had slain. I had thought them far hence, and myself forgotten...[39]

The very end of the book spotlights the inextricable dilemma into which the narrative fragmentation has forced Melville and his narrator. During the very last bit of action, when Taji abandons the world and suicides himself into eternity, the narration is still first person:

> "Now I am my own soul's emperor; and my first act is abdication! Hail! realm of shades!"--and turning my prow into the racing tide, which seized me like a hand omnipotent, I darted through.
> Churned in foam, that outer ocean lashed the clouds; and straight in my white wake, headlong dashed a shallop, three fixed specters leaning o'er its prow: three arrows poising.[40]

At this crucial point, the first person narrator withdraws--as he would have to if there is to be anyone left to write "the end" to the tale--and some other narrator, who has been dodging in and out of the story as convenience or forgetfulness dictates, again takes over in order to wave a <u>mal voyage</u> to Taji and his specters:

> And thus, pursuers and pursued fled on, over an endless sea.
>
> THE END[41]

It is also the end of the reader's bewildered attempt to

determine just who is telling the story.

The narrative fragmentation of Mardi causes other structural breakdowns which are probably less important than those just mentioned, but which, nevertheless, help to destroy the book. For instance, the voyagers travel in a geography of allegorical abstraction, vaguely positioned in the south seas. But in Chapter CXLV ("Chiefly of King Bello"), they enter a geographical area which is not of the south seas. The Taji-not-yet-named-Taji narrator was painstaking in outlining his plan to drift eventually to the Kingsmill group of islands. The first few pages of Mardi are spotted with the details of location which belong to the "factual" introduction. In the Taji story and the Media-Babbalanja story, the reader must shift gears into a willing suspension of disbelief and accept the Mardian Archipelago (somewhere near the Kingsmills) not as an Earthly entity, but as an allegorical parallel with no location discoverable on a map. Suddenly, still in the allegorical Mardi of the non-discoverable south seas, the reader voyages to Dominora (England) and must accept this obvious bit of the northeast Atlantic as being somewhere in a nonexistent corner of the southwest Pacific. Melville makes the further mistake of jarring the reader's acceptance (now somewhat strained) by identifying his allegorical creations with the geographical Earth. For example, when explaining King Bello's marriage to the sea here in the middle of Mardi, the narrator recalls similar ceremonies by Jason, Castor and Pollux of Greece, Aeneas of Troy, Mark Antony and Cleopatra of Egypt, Torf-Egill of Denmark, Doge Dandolo of

Venice, Kumbo Sama of Japan, and Kannakoko of New Zealand. The reader cannot determine which world he is in. It would be silly to demand a consistent geography for an imaginary land used for satirical purposes, but political satire is only part of the function of this section of the book. One particular portion of the Media-Babbalanja story cannot so conveniently be divorced geographically from the rest of the other, abstract and symbolic Mardi simply because the author wills it so. He must make it so, and he does not.

Melville continues to confuse the reader by assuming for Mardi a geography identical with the real Earth. There is a voyage around Scotland (Kaleedoni), Ireland (Verdanna), then to continental Europe (Porpheero), where they see the coast of France (Franko) and where Media is frightened by the revolution of 1848. Then the voyage continues westward across the Atlantic-Pacific to the United States (Vivenza), where the travellers visit awhile, then south, overland, through the United States, and then out the Gulf of Mexico, down the east coast of South America (Kolumbo of the South), westward around Cape Horn (the Cape of Capes) and northward to the west coast of North America, where the travellers view the gold rush. Then the trip continues across the Pacific (the Pacific-Pacific, this time!), past lush isles where Mardi is supposed to be in the first place, southward along the coast of Asia (Orienda) and Africa (Hamora), around the Cape of Good Hope, northward to the Straits of Gibraltar, through which the travellers sail eastward with Europe's Christendom on their left and North Africa's Islam on their right, to the furthest reach of the Mediterranean, at which

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point they turn around and sail back out to the wide Atlantic. At this point, Melville simply asks the reader to disregard the specific geographical regions just caricatured and to believe himself once more in the Mardi of the south Pacific.[42] The chapter ends:

> As, after wandering round and round some purple dell, deep in a boundless prairie's heart, the baffled hunter plunges in; then, despairing, turns once more to gain the open plain; even so we seekers now curved round our keels; and from that inland sea emerged. The universe again before us; our quest as wide.[43]

That "universe" is the same familiar Atlantic already sailed over on the journey to Vivenza. But—the next chapter opens blithely in Mardi! "Morning dawned upon that same mild, blue Lagoon as erst; and all the lands that we had passed...were faded from the sight."[44]

It is all like the children's Saturday afternoon serialized cliff-hanger movies, which always manage to get the hero out of impossible scrapes. Either the "factual" introduction should have taken place in a sea unknown rather than the real Pacific, or the map of Mardi should not have been so confusingly similar to that of the real Earth. When the narrator exclaims, "Oh, reader, list! I've chartless voyaged," he makes a truer statement than he knows as far as the narrative structure is concerned.

The chartlessness of narrative is noticeable in one other large area of <u>Mardi</u>, and that is the haphazardness of incident itself. One of the worst accusations that can be levelled against the quality of the book is that there is no <u>steady</u> incremental development of symbol, meaning, plot or characterization in the

incidents. That is not to say that there is no development at all in the incident, but that the incident follows no plan of arrangement. There is no reason, for instance, why the visit to Valapee should precede the visit to Juam. Except for its last paragraph, there is no function for the chapter on "The Sea on Fire." With many other chapters developing the qualities of the sea, there is no reason why reiterative chapters like those which tell "More about Being in An Open Boat" were considered necessary. Nor can I find any reason why incidents like those in Chapter CXXI ("They Regale Themselves with Their Pipes") were included at all.[45]

Sometimes necessary action which impinges upon the major characters is made unnecessarily obtrusive by being injected as mechanically as the visits of Hautia's heralds. These bits of action become triggers for launching buckshot projectiles of discourse. For instance, Vee-Vee falls and breaks his arm like an obliging little chap only so that Babbalanja may enter upon a lengthy sermon on necessitarianism.[46] While the story of Donjalolo's emissaries to the outside world has a meaning reflexive to Mardi's theme, it is presented so mechanically that it seems as if the story is told only so that Babbalanja may make a summary statement about the relativity of truth. The mechanical appearance, the dry reiteration stems from one basic fault: Melville is not content, in Mardi, to let the incident speak for itself. He limits the possibilities with which incident creates further levels out of itself by constantly stretching a topping of statement over a piece of creation, and he does this again and again throughout the

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book. The fault of unnecessary statement and reiteration will irritate the clever reader and will bore the reader who seeks only the interest of plot.

One example will serve to illustrate what too high a percentage of Mardi's incident is like. As Taji, Media, Babbalanja, et. al. sail to Serenia, one of the oarsmen falls into the sea.

> But a sudden splash, and a shrill, gurgling sound, like that of a fountain subsiding, now broke upon the air. Then all was still, save the rush of waves by our keel.
>
> "Save him! Put back!"
>
> From his elevated seat, the merry bowsman, too gleefully reaching forward, had fallen into the lagoon.
>
> With all haste, our speeding canoes were reversed; but not till we had darted in upon another darkness than that in which the bowsman fell.
>
> As, blindly, we groped back, deep Night dived deeper down in the sea.
>
> "Drop paddles all, and list."
>
> Holding their breath, over the six gunwhales all now leaned; but the only moans were the wind's.
>
> Long time we lay thus; then slowly crossed and recrossed our track, almost hopeless; but yet loth to leave him who, with a song in his mouth, died and was buried in a breath.
>
> "Let us away," said Media—"why seek more? He is gone."
>
> "Ay, gone," said Babbalanja, "and whither? But a moment since, he was among us; now, the fixed stars are not more remote than he. So far off, can he live? Oh, Oro! this death thou ordainest unmans the manliest. Say not nay, my lord. Let us not speak behind Death's back. Hard and horrible is it to die; blindfold to leap from life's verge! But thus, in clouds of dust, and with a trampling as of hoofs, the generations disappear; death driving them all into his treacherous fold, as wild Indians the bison herds. Nay, nay, Death is Life's last despair. Hard and horrible is it to die. Oro himself, in Alma, died not without a groan. Yet why, why live? Life is wearisome to all: the same dull round. Day and night, summer and winter, round about us revolving for aye. One moment lived, is a life. No new stars appear in the sky; no new lights in the soul. Yet, of changes there are many. For though, with rapt sight, in childhood, we behold many strange things beneath the moon, and all Mardi looks a tented fair—how soon everything

fades. All of us, in our very bodies, outlive our own selves. I think of green youth as of a merry playmate departed; and to shake hands, and be pleasant with my old age, seems in prospect even harder, than to draw a cold stranger to my bosom. But old age is not for me. I am not of the stuff that grows old. This Mardi is not our home. Up and down we wander, like exiles transported to a planet afar:--'tis not the world we were born in; not the world once so lightsome and gay; not the world where we once merrily danced, dined, and supped; and wooed and wedded our long buried wives. Then let us depart. But whither? We push ourselves forward--then, start back in affright. Essay it again, and flee. Hard to live; hard to die; intolerable suspense! But the grim despot at last interposes; and with a viper in our winding-sheets, we are dropped in the sea."

"To me," said Mohi, his gray locks damp with night dews, death's dark defile at times seems at hand, with no voice to cheer. That all have died makes it not easier for me to depart. And that many have been quenched in infancy seems a mercy to the slow perishing of my old age, limb by limb and sense by sense. I have long been the tomb of my youth. And more has died out of me, already, than remains for the last death to finish. Babbalanja says truth. In childhood, death stirred me not; in middle age, it pursued me like a prowling bandit on the road; now, grown an old man, it boldly leads the way; and ushers me on; and turns round upon me its skeleton gaze: poisoning the last solaces of life. Maramma but adds to my gloom."

"Death! death!" cried Yoomy, "must I be not, and millions be? Must I go, and the flowers still bloom? Oh, I have marked what it is to be dead;--how shouting boys on holidays, hide-and-seek among the tombs, which must hide all seekers at last."

"Clouds on clouds!" cried Media, "but away with them all! Why not leap your graves while ye may? Time to die, when death comes, without dying by inches. 'Tis no death, to die; the only death is the fear of it. I, a demi-god, fear death not."[47] [The discussion of death and God continues for another entire page.]

Melville has not yet learned to let incident carry its share of theme's burden. He transfers symbolic growth from the device of action to the device of conversation, and for this reason Mardi appears to be such a ceaselessly "talky" book.

Moreover, the oarsmen are mentioned only two or three times in

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the course of the entire book. This particular oarsman is mentioned here for the first and only time. His sudden introduction is not the only hint of unincorporated action. The dialogue itself after the first three sentences of Babbalanja's soliloquy, makes no mention of the oarsman (who has fulfilled his function of convenient death and is now dispensed with; about whom neither the narrator, the major characters, nor the reader can have any feeling). The dialogue centers either upon generalizations about death or upon revelation of characteristics of whoever happens to be speaking. The oarsman might just as well never have died: the entire discussion could have been introduced by Media's calling for talk, as he so often does; or by Babbalanja's unstimulated volunteering of talk, which so often occurs. The incident itself is not really incorporated into the discussion of the talkers. It can have nothing whatsoever to do with any other action that led up to it (for there was none) or any action which proceeds from it (for there is none). It is fortuitous and gratuitous. It is an example of the rare kind of passage in which Melville stands guilty of cheap and easy writing.[48]

One sample of another kind of fragmentation will close these suggestions about Mardi's narrative structure. Not only is incident sometimes unrelated to the book proper, but very often pieces of dialogue within an incident become fragmented so that a continued stretch of talk will incorporate sections unrelated to anything but Melville's desire to say what he wants to say, necessary or not. For instance, after one of Babbalanja's disquisitions,

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which is a lecture upon the need for equal balance and cooperation between mind and body and upon the evolutionary source of all men's corporeal beings—including those of kings—the conversation shifts unaccountably:

> "Babbalanja," said Mohi, "you must be the last of the kangaroos."
>
> "I am, Mohi."
>
> "But the old fashioned pouch or purse of your grandams?" hinted Media.
>
> "My lord, I take it, that must have been transferred; nowadays our sex carries the purse.
>
> "Ha, ha!"
>
> "My lord, why this mirth? [The reader also wonders.] Let us be serious. Although man is no longer a kangaroo, he may be said to be an inferior species of plant. Plants proper are perhaps insensible of the circulation of their sap: we mortals are physically unconscious of the circulation of the blood; and for many ages we were not even aware of the fact. Plants know nothing of their interiors:—three score years and ten we trundle about ours, and never get a peep at them; plants stand on their stalks;—we stalk on our legs; no plant flourishes over its dead root: —dead in the grave, man lives no longer above ground; plants die without food;—so we. And now for the difference. Plants elegantly inhale nourishment, without looking it up: like lords they stand still and are served; and though green, never suffer from the colic: —whereas, we mortals must forage all round for our food: we cram our insides; and are loaded down with odious sacks and intestines. Plants make love and multiply; but excell us in all amorous enticements, wooing and winning by soft pollens and essences. Plants abide in one place, and live: we must travel or die. Plants flourish without us: we must perish without them."[49]

Thematically, this passage is related to a symbolically created theme. But Babbalanja has already given enough clues about the basic unity of creation and about his doubts of immortality. This addition is unnecessary. But especially after the words, "And now for the difference," the dialogue becomes totally irrelevant and unilluminating.

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Because the overall narrative structure of the book falls apart, the components of the structure's segments follow only the haphazard needs of the moment and also break into unrelated sections. The overall narrative structure breaks, causing fractures in smaller and smaller sections of the story. The topmost stone is built upon sand.

II

When we turn from the narrative structure to symbol and the theme arising from symbol, we discover a totally different world, a totally new Mardi. Characterization provides the best approach to this new world.

Mardi opens exactly as does Typee. The protagonist is weary of a stale sea cruise, and the weariness immediately makes his characteristics apparent. He is set apart from the ship's community. He differs from his shipmates in desires and sensibilities. "And what to me, [he says] thus pining for some one who could page me a quotation from Burton on Blue Devils; what to me, indeed, were flat repetitions of long-drawn yarns, and the everlasting stanzas of Black-eyed Suzan sung by our full forecastle choir? Staler than stale ale."[50] In the commitments of daily men and daily living he does not find the kind of history he would create.

> ...The sailors were good fellows all, the half-score of pagans we had shipped at the islands included. Nevertheless, they were not precisely to my mind. There was no soul a magnet to mine; none with whom to mingle sympathies; save in deploring the calms...Under other and livelier auspices the tarry knaves might have developed qualities more attractive...But as it was, there was naught to strike fire from their steel...
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> Ay, ay, Arcturion! I say it in no malice, but thou

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> wast exceedingly dull. Not only at sailing: hard though it was, that I could have borne; but in every other respect...ye lost and leaden hours, I will rail at ye while life lasts.[51]

Temper tossed Taji displays the characteristics of the quest figure early in the book.[52] Life as is is a waste of time for him. In a curious bit of dialogue indicative of the quester's attitude toward the lot of man, the captain and the protagonist foreshadow the plight of the quester and of man. "'Captain,' said I, touching my sombrero to him as I stood at the wheel one day, 'It's very hard to carry me off this way to purgatory. I shipped to go elsewhere.'

"'Yes, and so did I,' was his reply. 'But it can't be helped,'[53]..." The quester has visions of heaven. In the very act of being born, in the very act of existence, he points toward heaven. If he doesn't like the direction the world takes, regardless of responsibilities or consequences, he abandons it. Again, as in Typee, the protagonist is introduced as the isolato who wishes to absent himself either from the cruelty or the dusty deadness of society in order to find himself a Golden-Age Paradise.[54]

Taji (not yet named Taji) gazes off into vaults of sky. He drifts loose from the hampering cables of this mother-ship of his own world. The Arcturion is the society of this real world, and Taji calls it a "maternal heart of oak." As early as we can see Taji, he carries his visions, "towing argosies by the score," trembling, gasping, and straining in flight to go beyond the shoals, which are, "like nebulous vapors, shoreing the white reef of the Milky Way, against which the wrecked worlds are dashed."[55]

At first introduction we do not see Taji's frenzy. But as he watches the arching gateways to another world, we see his predisposition to leave the world, and then we see his frenzy.

> In the distance what visions were spread! The entire western horizon piled high with gold and crimson clouds; airy arches, domes and minarets; as if the yellow, Moorish sun were setting behind some vast Alhambra. Vistas seemed leading to worlds beyond. To and fro, and all over the towers of this Nineveh in the sky, flew troops of birds. Watching them long, one crossed my sight, flew through a low arch, and was lost to view. My spirit must have sailed in with it; for directly, as in a trance, came upon me the cadence of mild billows laving a beach of shells, the waving of boughs, and the voices of maidens, and the lulled beatings of my own dissolved heart, all blended together.
>
> Now, all this, to be plain, was but one of the many visions one has up aloft. But coming upon me at this time, it wrought upon me so, that thenceforth my desire to quit the Arcturion became little short of a frenzy.[56]

This is really Taji's first view of Yillah. The predisposition to find her is apparent before the predisposition can be objectified in the meeting with Yillah. But it will be activated in the very act of the desertion of the Arcturion long before Yillah is introduced. The quester will seek heaven and will gain it by escalade if need be, or he will make no voyage at all. Taji knows that because of his relationship with the real world and because of his view of it that he will desert it. Again, as in Typee, the legal niceties are the surface appearances that are not basic to the real motives for the desertion and the journey into "worlds beyond." At the moment he thinks of stealing one of the ship's boats in order to desert, Taji waives the legalities in the same breath with which he invokes them. Nor do the legalities and appearances have the same strength they had in Typee, where the

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captain was a brute.[57]

> My first thoughts were of the boat to be obtained, and the right or wrong of abstracting it, under the circumstances. But to split no hairs on this point, let me say that were I placed in the same situation again, I would repeat the thing I did then. The captain well knew that he was going to detain me unlawfully; against our agreement; and it was he himself who threw out the very hint which I merely adopted, with many thanks to him.[58]

The characteristic is unbending will. The thing revealed is the predisposition. Neither ever changes, for the Taji who quests through the allegorical archipelago is the same man who abandoned the "real" Arcturion. Much later, when shot at and missed by the avengers of Aleema, Taji examines the arrow and says, "Then it missed its aim. But I will not mine. And whatever arrows follow, still will I hunt on. Nor does the ghost, that these pale specters would avenge, at all disquiet me. The priest I slew but to gain her, now lost; and I would slay again to bring her back."[59] Just as Jarl is at first shocked by Taji's revelation of his decision to abandon the Arcturion, so Taji's companions are shocked by his revelation of pure murderous will. It is this same will which prevails upon Jarl to help in the act of withdrawal:

> At last he very bluntly declared that the scheme was a crazy one; he had never known of such a thing but thrice before; and in every case the runaways had never afterwards been heard of. He entreated me to renounce my determination, not be a boy, pause and reflect, stick to the ship, and go home in her like a man...
>
> But to all this I turned a deaf ear; affirming that my mind was made up; and that as he refused to accompany me, and I fancied no one else for a comrade, I would go stark alone, rather than not at all...[60]

It has never been properly emphasized that Taji is the quester before he meets Yillah, and that the Arcturion episode is a

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definition of Taji through symbolic action. Chapter one sets up the essential character of Taji and reveals that conscious will is the character's identifying trait. By the end of chapter five, the character is settled in a mold that never changes throughout the course of Mardi.[61] As a "man overboard" never afterwards heard of, Taji "dies" to the world of the Arcturion. For a while he is a new figure, that of the omoo aboard the Chamois. Then for the first time he becomes captain of the means which can direct his fate when he becomes master of the Parki. This life "dies" with the sinking of the ship. After the meeting with Yillah, he emerges as Taji, a god from the sun, and this new life, which is an affiliation with other-worldliness, is the protagonist's major role throughout the rest of the book. However, Taji never undergoes any character change as would be suggested by the symbolic use of immersion-in-water, the cycle of death and rebirth.

In Taji we have the monomaniac, the quest figure in full stature. He stocks up for pursuit of his private vision by stealing from the world community of the Arcturion. The transfer or plunder of the means of existence has been adumbrated in Typee, and again in Mardi we find that no one willingly allows the quester to transfer worlds. The quester must be a stealthy liar. The world has more care that the world exist and that society not be torn apart than that the quester attain his vision.[62] The quester, on the other hand, scorns the world, and places his individuation and his ideal as the highest values in the cosmos. The pilfering

of the ship's stores is the same as the thoughtless exploitation of Typee nature or the wanton destruction of the leviathan. The act of pilfering becomes the symbol of the spoilation and loss that accompanies the action of the isolato who does not bring his vision to bear on the struggles, needs, and values of the real world in which he lives. The withdrawal from the real world is the first death, the first suicide of self and the first possible murder of the world. It is accompanied by the remorse and guilt which call for the salve of legal niceties. That those nicieties never stop the pursuit of guilt is sometimes stated and often implied, as in Chapter VII ("A Pause"):

> ...And for myself I am almost tempted to hang my head, that I escaped the fate of my shipmates; something like him who blushed to have escaped the fell carnage at Thermopylae.
>
> Though I cannot repress a shudder when I think of that old ship's end, it is impossible for me so much as to imagine, that our deserting her could have been in any way instrumental in her loss. Nevertheless, I would to Heaven the Arcturion still floated; that it was given me once more to tread her familiar decks.[63]

It is futile to conjecture whether or not one or two men posted in the right places at the right time would have saved the Arcturion. But it is important that underlying Taji's absolution of his own guilt is the undying shudder of guilt. It is especially important that this early in the book, because he acts like a "boy" rather than like a "man," Taji and guilt are inextricably associated. The entire Arcturion episode is a foreshadowing of and a miniature of the more highly stylized plight of the later Taji.

Accompanying the stealing, symbolic suicide, and possible murder which characterize withdrawal from the world, there is a

further necessity for deceit. Taji has to make all the plans, for Jarl is too honest for well executed indirections. Taji confounds his shipmates with a call of death on the open wastes of a midnight sea. The "man overboard!" is the obituary of the man not-yet-named-Taji as, like Tommo, he casts himself adrift from his known, western world. At the same time it is the deceit by which he manages his transfer from one world to another. Deceit, in fact, accompanies almost all of Taji's words.

When Jarl and Taji board the Parki, Samoa tells his story in candid detail. Taji projects his own deceit to Samoa and at first does not believe a single word. And Taji cloaks himself in deceitful mystery—by means of which he assumes an attitude which will further as much as possible the carrying out of his own unyielding will:

> My own curiosity satisfied with respect to the brigantine, Samoa himself turned inquisitor. He desired to know who we were; and whence we came in our marvelous boat. But on these heads I thought it best to withhold from him the truth; among other things, fancying that if disclosed, it would lessen his deference for us, as men superior to himself. I therefore spoke vaguely of our adventures, and assumed the decided air of a master; which I perceived was not lost upon the rude Islander. As for Jarl, and what he might reveal, I embraced the first opportunity to impress upon him the importance of never divulging our flight from the Arcturion; nor in any way to commit himself on that head; injunctions which he faithfully promised to observe.[64]

Taji bends everything to suit his own individual driving vision. So far, he has done nothing to convince the reader that he is as good a man as Samoa, let alone a better; yet he gains ascendency over the Islander by means of a deceit which is a tacit

renunciation of earthly origins and mortal being. He uses Jarl's loyalty in a way which makes the dupe out of the honest man, and which finally results in the dupe's death. He attempts to fashion Yillah to his human needs, and then he disregards all in his attempt to regain her when his very attempt causes her disappearance.[65]

Taji's deceit as well as his vision always associates him with "worlds beyond." His deceit makes him a sungod. His vision hurls him after Yillah, who is identified with heaven rather than earth. His deceit makes him quite content to leave Samoa and Annatoo with the impression that he is a ghost, or at least a miracle man. His vision results in the sacrifice of the human and earthly—the deaths of Samoa and Jarl. Taji never becomes the tool of earthly endeavor. He never yields to Jarl or Samoa, and it is inconceivable to think of Taji abandoning his set path for Jarl as Jarl does for him, finally and irrevocably. Taji's deceit and Taji's vision are the same in terms of results. When we turn this consideration inward upon the pragmatism which impells the major theme of the book, it becomes apparent that Taji's vision is a thing which deceives Taji himself. In short, it is a revelation of the major theme, that pursuit of heaven, of the pure and ideal absolute is a murderous delusion. In Taji, we do not have an adumbration of Ahab; we have Ahab. Recognition of Taji is deterred by three aspects of his presentation. (1) He feels remorse more often than does Ahab, not yet having been as dehumanized by the monomania of quest before the book opens. By the end of

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the book he is as totally dehumanized. (2) He is not heard as often as Ahab, so that the similarity must be found largely in action and its consequences rather than in speech. (3) Taji appears less terrible than Ahab in the eyes of the people surrounding the two men. Essentially, however, he is as terrible a being, as false a Prometheus. When remorse does come to Taji, it is dismissed as quickly as it is by Ahab.

Immediately following the murder of Aleema, Taji feels remorse. But at the very instance of realization, Taji covers his guilt with a deceitful statement of appearances which in turn becomes a further manifestation of the iron will that is the real motivating force. Mind and will shape more clearly the character of the quester at this crucial point.

> ...what iron mace fell upon my soul; what curse rang sharp in my ear! It was I, who was the author of the deed that caused the shrill wails that I heard. By this hand, the dead man had died. Remorse smote me hard; and like lightning I asked myself, whether the death-deed I had done was sprung of a virtuous motive, the recuing a captive from thrall; or whether beneath that pretense, I had engaged in this fatal affray for some other, and selfish purpose; the companionship of a beautiful maid. But throttling the thought, I swore to be gay. Am I not rescuing the maiden? Let them go down who withstand me.[66]

So Taji's quest begins in suicide and murder, flight and deceit. Murder, deceit and flight are duplicated, concretely realized in action, when Taji obtains Yillah. The quest itself is attended by murder before Taji engages in it: the wronged man, Aleema, had himself committed murder in keeping Yillah, and murder had been committed in gaining her. The history of the other worlder is steeped in murder, guilt, and revenge. There is no

evidence that Melville is saying that the ideal attained through murder cannot be kept. In fact, the opposite may be true, for at the end of the book, the enlightened Media correctly engages in violence in order to gain a social ideal. What is germane is that in the development of the quester's character, the action shows that the man motivated as Taji is motivated, striving for otherworldly ideal, is not the man to bring peace out of murder or order out of chaos.[67]

From the foreshadowing given in the "factual" introduction, we expect that death will result from Taji's quest. And we see an incremental development of evil upon evil with every new view of the attempt to gain Yillah. There is a suggestion of Aeschylean tragedy: man must stop his activity in this direction, or murder and revenge will multiply through the generations. In this sense, there is another symbolic wedding between the book of Taji and the book of Media and Babbalanja, in which the deus ex machina does interpose new values and, in love and strength, resolves the tensions and puts a stop to the incremental sins of history by ending man's feverishly erroneous activities.

As Typee foresaw, and the later books confirm, the protagonist, as in the Hemingway ingroup, is an insomniac.[68] Aboard the Parki, Taji tries to prod his fellows into wakefulness at night in order to keep the Parki ploughing on in the direction Taji pursues. He complains, "For Samoa, his drowsiness was the drowsiness of one bent on sleep, come dreams or death. He seemed insensible to the perils we ran. Often I sent the sleepy savage below, and steered myself till morning. At last I made a point of slumbering much by day, the

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better to stand watch by night; though I made Samoa and Jarl regularly go through with their allotted four hours each."[69] And Jarl, though not possessed of the sleep-unconsciousness of the Typee savage, is closer to the values of land-humanity than to the values of the searoving quester:

> Though in all else, the Skyeman proved a most faithful ally, in this one thing he was either perversely obtuse, or infatuated. Or, perhaps, finding himself once more in a double-decked craft, which rocked him as of yore, he was lulled into a deceitful security.[70]

It is only that master deceiver, the quester, who shies from appearances, trying to make his enormous vision pierce through to the other-world. Engaged in this activity, his securities and concerns in this world are either nonexistent or past caring about. Not so Jarl.

Jarl is important for two reasons. First of all, it is partially through Jarl that Yillah is defined. Secondly, for purposes of analysis Jarl helps to illustrate the shifting patterns of Melville's use of symbolic material, and illustrates this in such a way as to make clear that the reader must take each symbol, or what he thinks is a symbol, as it comes rather than to try to interpret one symbol by another because of apparent similarity between them. For instance, Jarl is first introduced as an alien to the south Pacific world of Mardi.

> Jarl hailed from the Isle of Skye, one of the constellated Hebrides. Hence, they often called him the Skyeman...his long yellow hair waved round his head like a sunset. My life for it, Jarl, thy ancestors were Vikings...and are now quaffing mead in the halls of Valhalla, and beating time with their cans to hymns of the Scalds.[71]

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At first we are tempted to consider Jarl another other-worlder or a quester. He is a Skyeman--a proposition seductive to the Melville student. He is fair-haired, and the mention of his ancestor relates a heavenly other-world to Jarl. He is in alien surroundings, which hints at the isolato. In complexion he is dark, and he is silent; again because of this apparent similarity to a familiar pattern of Melvillean characterization-imagery, we would guess that he is a quester or at least an isolato.

> ...No lady-like scruples had he, the old Viking, about marring his complexion, which was already more than bronzed. Over the ordinary tanning of the sailor, he seemed masked by a visor of japanning, dotted all over with freckles, so intensely yellow, and symmetrically circular, that they seemed scorched there by a burning glass.[72]

> ...But Jarl, dear, dumb Jarl...Thou didst carry a phiz like an excommunicated deacon's. And no matter what happened, it was ever the same. Quietly, in thyself, thou didst revolve upon thine own sober axis, like a wheel in a machine which forever goes round...Ay, Jarl! Wast not forever intent upon minding that which so many neglect--thine own especial business? Wast thou not forever at it, too, with no likelihood of ever winding up thy moody affairs, and striking a balance sheet?

> ...I longed for something enlivening; a burst of words; human vivacity of one kind or another. After in vain essaying to get something of this sort out of Jarl, I tried it all by myself;...till my Viking stared hard; and I myself paused to consider whether I had run crazy or no.[73]

Also tempting is a descriptive similarity to Fedallah and Ahab. The dark man topped with fairness is Fedallah with his shroud-white turban and is Jarl with his streaming yellow hair. The dark man burned with light marks is Ahab with his pale scar and is Jarl with his yellow freckles. So if we wished to find a consistent meaning for Melville's patterns of imagery, we should say that

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Jarl is another quester. And we should be completely wrong.

Jarl's relation to immortality is no different than that of the great majority of the quester's worldmates. Unlike Yillah, who thinks she has memories of another life, and unlike Taji who has visions of other worlds beyond, Jarl is conscious only of his terrestrial existence, and this existence is all that fills his memory of his origins. "Now, among the crew was a fine old seaman, one Jarl; how old, no one could ever tell, not even himself. Forecastle chronology is ever vague and defective. 'Man and boy,' said honest Jarl, 'I have lived ever since I can remember.' And truly, who can call to mind when he was not? To ourselves, we all seem coeval with creation. Whence it comes, that it is so hard to die, ere the world itself is departed."[74]

As for Jarl's being alone and alien, at the very moment this aspect of his existence is mentioned, it is negated by a long passage which makes Jarl one with all of man and with all of this world:

> Yet Jarl, the descendent of heroes and kings, was a lone, friendless mariner on the main, only true to his origin in the sea-life that he led. But so it has been and forever will be. What yeoman shall swear that he is not descended from Alfred? what dunce, that he is not sprung of old Homer? King Noah, God bless him! fathered us all. Then hold up your heads, oh ye Helots, blood potential flows through your veins. All of us have monarchs and sages for kinsmen; nay, angels and archangels for cousins; since in antediluvian days, the sons of God did verily wed with our mothers, the irresistable daughters of Eve. Thus all generations are blended: and heaven and earth of one kin: the hierarchies of seraphs in the uttermost skies; the thrones and principalities in the zodiac; the shades that roam throughout space; the nations and families, flocks and folds of the earth; one and all brothers in essence—oh, be we then brothers indeed![75]

Here, in relation to Jarl, is the familiar Melville creed of democracy and common, human brotherhood, that the whole world is the patrimony of the whole world.

And what of Jarl's silence? Is his the special Ahab-language which so dominates the crew? Is it the silence or stutter which is the mark of the other-worlder like Yillah or Billy Budd? When Jarl does speak, he speaks not the language of quest or heaven, but the language of common and earthbound humanity. "Now, in old Jarl's lingo there was never an idiom. Your aboriginal tar is too much of a cosmopolitan for that. Long companionship with seamen of all tribes: Manilla-men, Anglo-Saxons, Cholos, Lascars, and Danes, wear away in good time all your mother-tongue stammerings. You sink your clan; down goes your nation; you speak a world's language, jovially jabbering in the Lingua-Franka of the forecastle."[76] Jarl is no wanderer after other-worlds, nor is he a soarer or a diver into the mysteries of this world's phenomena. Jarl knows nothing of books or geography, cares not at all that a mate page him a quotation from Burton on Blue Devils, and <u>he cares not that he knows not</u>. His association with sailing is the association of the sailor to his work, the care of the earthman that he act like a man and fulfill his social function as well as possible.[77] His silence is the silence of the simple man who simply minds his own business and minds it well.

> Ah, Jarl! an honest, earnest wight; so true and simple, that the secret operations of thy soul were more inscrutable than the subtle workings of Spinoza's.[78] Quietly, in thyself, thou didst revolve upon thine own sober axis, like a wheel in a machine which forever goes

> round, whether you look at it or no. Ay, Jarl! wast thou not forever intent upon minding that which so many neglect--thine own especial business. Wast thou not forever at it, too, with no likelihood of ever winding up thy moody affairs, and striking a balance sheet?[79]

His silence has nothing to do with yearnings or philosophical reachings. His silence and mystery is the mystery of the dignity which surrounds the simple and sincere workman, part of the dignity which creates respect for Jack Chase, who is certainly not so simple a man as Jarl.

> But how account for the Skyeman's gravity? surely it was based on no philosophic taciturnity; he was nothing of an idealist; an aerial architect; a constructor of flying buttresses. It was inconceivable, that his reveries were Manfred-like and exalted, reminiscent of unutterable deeds, too mysterious to be indicated by the remotest of hints. Suppositions all out of the question.[80]

Jarl's most prominent characteristics are the three virtues of honesty, simplicity, and loyalty. It is the outstanding loyalty to friend, taking precedence even over loyalty to work, which accounts for Jarl's friendship with Taji, the true isolato and quester. In an almost parenthetical aside, Taji reveals that his higher and most important interests are not shared by Jarl. "Now, higher sympathies apart, for Jarl I had a wonderful liking; for he loved me; from the first had cleaved to me".[81] The relationship which binds Jarl to Taji, then, has nothing to do with quest generally or with Taji's motives for quest specifically. True to his prime characteristics, Taji's reasons for chummying with Jarl are wrapped in self and in will.

So far, we have in Jarl an emblem of the earnest and common humanity of the workaday world. It is this emblem that is

manipulated to follow the will of the quester and whose death is finally caused by the quester.[82] One always has the feeling that Taji scrutinizes the human being, Jarl, with an amused and Machiavellian disinterestedness. Even in jest, the visionary sees the Skyeman, who is entirely the Earthman, in a secondary position, implying that in the course of quest it is not the quester who will perish first. The jest also reveals Taji's major attitude toward Jarl: the amused love and affection of the master for the body-servant:

> In the tragico-comico moods which at times overtook me, I used to look upon the brown Skyeman with humorous complacency. If we fall in with cannibals, thought I, then, ready roasted Norseman that thou art, shall I survive to mourn thee; at least during the period I revolve upon the spit.[83]

And of course while Taji is spitted upon his own will, roasted over the hellfire of his own torments, this is precisely what happens.

There are other characteristics which allow us to define Jarl even more specifically. For instance, it is Jarl who is concerned that the water should last;[84] in contrast to his companion of the chartless wandering, it is Jarl who figures out a secure keeping-place for the compass (which is significantly likened to a <u>human</u> eye), and who is frantic lest they lose the compass and flint;[85] it is Jarl who suggests that they row in case of a calm (a suggestion of work from which Taji shrinks);[86] it is Jarl who keeps track of time by cutting a daily notch in his oar handle;[87] it is Jarl's shoe which serves as a water dipper;[88] and summarily, it is Jarl rather than Taji who is concerned with the means of life and work, the maintenance of the boat, the human needs for a keeping of

time and direction. Taji, who reclines and philosophises, has no sympathy for these important concerns. He cannot really understand them. He says, "Oh! Jarl, Jarl; to me in the boat's quiet stern, steering and philosophizing at one time and the same, thou and thy [water] breaker were a study."[89]

Jarl is also industrious. He stitches and darns and knits.[90] In order to keep his thirst at a minimum and conserve water, he foregoes his chewing-tobacco, tobacco and liquor being his only two indulgences. He is also superstitious. He believes that the pilot-fish are a good omen.[91] He believes that the abandoned Parki is a ghost ship piloted by specters. Yet true to his thrifty character, he will not be deterred from the main chance. Finding a bag of coin aboard the Parki, Jarl rings them on a chest lid. "Sounded on the chest lid, the dollars rang clear as convent bells. These were put aside by Jarl; the sight of substantial dollars doing away, for the nonce, with his superstitious misgivings."[92]

Also true to his character, Jarl, who was never anxious to withdraw from the world, is most anxious to rejoin it. When they sight the Parki in the distance, Taji and Jarl at first think it is a whaler. Jarl wishes to hail it and rejoin humanity. Taji wishes to avoid it in order to pursue no course but his own:

> ...To be sure, we could not be certain what kind of a vessel it was; but whatever it might be, I, for one, had no mind to risk an encounter; for it was quite plain, that if the stranger came within hailing distance, there would be no resource but to link our fortunes with hers; whereas I desired to pursue none but the Chamois'. As for the Skyeman, he kept looking wistfully over his

> shoulder; doubtless, praying Heaven, that we might not escape what I sought to avoid.[93]

The emerging adjectives place Jarl in relation to the action of the book. He is the honest, simple, loyal, frugal, industrious, superstitious and earnest working man. It is this man who is first to take the necessary actions which give the Parki's occupants time to abandon ship before it founders in a storm. (The ship of the Typee world is the wrong world for Taji.) When Taji takes Yillah to a secluded islet, off the mainland of Odo, Jarl maintains his loyalty <u>and</u> his membership in humanity. Not prompted to desertion by Taji, he does not abandon the mainland this time, and he remains with the mass of humanity. At the same time he is loyal to Taji to the extent of building his wigwam on the shore facing Taji's isolated retreat.[94]

Most important, Jarl is the only character in <u>Mardi</u> who is not impressed by Yillah. His hard headed and practical humanity never allows him to become interested in the other-world object of Taji's quest.

> But what of my Viking? Why, of good Jarl I grieve to say, that the old-fashioned interest he took in my affairs led him to look upon Yillah as a sort of intruder, <u>an ammonite siren who might lead me astray</u>. This would now and then provoke a phillipic; but he would only turn toward my resentment his devotion; and then I was silent.[95] (Italics mine)

The Earthman, in his rejection of the other-worlder, is the opposite of the quester. Where there is realization (Starbuck) or virtuous, common humanity (Jarl), the earthman distrusts the quest and its goal, and objects to his own abandonment and murder. Jarl, in his humanity, well knows what to distrust, sensing that Yillah

will, as she does, lead Taji astray. But he is inoperative in preventing Taji's quest, for just as he is loyal to Taji, so Taji is fanatically loyal to his ideal. Then the final characteristic of Jarl, stemming from his simplicity and loyalty, is resignation. He bends to Taji's will, turns dumb devotion to Taji's abuses, and at last obeys Taji's command that they part company. And even in the final parting, in the premonition of the inevitable death to result from the ahumanity of Taji's quest, Jarl's action is one of characteristic dumb resignation. "Though he spoke not a word, Jarl was long in taking leave. His eyes seemed to say, I will see you no more.[96]

Jarl assumes the outlines of the western world's counterpart of the Typee savage. He might be represented by the general Nordic, the good, staid burgher who respects authority, the medieval serf whose labors cleared the wildernesses of Europe. In Typee there was only one general type of western man. Mardi displays ambitions for a more complete canvas. The primitive counterpart of Jarl is Samoa. In his incompleteness and his commonness he is Jarl's brother. Jarl's incompleteness lies in his inability to carry his human virtues and practical instincts into physical action worthy of the man with the vision. That is, he can take the action which preserves the water breaker, but he cannot take the overall action which would preclude in the first place the desertion which necessitated stealing the water breaker. Once committed to a line of action by exterior forces, Jarl is an active man. But he is unable to form his own commitments. Samoa is also incomplete in that his

conscious values are nil. Like Jarl, he responds to the moment, but without any rationalizing reserve of virtue such as Jarl has, or of evil, such as Billy Budd's Claggart has. His is the physicality which will allow itself to be committed to any cause other than its own destruction, whereas Jarl, who does have doubts and questions, can be committed to his own destruction by those very characteristics which gave rise to the doubts in the first place. Jarl is not entranced by the idea of the quest for Yillah, yet his characteristic of loyalty will not allow him to abandon his friend:

> But fearing anew, lest after our departure, the men of Amma might stir up against me the people of the isle, I determined to yield to the earnest solicitations of Borabolla, and leave Jarl behind, for a remembrance of Taji; if necessary to vindicate his name. Apprised hereof, my follower was loth to acquiesce. His guiltless spirit feared not the strangers: less selfish considerations prevailed. He was willing to remain on the island for a time, but not without me. Yet, setting forth my reasons; and assuring him that our tour would not be long in completing, when we would not fail to return, previous to sailing for Odo, he at last, but reluctantly, assented.[97]

Samoa, however, calls quits to the whole business at this point. He may have talked like a quester, but when he sees himself endangered, the appearances dissolve:

> At Mondoldo, we also parted with Samoa. Whether it was, that he feared the avengers, whom he may have thought would follow on my track; or whether the islanders of Mardi answered not in attractiveness to the picture his fancy had painted; or whether the restraint put upon him by the domineering presence of King Media, was too irksome withal; or whether, indeed, he relished not those disquisitions with which Babbalanja regaled us: however it may have been, certain it was, that Samoa was impatient of the voyage. He besought permission to return to Odo, there to await my return; and a canoe of Mondoldo being about to proceed in that direction, permission was granted;

> and departing for the other side of the island, from thence he embarked...
>
> Yoomy was at a loss to account for the departure of Samoa; who, while ashore, had expressed much desire to roam.[98]

After the departure, both Jarl and Samoa are killed by the avengers. So neither the physical being concerned almost entirely with self nor the virtuous man who submits holds out the proper courses of action. The former had no means for foreseeing the consequences of action in which he has become ensnared, and the latter has no plan with which to meet the consequences he does foresee.

While both represent cultures which have attained different levels of consciousness, both men are basically the same. They are general humanity, conscious of no urge for worlds other than the globe they inhabit, meeting the demands of their civilizations as the demands arise. But both are essentially mindless and both are inoperative in the world of the quester. As a goal for human behavior they fall short in a world where there are more completely conscious men. One of Melville's prescriptions emerges: the Jarls and Samoas are necessary, indeed indispensable, but to preserve their world and their life, they must either attain the consciousness which will allow them to assign the goals of action to the quester, or they must refuse to follow the consciousness which leads to a plunge out of and beyond the world. Or they can themselves adapt action to consciousness, as Media will. In any case, the Jarls must join mind to virtue, the Samoas must join mind to physicality--or be murdered.[99] And once the physicality of Samoa and his Annatoo is explored, book I of Mardi is ended, and the

"factual" introduction sets the stage for an understanding of the symbolic portrait of Yillah.

The story of Samoa does not merely reiterate a characterization of the Jarl-figure. Samoa's and Annatoo's story is a symbolically burlesqued parallel of the story of Taji and Yillah placed on physical and mundane level which hovers between and never reaches either hilarity or pathos.

Just as Taji is responsible for the death of three men (Aleema, Samoa, and Jarl), Samoa is also responsible for the death of three men (the two Cholos and the savage). Taji has his moments with his lady before she is snatched away to death. So too does Samoa, and in both cases the lady's corpse remains somewhere in the depths of the sea. In his story, when he saves the Parki from the Cholos, Samoa becomes the hunting hunted. Throughout his story, Taji is also the hunting hunted. The two major differences between Samoa's and Taji's story reveal the relationship of those stories. (1) Samoa's murders are an action of unplanned need, anchored in no metaphysic. His action preserves his own physical existence from deceit and death: in his own incomplete way, he saves his own incomplete world. (2) Samoa's mundane life with Annatoo is anything but the ethereal idyll that is Taji's life with Yillah.

Samoa's Annatoo is a parallel, a caricatured opposite of Yillah. She is dark, aggressive, loud, and bawdy. Yillah is fair, shrinking, soft-spoken, and chaste. Annatoo was carried off from a western isle when still a girl, and her kidnapper was soon more

than willing to be rid of her: "The woman, Annatoo, was a native of a far-off, anonymous island to the westward: whence, when quite young, she had been carried off by the commander of a ship, touching there on a passage from Macao to Valparaiso. At Valparaiso her protector put her ashore; most probably, as I afterward had reason to think, for a nuisance."[100] If she was taken by the sea-captain for any special purpose, we can guess that the purpose was a most earthy one. Yillah, on the other hand, was carried <u>to</u> a western isle when she was a child, and her captors were more than anxious to keep her, and for most unearthly purposes at that. Yillah leads Taji a chartless and infinite wandering, leaving him devoid of a sense of time or a sense of his own or Yillah's true humanness until it is too late. Annatoo leads Samoa into a chartless and finite wandering, stealing the compass, destroying the history in the log books, and destroying the clock aboard the Parki. Annatoo makes constant raids on other people's possessions, laying up great stores of earthly goods. Yillah, the one time the reader sees her in an attempted act of possession, desires something not of earth but of heaven:

> She betrayed much surprise at my Viking's appearance. But most of all was she struck by a characteristic device upon the arm of the wonderful mariner—our Saviour on the cross, in blue; with the crown of thorns, and three drops of blood in vermilion, falling one by one from each hand and foot...
>
> Eventually, through the Upoluan, she made overtures to the Skyeman, concerning the possession of his picture in her own proper right. In her very simplicity, little heeding, that like a landscape in fresco, it could not be removed.[101]

Annatoo, however, is attracted to Jarl by his body, and is not so

much concerned with a thoughtful view of his arm as with a suggestive pinch of his buttocks. Annatoo is what is left after the bloom is gone; Yillah is still the blooming rosebud. Annatoo is characterized by flesh and earth, Yillah by flowers and heaven. Samoa became vitally enamored of Annatoo, and "By chance it came to pass that when Annatoo's first virgin bloom had departed, leaving nothing but a lusty frame and a lustier soul, Samoa, the Navigator, had fallen desperately in love with her."[102] Yet when Annatoo is carried off by the ocean, Samoa shrieks once and thereafter displays no great woe. In fact he seems to live in huge contentment whenever he is seen in Mardi. He quests no quest for a corpse. Taji also falls desperately in love. But after his Yillah is carried away over the waters, he grieves like a madman. When she is carried away by the subterranean river which flows out to sea, Taji can find no contentment in Mardi, and he leaves the world to pursue her corpse over an endless sea. The narrator gives very little of Annatoo's personal history, but the revelations of action leave no doubt as to what she is. The close and constant inverse parallels between Annatoo and Yillah show that Annatoo is the earthly female, the physical being. Significantly, she is—or was—the goal of the "quest" made by the representative of earthly, male physicality, Samoa. She offers happiness for a time, but it is happiness vitiated by the uxorious, petty circumstances of a very mundane married life which becomes a subject for satire rather than tragedy. Whereas Annatoo and Samoa have too much time together for the attainment of a very limited and earthly goal,

Taji and Yillah have not enough time together for the attainment of heavenly ideal. Annatoo is a comic representative of time's breakdown of the earthly ideal based upon sexual attraction, and represents the limitations of physicality.[103] Purposeless Annatoo is magnified into another picture of purposeful lust and pride in the creation of Hautia, that other dark lady who, in a much more serious sense, is a counterpart of Yillah. Perhaps one of the most successful integrations of the mythic and the mundane in Mardi's methods is the embodiment of the story of man's primal pursuit of ideal in the very basic image of the male's pursuit of the female. But as we shall see, the images of sex and lust create meanings which carry far beyond an examination of the libido.

Clear as Annatoo is, the narrator, tongue in cheek, would make a mystery of her as the satirized (and satyrized) eternal female:

> Verily, her ways were as the ways of the inscrutable penguins in building their inscrutable nests, which baffle all science, and make a fool of a sage.
> Marvelous Annatoo! who shall expound thee?[104]

Again the opposite is true of Yillah. The narrator gives a fairly detailed history of Yillah, both "factually" and allegorically. Without ever saying she is inscrutable, he does, by divorcing her from revelatory action, make her the major mystery of the book. The "factual" introduction, then, foreshadows the fate of Taji and presents a mock-heroic miniature of the Taji story as well.[105]

Annatoo's Samoa himself has a clearly delineated value. Like Annatoo, his value is that of physical action and physical existence. He is Typee's Mow-Mow reincarnate.

Samoa's limitation to physicality encompasses a lack of sensitivity, as opposed to the quester, whose nerves seem to be all on the surface of his skin. Samoa operating on an arm or on a brain is the same man. When Annatoo swings the ax, the pain of the arm amputation is deadened by "the very clumsiness of the operation," the consciousness deadened by the sheer brute weight of the blow. A la' Typee's first view of the Marquesans, the brain operation depicts Samoa stuffing coconut shell into a man's head, with no apparent sense of discrimination between the two, no apparent realization of what the human head signifies. Of course, the arm operation is successful. But after the brain operation, the patient dies.

The missing member of the body, the incomplete tattoo, the partial ability to do a thing are common Melvilleian symbols which indicate the man who can not be the hero, the man who through his actions can not and will not embrace body, mind and heart. The incompleteness indicates an ineffective behavior pattern which leads to harm--Mow-Mow and his one eye, Tommo and his bad leg, Samoa and his one arm and incomplete tattoo, Ahab and his missing leg, Billy Budd and his stutter. Of course, not all the major characters are so marked, but when they are so marked, they become unified in one of the few symbols which does hold constant for all of Melville's works. With complete equanimity, for instance, the incomplete Samoa can tell a tale of a remarkable surgeon who succeeded in stuffing a man's head with pig's brains. This feat is seen by Samoa with no view of murder or perversion.

The limitation to half a man, to a dead man in terms of consciousness, is symbolized in a passage which describes Samoa's superstitions and which relates Samoa to incompleteness and deadness:

> But shall the sequel be told? How that, superstitiously averse to burying in the sea the dead limb of a body yet living; since in that case Samoa held, that he must very soon drown and follow it; and how, that equally dreading to keep the thing near him, he at last hung it aloft from the topmast-stay; where yet it was suspended, bandaged over and over in cerements. The hand that must have locked many others in friendly clasp, or smote a foe, was no food, thought Samoa, for fowls of the air nor fishes of the sea.
>
> Now, which was Samoa? The dead arm swinging high as Haman? or the living trunk below? Was the arm severed from the body, or the body from the arm? The residual part of Samoa was alive, and therefore we say it was he. But which of the writhing sections of a ten times severed worm, is the worm proper?
>
> For myself, I ever regarded Samoa as but a large fragment of a man, not a man complete...[106]

Describing Samoa, Melville uses the tattoo for the same symbolic purpose it served in Typee:

> ...In his style of tattooing, for instance, which seemed rather incomplete; his marks embracing but a vertical half of his person, from crown to sole; the other side being free from the slightest stain. Thus clapped together, as it were, he looked like a union of the unmatched moieties of two distinct beings; and your fancy was lost in conjecturing where roamed the absent ones. When he turned round upon you suddenly, you thought you saw someone else, not him whom you had been regarding before.[107]

The unmatched moieties display Samoa's own being. Within the shell of sheer physicality, selfishness, and barbarism, is the soul of a man who, in all other respects, is like Jarl. He is superstitious, he meets the demands of battle most admirably, he is a very simple man and, when understood, a constant one. He is different from

Jarl in culture, and the narrator makes a point of emphasizing their names and origins.[108] But the two are complements of each other, the joining of two hemispheres into one world. Reflecting Mardi's theme of unity in diversity, Jarl's western, civilized world produces the sensitive and virtuous aspects of humanity complementing Samoa's south Pacific world which produces physical aspects of humanity. For all his appearance and values, Samoa also has the soul of a man:

> But there was one feature in Samoa beyond the reach of the innovations of art: --his eye; which in civilized man or savage, ever shines in the head, just as it shone at birth. Truly, our eyes are miraculous things. But alas, that in so many instances, these divine organs should be mere lenses inserted into the socket, as glasses in spectacle rims.
>
> But my Islander had a soul in his eye; looking out upon you there, like somebody in him. What an eye, to be sure! At times brilliantly changeful as opal; in anger, glowing like steel at white heat.[109]

To be sure, the narrator never lets the reader forget that it is the soul of a savage, reflecting a savage culture, but it is nonetheless a human soul.[110] And as Melville often demonstrates, he is too much of a cultural relativist to connect good or bad, superiority or inferiority as absolute labels, with savage or civilized man. They are simply different. In certain instances, the actions dictated by such behavior patterns are operative or inoperative, murderous or redemptive, but they are always given in context. Melville joins Jarl and Samoa almost as we might join two typifications of large segments of our own society, joining, for instance, the Non-Militant Liberal who is loyal to Party, and the Soldier.[111] As mindless humanity, Jarl and Samoa make a whole,

Jarl being almost all heart, Samoa being almost all body. Neither wish to quest, both wish to return to their own cultures, both are superstitious, both matter-of-the-moment actors, both the men who would sleep when the monomaniac quester would take them in pursuit of his own vision. They both reappear as Starbuck and Queequeg. When these two types die because of the quester, the indispensable and healthy, common, working-humanity part of the world dies. And it is with this part of humanity that Melville the thinker-artist as well as Melville the thinker-sailor has his warmest sympathy. When the critic would speak of Melville's sympathy for the quester who leads mankind to death, he must remember that he speaks of the same Melville who portrays the results of that quester's actions, the results of the allurements of all the Yillahs in their various masks, fish or female, the Melville who also wrote Whitejacket and Redburn.

Mardi's lure, Yillah, undergoes a series of transformations just as does her pursuer, Taji. But unlike Taji, Yillah is a dual creature who does change in essence.

The first view at once dissociates her from the islanders and from any idea that as an ideal she may represent the primitivistic paradise foreseen by Tommo before he became acquainted with the full meaning of Typee valley. Yillah is at once out of place and alien in this environment. Her language is not that of the islanders, and it rings a note of familiarity only in the ears of Taji. Neither islander nor westerner in speech, she is even more out of this world than Taji, being unable to communicate either in English or in the

lingua franca of the cosmopolitan sailor.

Before the introduction of Yillah, the reader is introduced to the most important large sections of humanity--the man of mind and will, the man of body, and the man of heart. And Yillah utters sounds that are vaguely familiar only to the first, and are totally inexplicable to the other two. Also, Yillah represents Taji's greatest joy; yet she is always quiet and sad. Babbalanja, in his Serenian dream of heaven is to report that heavenly joy is quiet and sad, that the essence of otherworldly joy is sadness and silence. It is inescapable that the characteristics which introduce Yillah are sadness, quietness and a separateness from humanity. She is hidden in a tent. She is physically isolated from the outside world of humanity.

> Before me crouched a beautiful girl. Her hands were drooping. And like a saint from a shrine [note the identifying imagery] she looked out sadly from her long, fair hair. A low wail issued from her lips, and she trembled like a sound. There were tears on her cheeks, and a rose-colored pearl on her bosom.
>
> Did I dream?--A snow-white skin: blue, firmament eyes: Golconda locks. For an instant spell-bound I stood; while, with a slow, apprehensive movement, and still gazing fixedly, the captive gathered more closely about her a gauze-like robe. Taking one step within, and partially dropping the curtain of the tent, I so stood as to have both sight and speech of Samoa, who tarried without; while the maiden, crouching in the farther corner of the retreat, was wholly screened from all eyes but mine.
>
> Crossing my hands before me, I now stood without speaking. For the soul of me, I could not link this mysterious creature with the tawny strangers. She seemed of another race. So powerful was this impression, that unconsciously, I addressed her in my own tongue. She started, and bending over, listened intently, as if to the first faint echo of something dimly remembered. Again I sopke, when throwing back her hair, the maiden looked up with a piercing, bewildered gaze. But her

> eyes soon fell, and bending over once more, she resumed her former attitude. At length she slowly chanted to herself several musical words, unlike those of the Islanders; but though I knew not what they meant, they vaguely seemed familiar.[112]

The tantalizing speech familiarity serves two purposes. First, it establishes an immediate relation between the quester and the other-worlder, and secondly, it prepares for the reader's discovery of the second half of Yillah's dual being: her human origin. In direct contrast to Jarl, Yillah remembers life in another world, although she recalls a human origin:

> She declared herself more than mortal, a maiden from Oroolia, the Island of Delights, somewhere in the paradisiacal archipelago of the Polynesians. To this isle, while yet an infant, by some mystical power, she had been spirited from Amma, the place of her nativity. Her name was Yillah. And hardly had the waters of Oroolia washed white her olive skin, and tinged her hair with gold, when one day strolling in the woodlands, she was snared in the tendrils of a vine. Drawing her into its bowers, it gently transformed her into one of its blossoms, leaving her conscious soul folded up in the transparent petals.
>
> Here hung Yillah in a trance, the world without all tinged with the rosy hue of her prison. At length when her spirit was about to burst forth in the opening flower, the blossom was snapped from its stem; and borne by a soft wind to the sea; where it fell into the opening valve of a shell; which in good time was cast upon the Island of Amma.
>
> In a dream, these events were revealed to Aleema the priest; who by a spell unlocking its pearly casket, took forth the bud, which now showed signs of opening in the reviving air, and bore faint shadowy revealings, as of the dawn behind crimson clouds. Suddenly expanding, the blossom exhaled away in perfumes; floating a rosy mist in the air. Condensing at last, there emerged from this mist the same radiant young Yillah as before; her locks all moist, and a rose colored pearl on her bosom. Enshrined as a goddess, the wonderful child now tarried in the sacred temple of Apo, buried in a dell; never beheld of mortal eyes save Aleema's.[113]

This passage holds the essential definition of Yillah. It is

this definition which is Taji's view of Yillah. Although basically of mortal origin, she is transformed by heaven and given back to humanity in immortal form. There is no doubt that Oroolia is heaven. The supreme God is Oro, and the Island of Delights is an accurate apposative for the heaven of the world in which the action exists. Yillah's whiteness is one clue to the mark of the other-world upon her. As Jarl, Samoa, and Annatoo show, dark complexion is here associated with humanity and earth. As Yillah and Taji show, white complexion is associated with other-worldliness. Taji, for instance, when he is "reborn" as the demi-god from the sun is accepted as a visitor from another world because he is white. Yillah, in her human infancy on Amma, was dark, the waters of heaven washing her white. The baptism is symbolic of a removal of humanity, or, more accurately, mortality.

Yillah is ever after marked by heaven, not only by her complexion, but by her rose pearl. The hue of the heavenly flower which ensnared the essence of Yillah was rose; the shell which conducted this spirit from the shores of heaven was a "pearly casket." The last token of Yillah on earth is the rose pearl, clutched in Hautia's hand. What then, is this essence revealed to Taji, an essence described as human in origin, transformed and endowed with immortality by heaven? The narrator names this essence when he describes what it is that is separated from corporeal being and is ensnared in the flower: "Drawing it into its bowers, it <u>gently transformed her into one of its blossoms</u>, leaving her <u>conscious soul</u> folded up in the transparent petals." It is this

spirit, this essence of conscious soul that is to be released from the flower: "At length when her spirit was about to burst forth in the opening flower, the blossom was snapped from the stem." Man's conscious soul, the immortal and divine faculty in his animal being, is to be deposited on earth pure and unvitiated in the substantial form of Yillah. If only for the purpose of narrative, let alone Melville's view of heavenly tokens on earth, this corporeality would have to exist. And the rose pearl is the symbol of Yillah's disembodied spiritual state in heaven, the essential existence within the rose-flower womb before earthly rebirth in substantial form.[114] It is inevitable that Taji, all consciousness, should accept as his visionary goal the heavenly purity of conscious soul.[115]

The story of conscious soul is the story that Taji knows--it is on the basis of this story's implications that Yillah's great attraction is transferred into the concrete image of the beautiful maiden. Conscious soul in pure state is the ideality of a traditional absolute of the western world: it is the unvitiated intellect, fresh from the hand of God, blessed with a transcendent, Golden-Age understanding and sight which makes possible the Beatific Vision and communication with God and his Angels. It is the one divine faculty, which even in its vitiated earthly form lifts man above earth and beast in the great chain of being and makes it possible for man to be an inhabitant in heaven. The pure state of soul is the purity and innocence of man before the Fall, the purity of the days when Astraea walked the earth. She is at once other-worldly,

pure, ideal, absolute. And Taji tries to make Yillah believe that he too is a heavenly being with a right to keep her; that she too is an earthly being who belongs on earth with him. To Taji, the specific definition of Yillah is that combination of medieval innocence and Renaissance reason which is the pure conscious soul in the prelapsarian state. Attainment of Yillah is attainment of happiness, a happiness specifically defined by attainment of heaven, by the flying with the bird through the vaulted archways of the eastern sky. Happiness, when used as part of the definition of Yillah, must be specifically anchored in the view of Yillah held by any particular quester. For Taji, for instance, the word happiness does not include the fleeting sexual happiness which characterized the Samoa-Annatoo burlesque. Taji, Ahab and Pierre are basically the same man in quest.

Yet Yillah is more than conscious soul, for she has different meanings for different men. In her capacity as pure soul, she is the sum of all man's heavenly attainments, the sum of all the Pure Ideal which the pure soul of man encompasses. As an embodiment of Pure Ideal, she is sought by all the voyagers, all of whom seek different things[116]--Yillah is all things to all men.[117] Yoomy seeks the Truth of transcendent beauty as a proof of heaven.[118] Throughout Mardi he sings fragments of one composite song which identifies Yillah as the lone bright fish of the sea, the far, departed bright maid, the female body soft as morning meadows. In the quest for truth,[119] for Yoomy the ideal is not pure conscious soul, but pure transcendent beauty. It is something between the

Keatsian truth-is-beauty and the Shelleyan beauty of ideal social love.[120] And it is this which is the lost Astraea, the bright Yillah of Yoomy's search. Mohi is constantly fearful of death and cringes from the premonitory aches and twinges of his old age. As the historian who records chronology rather than meaning, he is constantly aware of the statistics of death. He is characterized by officialness, greyness, and age. The few times that Mohi is permitted personal words about his own fears and desires, he voices fear of death and desire for long life. It is not until the Serenian conversion and acceptance of human limitation that he can accept Babbalanja's prescription: "Mohi! Age leads thee by the hand. Live out thy life and die, calm-browed."[121] And it is only after this acceptance that Mohi tries to restrain Taji from further search for Yillah. For Mohi, who of all the voyagers can least be called a searcher, if Yillah is anything, she is long life.[122] Media, until he finds his true goal in Serenia, tries to find his own kind of happiness during the quest. It is the happiness of the wealthy and untroubled aristocrat, and he visits his cousin-kings and demigods solely for the wealthy, healthy good times they offer. As a follower of the median way, he hugs his kingship, which is an authoritative guarantor of his own, selfish wealth and health. After his Serenian conversion, he returns to Odo to universalize in the just society the wealth and health which the perversions of his dictatorial aristocracy had wrung from his slaves to give to him. The goal, the ideal remains the same: its place and its uses change vastly. If Yillah is to

be defined for Media--who had, by the way, displayed his own unsolicited interest in finding Yillah--she is wealth and health. Babbalanja seeks one glimpse of immortality as proof of heaven, cosmic unity, cosmic design. Only immortality could invest with meaning and reason the earthly woes of beings crammed with life, seemingly only to suffer and perish. This is the questing Babbalanja, who before his Serenian conversion sees that man's last hope of immortality is lost and gone.[123] For him, Yillah is the last lost hope of heaven, the last lost hope of reason or purpose, the last lost hope for the glimpse of the ultimate. Hautia, as the Duessa, knows what is sought, and falsely says that only she can offer the ideal. In one speech, in fact, she uses some capital-letter terms which are names for Yillah, and to make the definition stronger, these terms are associated with one of Yillah's most prominent trademarks, the pearl:

> ...Hautia rose; hands full of pearls.
> "Lo! Taji; all these may be had for the diving; and Beauty, Health, Wealth, Long Life, and the Last Lost Hope of man. But through me alone, may these be had. Dive thou, and bring up one pearl if thou canst."[124]

The relativity of Yillah's definition (and the fact that those definitions add up to a unity[125]) is a structural parallel to the theme that all truth is relative and that all relative bits of truth, that is all the manifestations of existence, all phenomena, are united parts of a single entity, Time. Especially does this have relevance when we will consider that heaven, God, and Time are one, and that Yillah is a representative of heaven. This unification of structure and symbol is best exemplified in one episode on that

rock of time, the "Isle of Fossils," wherein Babbalanja settles an argument by explaining that a footprint on the rock indicates both three toes and one foot. He tells the disputants, "Unite and both are right; divide, and both are wrong. Every unit is made up of parts, as well as every plurality."[126] Yillah's duality and the suggestion that Hautia and Yillah are different faces of one and the same thing also parallels the structural fragmentation of Mardi with this same theme of Melville's cosmic ontology.[127]

When we consider the specific meanings of Yillah, the relationship of all the book's characters becomes clear and predictable. In this central definition the artistic expectancies are focused, and the denouement grows out of it. It is inevitable that Taji pursued Yillah before he ever knew her, and that his initial pursuit be tinged with guilt. It fits concisely that Taji should be the pursuer and that he should fail in his quest, ridden as he is by a monomania of will which would sin and sin again in order to regain a spotless and pure state of being. It is this paradox which is one of the underlying ironies creating the dualities in the Melvillean world of Mardi. It is inevitable that it should be Jarl's tattoo and not his body which attracts Yillah. It is inevitable that Jarl should feel foreboding and uneasiness at Yillah's presence. In one brief and important chapter, the relationship between "Yillah, Jarl, and Samoa" is sketched. At first the pure conscious spirit shrinks from sheer physicality, but after earthly experience comes to accept its existence as one of the necessities

of the life of this world. But she remains aloof, and her relationship with Samoa again identifies her as the divinity in human faculties.

> As Beauty from the Beast, so at first shrank the damsel from my one-armed companion. But seeing my confidence in the savage, a reaction soon followed. And in accordance with that curious law, by which, under certain conditions, the ugliest mortals become only amiably hideous, Yillah at length came to look upon Samoa as a sort of harmless and good natured goblin. Whence came he, she cared not; or what was his history; or in what manner his fortunes were united to mine.[128]

At best, the pure soul or ideal can attempt to persuade man away from the most barbaric manifestations of physicality and savagery:

> Now, as every where women are the tamers of menerageries of men; so Yillah in good time tamed down Samoa to the relinquishment of that horrible thing in his ear, and persuaded him to substitute a vacancy for the bauble in his nose. On his part, however, all this was conditional. He stipulated for the privilege of restoring both trinkets upon suitable occasions.[129]

Despite his superstitious reverence for Yillah as a being not of this world, Samoa is dedicated to the actions of this world and will not relinquish his own characteristics when the need for preservation demands his own special attributes. "On suitable occasions" underscores the themes of incompleteness and the relativity of man's necessities. For instance, when the Chamois group comes ashore at Mardi, Yillah's qualities can not cope with the earthly needs demanded by a physical meeting with earthmen in an alien land. Yillah remains cowering in the tent on the Chamois. It is Samoa who springs ashore, determining beforehand whether or not it is safe to land. In brief, Melville makes it almost immediately apparent that pure being, the Ideal in that other-world outside of

Plato's cave, is an incompletion on earth and is inoperative in certain situations. The very fact of the inclusion of the chapter "Yillah, Jarl, and Samoa" is a clue to how the reader should interpret Yillah.

Samoa may or may not recognize Yillah as pure conscious soul, a recognition reserved for Taji and the reader. But he is aware that she is of other-worldly purity, that she is the embodiment of that pure state of being. He acts toward her as he acts toward no one else in the book, not even toward Taji, for Samoa's primitive, mindless and superstitious awe of other-worldiness is stronger than his submission to a demi-god with whom he can deal on a physical level:

> But if thus gayly the damsel sported with Samoa; how different his emotions toward her? The fate to which she had been destined, and every nameless thing about her, appealed to all his native superstitions, which ascribed to beings of her complexion a more than terrestrial origin. When permitted to approach her, he looked timid and awkwardly strange; suggesting the likeness of some clumsy satyr, drawing in his horns, slowly wagging his tail; crouching abashed before some radiant spirit.
>
> And this reverence of his was most pleasing to me. Bravo! thought I; be a pagan forever. No more than myself; for after a different fashion, Yillah was an idol to both.[130]

Not only Samoa, but all mortal men recognize the emblem of other worldliness, and tremble superstitiously before something which ironically is out of place and inoperative in the very world they inhabit. The reaction of the Islanders is another revelation of the primitive and unconscious mind, much as the taboo was in <u>Typee</u>.

> Until now, enveloped in her robe, and crouching like a fawn, Yillah had been well nigh hidden from view. But presently she withdrew her hood.
>
> What saw the Islanders, that they so gazed and adored

> in silence: some retreating, some creeping nearer, and the women all in a flutter? Long they gazed; and following Samoa's example, stretched forth their arms in reverence.[131]

III

Once Yillah is given a dramatic weighting, a discernible value, she disappears. The rest of her story, the consequences of her pursuit, capture, and disappearance, centers not upon her but upon all the other characters of the book. She is continually revealed as revelation is made about Aleema, Aleema's sons, Hautia, Taji, and the other voyagers. As with the other lures, Isabel and the whale, the story is not hers. She continues to exist only as a motive, a cause for activation, and it is in the consequences of the quester's actions and the actions of the characters with whom he has contact that the story is built. Over the craft is mistaken for one of the creatures of the sky, the snow-white birds of the other-world. It is confused with heaven, but closer inspection reveals growing discrepancies between the pure all-colorlessness of heaven and the stains of earthly religion:

> It looked like one of many birds; for half intercepting our view, fell showers of plumage: a flight of milk-white noddies flying downward to the sea.
>
> But soon the birds are seen no more. Yet there remains the speck; plainly a sail; but too small for a ship...
>
> As the sail drew nigh, its failing to glisten white led us to doubt whether it was indeed a whale-boat. Presently, it showed yellow; and Samoa declared, that it must be the sail of some island craft.[132]

When the boat comes within description distance, it is presented in images identical with those of Typee, especially the fruit laden altars of the aboriginal, universal, superstitious religion of the

primitive everyman:

> The yard, spreading a yellow sail, was a crooked bough, supported obliquely in the crotch of a mast, to which the green bark was still clinging. Here and there were little tufts of moss. The high, beaked prow of that canoe in which the mast was placed, resembled a rude altar; and all round it was suspended a great variety of fruits, including scores of cocoanuts, unhusked. This prow was railed off, forming a sort of chancel within.[133]

The marks of land and greenness which identify the craft immediately differentiate it from the qualities of the sea-rover who is Mardi's quester. The sail is yellow rather than pure white; we are to see soon that Aleema represents religion, and, as Maramma is to show, the immediate appearance (whiteness, heavenliness) of religion is not the true picture of its earthly reality once the viewer gets close to it.

Aleema, the priest, is characterized by two recurring sets of images: oldness and timelessness on the one hand, and on the other the stern qualities of the Aaron, the devout follower of the harsh and vengeful Jehovah.

> ...Meantime, old Aaron, fastening the two silks crosswise over his shoulders, like a brace of Highland plaids, crosslegged sat, and eyed us.
>
> It was a curious sight. The old priest, like a scroll of old parchment, covered all over with heiroglyphical devices, harder to interpret, I'll warrant, than any old Sanskrit manuscript. And upon his broad brow, deep-graven in wrinkles, were characters still more mysterious, which no Champollion nor gipsy could have deciphered. He looked old as the elderly hills; eyes sunken, though bright; and head white as the summit of Mont Blanc...
>
> ...that old sire, Old Aaron; who, no doubt, reposed upon his sons, as an old general upon the trophies of his youth.[134]

The last fragment of the passage introduces one of the characteristics of Mardi's religion. It is supported by the physical savage

in everyman; as in Maramma, religion is supported by the sword. It is significant that it is Samoa who first identifies the boat, that Samoa wishes to meet it, that Samoa as physical savage feels an immediate kinship and uncowed familiarity. "Seeing that flight was useless, the Islanders again stopped their canoe, and once more we cautiously drew nearer; myself crying out to them not to be fearful; and Samoa, with the odd humor of his race, averring that he had known every soul of them from his infancy."[135]

Whereas Aleema is presented in terms of past vitality and present shrunken stature masked by the sternness and the mystery of his hocus-pocus heiroglyphics, his fourteen sons who are the "sword" of religion, are presented in images of food, animality, physicality, and martial might:

> The rest were a youthful and comely set; their complexion that of Gold Sherry, and all tattooed after this pattern: two broad cross-stripes on the chest and back, reaching down to the waist like a foot-soldier's harness. Their faces were full of expression; and their mouths were full of fine teeth so that the parting of their lips were as the opening of pearl oysters. Marked, here and there, after the style of Tahiti, with little round figures in blue, dotted in the middle with a spot of vermilion, their brawny brown thighs looked not unlike the gallant hams of Westphalia, spotted with the red dust of Cayenne.[136]

And it is upon these "foot-soldiers," these "gallant hams of Westphalia" that the priest depends for the force which backs up his pronouncements. The gallant hams are further defined in terms of human history. They are the new generations moulded by religion to a dedication to the purposes of religion, fathered, despite a variety of mothers or families, into one uniform, conforming family of identical beings who literally do support religion as represented

by Aleema:

> But what a marvelous resemblance in the features of all. Were they born at one birth? This resemblance was heightened by their uniform marks. But it was subsequently ascertained, that they were the children of one sire; and that sire, old Aaron; who, no doubt, reposed upon his sons as an old general upon the trophies of his youth.
>
> They were the children of as many mothers; and he was training them up for the priesthood.[137]

What is the quality of this religion which was once vital but which now depends upon the force of physical might? The answer to this question exposes Melville's view of the relationship of religion to man's conscious soul. Aleema preserves Yillah only to sacrifice her. The preservation for sacrifice is an act which preserves not the soul but the status of the priest. The priest does not wish all men to share what Yillah symbolizes. He wishes to appear the sole, unchallenged custodian. During Yillah's seclusion in the valley of Ardair, a youth seeks out Yillah and finally sees her. Aleema either kills him or has him killed, probably by the guardians of the valley who would be his sons.[138]

Moreover, religion would deny the human origin of man's conscious soul by surrounding it with other world fantasy. Yillah, in relation to Aleema, must be defined as conscious soul. Melville could have inserted later in the book, the allegorical story that Taji knows; as he does the real history of Yillah. But he specifically defines her as conscious soul <u>before</u> revealing her history in Ardair. The other, relative definitions of Yillah are not delineated until long <u>after</u> the Aleema episodes. Aleema's sons' pursuit of Taji as the man who would attain pure soul and heaven by his own

will (thus negating the jealously guarded role of religion) is a parallel to the murder of the transcendental boy by the priests of Maramma. The implication emerges that the longest lasting and strongest deterrent to man's search for God is religion itself. By surrounding man's conscious soul with other-world fantasy, religion dehumanizes the very essence which could allow man whatever he can reach of the divine status to which he aspires.[139] Taji is not taken in by the superstitions of religion-Yillah is a different idol to him than she is to Samoa. Taji tries to relate himself, as a human, to his divine heritage, both by forever seeking that heritage, by trying to capture it by escalade, and by convincing himself and Yillah that that heritage itself is originally a human thing. In one speech, Taji lays bare the vision behind the quest story, and he embraces the beginning and end of that story with images that make the speech the most significant concentrate of his entire quest:

> Now re-entering the tent, she again inquired where tarried Aleema.
>
> "Think not of him, sweet Yillah," I cried. "Look on me. Am I not white like yourself? Behold, though since quitting Oroolia the sun has died my cheek, am I not even as you? Am I brown like the dusky Aleema? They snatched you away from your isle in the sea, too early for you to remember me there. But you have not been forgotten by me, sweetest Yillah. Ha! ha! shook we not the palm-trees together, and chased we not the rolling nuts down the glen? Did we not dive into the grotto on the sea-shore, and come up together in the cool cavern on the hill? In my home in Oroolia, dear Yillah, I have a lock of your hair, ere yet it was golden: a little dark tress like a ring. How your cheeks were then changing from olive to white. And when shall I forget the hour, that I came upon you sleeping among the flowers, with roses and lilies for cheeks. Still forgetful? Know you not my voice? Those little spirits in your eyes have seen me before. They mimic me now as they sport in their lakes. All the

> past a dim blank? Think of the time when we ran up and down in our arbor, where the green vines grew over the great ribs of the stranded whale. Oh Yillah, little Yillah, has it all come to this? Am I ever forgotten? Yet over the wide watery world have I sought theee: from isle to isle, from sea to sea. And now we part not. Aleema is gone. My prow shall keep kissing the waves, till it kisses the beach at Oroolia. Yillah, look up.[140]

The first thing that is apparent is that on the narrative level Taji is again employing deceit in order to win Yillah. But even though on the surface level of plot Taji's speech is part of his campaign of conquest, in terms of allegory, Taji speaks in images which are an undeniable part of the book's general symbolism. Again there is the emphasis on origins presented in a suggestion of man's prelapsarian state, or at least the state of earthly bliss. Yillah, ere she was golden, was Fayaway, or whatever name we chose whereby to designate the primitivistic ideal of the Golden Age.[141] In that happy and faraway time, Taji and Yillah travelled together, alive and human, from the sea grotto to the cavern in the hill, coming <u>inland</u>. At the end of the book, inhuman, in despair, and dead, they travel from the cavern in the hill out to the uttermost seas. The otherworld changes the ideal from dark to white, from earthliness to pure being. The story of Ozonna and Rea shows that pride of this world, Hautia, changes the ideal from white to dark. As the corruption represented by Hautia is pictured by a false-front of birds and flowers and pearls on earth, the ideal is pictured by flowers, birds, and pearls in heaven. Taji's speech, to this point, moves from the early view of the pure ideal to the foreshadowing of the destruction of that ideal at the hands of the inversion which is Hautia. Along with suggestive bits like images

of green vines growing over the great ribs of the stranded whale, is the definite statement that Taji did hunt for Yillah long before he ever knew of or met her incarnation. And the passage ends with Taji's determination not to rest until he and Yillah can reenter the other-world together, until the final withdrawal and desertion from earth is complete, until the victory of man's escalade is final. The foreshadowing in the passage makes the ironic technique apparent: Taji and Yillah do make their final withdrawal from earth, but the consequences of such a desire and such an action are far different from what Taji anticipates. The irony is clinched in the chapter's final sentence placed in a separate paragraph immediately following the passage just quoted: "Sunk the ghost of Aleema: Sweet Yillah was mine!"

Aleema has an easier task than Taji: religion beats the quester hands down. Religion merely has to dehumanize and sacrifice aspects of the human being in order to maintain its own favored and authoritative position. When the priests's status is threatened by men clamoring for the release of Yillah, the priest spirits her away to destruction in the whirlpool of Tedaidee.[142] Release of religion's grasp on man's conscious soul is an occurrence that the priest cannot allow, and it is by stealth and force that he circumvents the demands of general humanity.[143] In all events, it is the innate, human essence which is truly divine albeit pliable. But the religion which claims to be the special custodian of that essence is dusky, deceitful, implacably stern. This view of religion does not have to be justaposed against the Maramma chapters or

against Melville's general cultural democracy and relativism. This view is concretely symbolized in the episode wherein Yillah is immured in the valley of Ardair. The god of Aleema, Apo (a possible play on ape: anthropocentrism, anthropoidism, animality, imitation and conformity?), is a "grim profile of a human face; whose shadow, every afternoon, crept down the verdant side of the mountain: a silent phantom, stealing all over the bosom of the glen."[144] It is to this view, to this god that old Aleema sacrifices the maiden mystagogically before he tries to sacrifice her actually:

> At times, when the phantom drew near, Aleema would take Yillah forth, and waiting its approach, lay her down by the shadow, disposing her arms in a caress, saying, "Oh, Apo! dost accept thy bride?" And at last, when it crept beyond the place where he stood, and buried the whole valley in gloom; Aleema would say, "Arise Yillah; Apo hath stretched himself to sleep in Ardair. Go, slumber where thou wilt; for thou wilt slumber in his arms."[145]

And just as Apo buries the greenness of the valley in gloom and covers man's conscious soul with shadow, so Aleema buries the quester's thoughts in gloom and makes the very waters over which Taji sails a place of shadow and death.

Although the ritualistic aspects of religion dehumanize Yillah, Taji, who paradoxically leads to the greatest ahumanity, tries to humanize Yillah. Religion becomes the false path to God, a killer. The conscious quester, on the other hand, is so acutely conscious of his human birthright that he tries to recapture it by storm, ignoring the actualities of a humanity that does not exist in Eden. In the attempt to storm the ramparts of an other-world which is not

there, the quester is also a killer. Either way, the attempt at an other-worldly paradise regained is murder and suicide, but it must be born in mind that the quester's attempt is based upon the widest and most splendid (although false) vision of man's cosmic status. In one way, the failure of Melville's questers is the death of idealism as a system and an ontology in the nineteenth century world, and it is enormously significant that Melville's portrayal of that death is actually grounded in empiricism and pragmatism.

Unlike the quester, religion's approach to God or absolute is based upon narrow authority, selfish prestige, and a wilfill attempt to dehumanize. Thus it is that whereas Aleema merely has to fill Yillah's head with fairy tales and then kill her, Taji must on the one hand identify himself with heaven and the birthright of the Golden-Age pure state of being, when earth was heaven, and on the other hand he has to identify that very state of being, Yillah, with earth and humanity. Chapter LI, "The Dream Begins to Fade," sums up Taji's relationship with Yillah; it is a brief chapter and important enough to be quoted almost in full:

> Stripped of the strange associations, with which a mind like Yillah's must have invested every incident of her life, the story of her abode in Ardair seemed not incredible.
>
> But so etherealized had she become from the wild conceits she nourished that she verily believed herself a being in the lands of dreams. Her fabulous past was her present.
>
> Yet as our intimacy grew closer and closer, these fancies seemed to be losing their hold. And often she questioned me concerning my own reminiscences of her shadowy isle. And cautiously I sought to produce the impression, that whatever I had said of that clime, had been revealed to me in dreams, her own lineaments had

smiled upon me; and hence the impulse which had sent me roving after the substance of this spiritual image.

And true it was to say so; and right it was to swear it, upon her white arms crossed. For oh, Yillah; were you not the earthly semblance of that sweet vision, that haunted my earliest thoughts?[146] /italics mine/

At first she had wildly believed, that the nameless affinities between us were owing to our having in times gone by dwelt together in the same ethereal region. But thoughts like these were fast dying out. Yet not without many strange scrutinies. More intently than ever she gazed into my eyes; rested her ear against my heart and listened to its beatings. And love, which in the eye of its object ever seeks to invest itself with some rare superiority, love, sometimes induced me to prop my failing divinity; though it was I myself who had undermined it.

But if it was with many regrets, that in sight of Yillah, I perceived myself thus dwarfing down to a mortal; it was with quite contrary emotions, that I contemplated the extinguishment in her heart of the notion of her own spirituality. For as such thoughts were chased away, she clung the more closely to me, as unto one without whom she would be desolate indeed.

And now, at intervals, she was sad, and often gazed long and fixedly into the sea. Nor would she say why it was that she did so; until at length she yielded; and replied that whatever false things Aleema might have instilled into her mind; of this much she was certain: that the whirlpool on the coast of Tedaidee prefigured her fate; that in the waters she saw lustrous eyes, and beckoning phantoms, and strange shapes smoothing her couch among the mosses.

Her dreams seemed mine. Many visions I had of the green corse of the priest, outstretching its arms in the water, to receive pale Yillah, as she sunk in the sea.

Symbolically, Taji and Yillah have become inseperable. Every revelation of one is a revelation of the other, until in this chapter—one of the last chapters wherein we see Yillah—a final statement is implicit. Yillah, as pure being, cannot exist without the conscious man to depend on. Ideal must be activated, humanized. And it is humanity, the very act of activization and humanization, which kills her. The spirit, once on earth, needs humanity and experience in which to exist at all, but once it touches humanity and

experience, it undergoes another transformation, which in the final case of Yillah, will be death. Briefly, the pure ideal cannot exist pure once it is mixed with mortality and the demands of earthly living. As the quest will demonstrate, it is suicide to pursue an unattainable purity which no longer is the state of the world. As Media will demonstrate, man must activate, within the possibilities of this earth, all the consciousness and ideal that he can and still be a preserver rather than a destroyer, operative rather than withdrawn. The buildup for the great resolution made by Captain Vere takes on much greater meaning in the light of this concept. For, Mardi insists, it is in this world that we must live. Whatever aspect of the other-world the book displays is either murderous or inhuman or inoperative because men delude themselves into believing it exists. Mortals cannot breathe the air of heaven, and the spirit exists only as long as mortality does. Babbalanja can accept this after he visits Serenia, but Taji is never able to accept the limitations of time and mortality, the limitations of the modern world's new view of man.

To this point, Mardi has given innumerable hints that God, heaven, immortality, the other-world--whatever we choose to call it--is not an area of humanity, and that the whole traditional concept has to be scrapped.for whoever the quester, whatever the book, the quester's pursuit of an absolute ideal dehumanizes himself, the ideal, and those around him. At any rate, humanity just does not exist in the other-world, and the action of Mardi cannot take place there. The trip throughout Mardi, as an exploration of this real

world, and as a statement of the appearances and realities of both worlds, becomes an integral necessity for the Taji story. Religion points to the other world and is murderous. It dehumanizes. The quester points to the other world and is murderous. He is dehumanized. The pure ideal lures to the other world and it is murdered. It is dehumanized and it dehumanizes. Even the gallant animal hams of Westphalia become dehumanized when, doubly ensnared by the crossed paths of religion and the quester, they pursue the pursuer of the other world.

When the sons of Aleema are first seen, they are dark and physical. However, as they undergo the isolation and alienation of quest, they become white. Rigid religionists, they are the self appointed avengers of heaven who will sacrifice all to murder the blasphemer, who will pile sin on sin to avenge sin. Their hatred and thirst for vengeance for a blasphemy hurled at the custodian of the other world is a white hatred that kills and bleaches what it touches:

> ...the same double-keeled craft, now sorely broken, the fatal dais in wild disarray: the canoe, the canoe of Aleema! And with it came the spearmen three, who, when the Chamois was fleeing from their bow, had poised their javelins. But so wan their aspect now, their faces looked like skulls. In my delirium I rushed upon the skeletons...the pale specters foamed out their curses again and again: —"Oh murderer! white curses upon thee! Bleached be thy soul with our hate! Living, our brethren cursed thee; and dying, dry-lipped, they cursed thee again. They died not through famishing for water, but for revenge upon thee! Thy blood, their thirst would have slaked!"[147]

From this point on, the three remaining, once dusky and husky sons of Aleema are always referred to as the "pale" strangers, the "wan" specters, or as "ghosts." Whiteness, other-worldliness, and death

are again connected by patterns of imagery, but these patterns now reveal the obverse side of the coin: the lure is associated with purity, the pursuit with annihilation.

In Mardi there is the best demonstration of the association of other-worldiness with the white man from the point of view of the savage and all he symbolizes. Aleema, in his allegorical dream story of Yillah's origin, pictured her as a bud torn from the flowering plant. Aleema's sons, when reciting the factual story of Yillah's origin employ the same image, showing that Aleema's story was simply the association made between the whiteness of western man and other-worldliness:

> "Of Yillah, we know only this:--that many moons ago, a mighty canoe, full of beings, white, like this murderer Taji, touched at our island of Amma. Received with wonder, they were worshipped as gods; were feared all over the land. Their chief was a tower to behold; and with him, was a being, whose cheeks were of the color of the red coral; her eye, tender as the blue of the sky. Every day our people brought her offerings of fruit and flowers; which last she would not retain for herself, but hung them round the neck of her child, Yillah; then only an infant in her mother's arms; a bud, nestling close to a flower, full-blown. All went well between our people and the gods, till at last they slew three of our countrymen, charged with stealing from their great canoe. Our warriors retired to the hills, brooding over revenge. Three days went by; when by night, descending to the plain, in silence they embarked; gained the great vessel, and slaughtered every soul but Yillah. The bud was torn from the flower; and, by our father Aleema, was carried to the valley of Ardair; there set apart as a sacred offering for Apo, our deity. Many moons passed; and there arose a tumult, hostile to our sire's longer holding custody of Yillah; when foreseeing that the holy glen would ere long be burst open, he embarked the maiden in yonder canoe, to accelerate her sacrifice at the great shrine of Apo, in Tedaidee. --The rest thou knowest, murderer!"[148]

Just as western consciousness, Tommo, was held as the most prized

captive by the Typees, who would eventually kill him, Yillah is held in exactly the same position, cut off from communication, except that in Mardi the symbolism is more explicit and more consciously ordered.

In Taji there is the disordered and incorrectly oriented "white" aspect of humanity. In Hautia there is the disordered and incorrectly oriented "dark" aspect. Until the reader approaches the isle of Flozella-a-Nina, he is prepared for a definition of Hautia by two general sets of circumstances. One is that Hautia, in her special way, is at once opposed to and united with the three pursuers who try to kill Taji. Whenever the pursuers appear, Hautia's heralds appear immediately afterward, offering a refuge from the sons of Aleema and offering a joy that is undefined. The second is that she is opposed to and united with Yillah, with hints that it is she who kidnaps Yillah. Hautia is introduced in a definite relationship to Taji and Yillah, even before the reader discovers that the person introduced is Hautia.

> Upon the third day, however, there was noticed a mysterious figure, like the inscrutable incognitos sometimes encountered crossing the tower-shaded Plaza of Assignations at Lima. It was enveloped in a dark robe of tappa, so drawm and plaited about the limbs, and with one hand, so wimpled about the face, as only to expose a solitary eye. But that eye was a world. Now it was fixed upon Yillah with a sinister glance, and now upon me, but with a different expression. However great the crowd, however tumultuous, that fathomless eye gazed on; till at last it seemed no eye, but a spirit, forever prying into my soul. Often I strove to approach it, but it would evade me, soon reappearing.[149]

The reader does not discover until the end of the book why Hautia hates Yillah, or that the glance given Taji is a glance of seduction. Yet Hautia's introductory symbol, the moss-rose, immediately

relates her to Yillah. The rose as well as the lily is an emblem of Yillah herself; the moss is a reminder of the mosses in the whirlpool which is to be Yillah's death.[150] There is at once a prefiguring of the dual presentation of the single being, the hint that Hautia is Yillah's death and that Hautia somehow is a form of Yillah.

The Yillah-Hautia opposition is continued in Yoomy's view of Yillah as well as in the white-dark opposition. When Yoomy sings of Yillah as the wondrous bright, lone light in the gloom and mystery of the universe, he instantly opposes Yillah to Hautia:

> Like the fish of the bright and twittering fin,
> Bright fish! diving deep as high soars the lark,[151]
> So, far, far, far, doth the maiden swim,
> Wild song, wild light, in still ocean's dark.
> "What maiden, minstrel?" cried Media.
> "<u>None of these</u>," answered Yoomy, pointing out a shallop gliding near.
> "The damsels three: —Taji, they pursue you yet."[152]

The flower language with which Hautia's three heralds communicate with Taji then tells Taji that to fly to Hautia is to fly to love, that Hautia has wrought a death (later revealed as the death of Yillah), and that Hautia offers Taji all "rosy" joys and sweets.[153] Yoomy then recites verses that differentiate between the rose and lily identification of Yillah and the rose and lily identification of Hautia.

> Oh! royal is the rose,
> But barbed with many a dart;
> Beware, beware the rose,
> 'Tis cankered at the heart.
>
> Sweet, sweet the sunny down,
> Oh! lily, lily, lily down!
> Sweet, sweet, Verbena's bloom!
> Oh! pleasant, gentle, musky bloom!

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> Sweet, sweet, Verbena's bloom!
> Oh! pleasant, gentle, musky bloom!

Dread, dread the sunny down;
    Lo! lily-hooded asp;
Blooms, blooms no more Verbena;
    White withered in your clasp.[154]

Consonant with the now familiar rejection of appearances (the very next chapter begins, "Judge not things by their names"), the association of Yillah's flowers with Hautia's is given with the warning that Hautia's flowers are deadly and withered at the heart. By the third time, then, that the reader meets Hautia or her heralds, her characteristics are completely adumbrated, although not defined. She is deadly; she hates the other-worldly pure-ideal; she clothes herself in flower appearances which are the same as that of the ideal, and she would lure the quester, claiming that she herself offers what he seeks.

We must turn to the history of Hautia, the story of her origins, to discover what is meant by the deadliness and withering at the heart. This is the story of Hautia's ancestry:

> In the beginning, there were other beings in Mardi besides Mardians; winged beings, of purer minds, and cast in gentler molds, who would fain have dwelt forever with mankind. But the hearts of the Mardians were bitter against them, because of their superior goodness. Yet those beings returned love for malice, and long entreated to virtue and charity. But in the end, all Mardi rose up against them, and hunted them from isle to isle; till, at last, they rose from the woodlands like a flight of birds, and disappeared in the skies. Thereafter, abandoned of such sweet influences, the Mardians fell into all manner of sins and sufferings, becoming the erring things their descendents are now. Yet they knew not, that their calamities were of their own bringing down. For deemed a victory, the expulsion of the winged beings was celebrated in choruses, throughout Mardi. And among other jubilations, so ran the legend, a pean was composed, corresponding in the number of stanzas, to the number of the islands. And a band of youths, gayly appareled, voyaged in gala canoes all around the lagoon, singing upon each isle, one verse of their song. And Flozella being the last isle in

> their circuit, its queen commemorated the circumstances by new naming her realm.
>
> That queen had first incited Mardi to wage war against the beings with wings. She it was, who had been foremost in every assault. And that queen was ancestor of Hautia, now ruling the isle.[155]

The parable is a transparent one. It is the moment of loss of the Golden Age, the loss of heaven, the earthly inversion of the expulsion of Lucifer from heaven, the inverted Fall of man. The original beings were all Yillahs, pure beings characterized by mind and love, again, the ideal. Be they angels or whatever order we may call them, they were the pure ideals on earth, the divine aspects of man's being. However, the pride of man-as-is made earth untenable for saints. (Significantly, Taji the quester abandons worlds because of rejection of life-as-is.) Heaven did not kick man away from bliss; man kicked bliss away from earth. Hautia is pride, born of pride, the continuer of an original universal behavior pattern of man's haughty pride in himself, admitting of no change or betterment or possibility of integration with his own highest potentialities. Hautia is the human arrogance which cannot tolerate the pure ideal because it represents something above, beyond, and incompatible with that very arrogance. She would deck herself out in an appearance of the ideal and hold herself forth as man's highest attainment. She is an empty lie. To grasp Hautia, as Taji discovers, is to grasp thin air. Hautia's pride not only denies the other-world, but it bewitches and drugs men into losing awareness of the possibilities of bettering this world. The demonism of human pride is met again in Fedallah. Just as Yillah is seen again as Isabel, Hautia is seen again as Mrs. Glendinning. The

enmity of the whale and Fedallah, of Isabel and Mrs. Glendinning is prepared in the symbolism of Mardi.

Hautia's enticements are those of bodily pleasure, all the pleasures of earth corrupted into a bewitching intensity which can find meaning only in the intense pride taken in unregenerate humanity. It will admit neither mind nor love. It is not the physicality of Samoa, who uses body as the occasion demands. It is not the physicality of Jarl, who uses body in devotion to duty. It is the physicality of a madness which takes the greatest joy in mankind divorced from any aspects of ideal behavior. It offers sex, but not love. The bloom which symbolizes it is withered at the heart. Hautia as a behavior value, is not limited to Flozella-a-Nina. The feast of Abrazza is a concretization of Hautia's way of life. It offers witchery, abandonment, and death. The white lily as a traditional symbol represents purity, chastity, and the other-world. Hautia's lily hoods the asp. The slow death of Donjalolo in his abandoned moments is a concretization of Hautia's way of life. It is empty and hollow, and leads to the deprivation and oppression of humanity, not to attainment of ideal. The fruits of Hautia's orchards hang "high in air, that only beaks, not hands, might pluck."[156] The irresponsible sumptuousness is concretized in Borabolla, who gorges himself into a gout-ridden caricature of a man. The isle of Flozella-a-Nina itself is a symbol of Hautia. Beyond the luxuriant orchard which is "the frontlet of the isle" is a "lengthening plain" which terminates in a hill which hides the sea caverns that lead to death.[157]

What Hautia symbolizes can not admit the superior being whom Aleema's sons would avenge. Neither god, priest, religion or devil can awe Hautia. And this is the basis of her opposition to the three avengers. Hautia's opposition to Yillah is clear in the story of her ancestry. Taji, in his attempt to leave the world in pursuit of pure being, is doubly opposed. He is enticed and lured by the world's false happiness which kills the embodiment of man's aspirations. And he is pursued by the self-appointed guardians of man's conscious soul, guardians who will kill and devour the man that would attain pure being on his own terms rather than on the terms of an orthodoxy which would deny that very attainment. The entire plight of Taji is solidified in one revealing image. Night falls as Taji, following the three heralds of Hautia and pursued by the three sons of Aleema, steers for Flozella-a-Nina. "When day dawned, three radiant pilot-fish swam in advance: three ravenous sharks astern. And, full before us, rose the isle of Hautia."[158] Chapter XVIII ("My Lord Shark and His Pages") has already shown that the bright and beautiful little pilot fish serve only to steer the shark toward his murders. This is another bit of appearance-reality polarity, for Hautia's three lovely heralds would steer Taji toward his own death. Thus the three avengers and the three heralds become different faces of the same thing, just as the pilot fish and shark are part of one team. In the same way Hautia and the avengers are unified. They are all sharks lying in wait in the oceans the quester travels. All has been adumbrated in Typee and will reach its climax in Pierre: the man who would change worlds is

doubly opposed by forces which are different, which act for different reasons, but which act the same action. That the resultant action is the unifying band is an insight into the pragmatism that helped dictate Melville's choice of symbolic methods.

What remains to be seen is the unity of Hautia and Yillah. The unity can be approached through Yillah's duality. She is at once divine and human, as her histories suggest. And, as all of Mardi reveals, humanity kills divinity and purity. When Yillah is in Ardair, she has a milk-white bird, a symbol of Yillah herself; the bird is named in fact Lil (Lily, Yillah) and is called the "blest soul of the maidens."[159] Yillah looks into the bird's eyes, and seeing her double reflection, makes a statement of her own dual character: "...Yillah, looking into its eyes, saw strange faces there; and said to herself as she gazed—'These are two souls, not one.'"[160] Immediately that this revelation is made, the bird flies away, leaving Yillah alone, human, and unaided outside of heaven: the very next paragraph relates the abandonment of Yillah:

> But at last, going forth into the groves with the bird, it suddenly flew from her side, and perched in a bough; and throwing back its white downy throat, there gushed from its bill a clear warbling jet, like a little fountain in air. Now the song ceased; when up and away toward the head of the vale, flew the bird.[161] "Lil! Lil! come back, leave me not, blest soul of the maidens." But on flew the bird, far up a defile, winging its way till a speck.[162]

The blest soul of the maidens is gone. All that is left are the transformed and corrupted maidens of Hautia, maidens who were once all Yillahs. Just as man cannot live in heaven, pure being cannot live on earth, and again dualities are unified in terms of action.

Heaven and humanity never meet. As far as the needs and desires of humanity are concerned, heaven might just as well not exist, for all the action is placed within the realms of human power--God did not dictate the Fall of man; man creates his own conditions. What this part of the allegory boils down to is simply this: pure soul, pure ideal, pure consciousness is for the other-world, not for man. Human pride kidnaps the ideal and either transforms it or kills it, and in the Hautia-Yillah allegory, Melville creates a retelling of the Faustus myth. Taji's selfish will motivates the attempted attainment of the ideal; pride kills it for Hautia is but the quester's own pride. Taji renounces pride and earth, is left only with his deadly will, and he is a dead man.

Taji dives in Hautia's cave to find the single pearl which is Yillah. He dives deep and can find nothing. Melville tells the reader all he has to know. Hautia tells what the pearls are: Health, Wealth, Long Life and the Last Lost Hope of man. Taji too would call the pearl by the same names, but differing as they do in their beliefs of what constitutes man's happiness, only Hautia can find earth's jewels in her realm and Taji must find nothing. Only if Taji abandons Yillah and accepts Hautia's values can he find the pearl. And as the Ozonna-Rea story specifies, the acceptance can only turn out to be transformation and death. But Taji will not accept. Taji will not forget the purity of man's divine other-world. He cannot reject his vision of the Golden Age past in order to submit to Hautia's allurements. Taji would search forever for the fulfillment of man's possibilities and would not rest content with man's

degraded state:

> Down, down! down, down, in the clear, sparkling water, till I seemed crystallized in the flashing heart of a diamond; but from those bottomless depths I uprose empty handed.[163]
>
> "Pearls, pearls! Thy pearls! thou art fresh from the mines. Ah, Taji! for thee, bootless deep diving. Yet to Hautia, one shallow plunge reveals many Golcondas. But come; dive with me: --join hands--let me show thee strange things."
>
> "Show me that which I seek, and I will dive with thee, straight through the world, till we come up in oceans unknown."
>
> "Nay, nay; but join hands, and I will take thee, where thy Past shall be forgotten; where thou wilt soon learn to love the living, not the dead."
>
> "Better to me, oh Hautia! all the bitterness of my buried dead, than all the sweets of the life thou canst bestow; even were it eternal."[164]

What, then, is wrong with Taji as the hero? He has the greatest vision. He would couple himself with man's highest possibilities rather than with man's lowest limitations. He would plunge into the other world (where through eternity he will find nothing, although he does not realize this) rather than find satisfaction in the ready and apparent joys of a depraved society whose values are shallow. Taji is the deep, deep diver.

The kink in Taji's character has already been stated. At the very point he rejects Hautia, he is made to repeat the revelation of his disability: "Show me that which I seek, and I will dive with thee, straight through the world, till we come up in oceans unknown." It is the same disability implicit in Taji's desire to voyage alone with Yillah until their prow touches the beach of Oroolia. Taji will join anyone, will sacrifice anything to gain the goal of his monomaniacal vision. He is essentially selfish. He has already sacrificed the largest and most wholesome part of humanity to his will,

and he is not interested in bringing his ideal back to earth for all men. Like Aleema, he too hid Yillah from view. If he could attain his ideal himself, for himself, he would be willing to relinquish his humanity and his world to be the sole dweller in oceans unknown. The true hero, then, must be able to realize Taji's grand vision, to be able to cast his eyes up to the heavens, but at the same time to act in accordance with the preservation of this world. The appreciation of ideal must underlie the expediencies of earthly action. Long before Melville created Starry Vere, he saw in the world the conditions which demanded him.

It is Taji's prideful attitude which attracts Hautia. The guilt attached to pride follows Taji in the vengeance of orthodox human institutions. Hautia follows vengeance. She realizes well her relationship to Taji, and at one point the relationship is stated. Significantly, at the moment Taji learns of the murder of Jarl, Hautia's first message to him reads, "Still I follow swiftly behind revenge."[165] Pride prompts murder and revenge, pride follows murder and revenge; the processions of pilot-fish and sharks are duplicated beyond the furthest verge of the ocean's horizon.[166]

At one point, and too late, Taji almost realizes that in the moment he drew Yillah into humanity for all the wrong motivations, he was her real murderer. Ideal and pride are two faces of man's quest. Yillah and Hautia are both part of Taji. When Taji brings his ideal into a realm where it is subject to his pride, he himself murders the ideal. The conflicting views of Hautia and Yillah sweep through Taji at a single moment. The partial recognition

that the two females are one, that they are fused, through him, so that the unity of the two are ironically made apparent in the death of Yillah, almost undoes him:

> But how connected were Hautia and Yillah? Something I hoped; yet more I feared. Dire presentiments, like poisoned arrows swept through me. Had they pierced me before, straight to Flozella would I have voyaged; not waiting for Hautia to have wooed me by that last and victorious temptation. But unchanged remained my feelings of hatred for Hautia; yet vague those feelings as the language of her flowers. Nevertheless, in some mysterious way, seemed Hautia and Yillah connected. But Yillah was all beauty, and innocence; my crown of felicity; my heaven below; —and Hautia, my whole heart abhorred. Yillah I sought; Hautia sought me. One, openly beckoned me here; the other dimly allured me there. Yet now I was wildly dreaming to find them together.[167]
>
> But the same, mysterious, evil-boding gaze was there, which long before had haunted me in Odo, ere Yillah fled. —Queen Hautia the incognito! Then two wild currents met, and dashed me into foam.[168]

It was not until he came to the world (Mardi) with Yillah that Hautia could appear, and then Taji did not recognize her. Now she emerges, and Taji is horror-stricken at what he sees: the guilt and crime of his own pride, which has shadowed him, like that phantom reminder, the green corpse of Aleema, throughout his voyage.[169] In either case, this world kills pure ideal. If not captured by Taji, Yillah would have been sacrificed to the Tedaidee whirlpool of orthodoxy. When captured by Taji, she is drawn into the whirlpool of pride. Yillah had foreseen the mosses of the whirlpool: it was the one thing she was always sure of. Now she is drowned in the moss-rose whirlpool of Hautia, who uses the vortex image to describe herself: "Come! let us sin, and be merry. Ho! wine, wine, wine! and lapfuls of flowers! let all the cane-brakes

pipe thir flutes. Damsels! dance; reel, swim, around me: —I the vortex that draws all in."[170]

Mohi, the historian, has seen Taji's story repeated throughout the ages. It is the old story of the man in individual pursuit of his individual ideal only to find that in the course of the pursuit pride eventually transforms the ideal into something other than what it was and draws it into pride's far-reaching vortex. Mohi knows what Hautia's slave-damsels are. He says to Taji, "Listen; and in his own words will I recount the adventures of the youth Ozonna. It will show thee, Taji, that the maidens of Hautia are all Yillahs, held captive, unknown to themselves; and that Hautia, their enchantress, is the most treacherous of queens."[171] The very predisposition which is the stimulus for Taji's quest is the very thing which is instrumental in the death of his goal. He can no longer find her on earth. Babbalanja, while still the seeker with no answer, makes a statement which accurately sums up Taji's plight, although Taji is less bothered than Babbalanja about leaving this world:

> ...'tis not the world <u>we</u> were born in; not the world once so lightsome and gay; not the world where we once merrily danced, dined, and supped; and wooed, and wedded our long buried wives. Then let us depart. But whither? We push ourselves forward--then, start back in affright. Essay it again, and flee. Hard to live; hard to die; intolerable suspense! But the grim despot at last interposes; and with a viper in our winding-sheets, we are dropped into the sea.[172]

However, Taji will pursue his object into death if need be, even though all that has gone before tells him that heaven cannot be regained in this way; that just as man banished heaven from this

pipe thir flutes. Damsels! dance; reel, swim, around me: --I the vortex that draws all in."[170]

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However, Taji will pursue his object into death if need be, even though all that has gone before tells him that heaven cannot be regained in this way; that just as man banished heaven from this

earth, man will gain heaven on this earth or not at all. Once the white bird has flown it never returns. Taji, whose vision is greater than his effectiveness, blinds himself to consequences and will not rest content. "I am the hunter, that never rests!" he says, "the hunter without a home!" She I seek still flies before; and I will follow, though she lead me beyond the reef; through sunless seas; and into night and death..."[173]

The irrevocable decision once made completes the dehumanization of the quester, kills his heart, submerges him in the consequences of guilt and murder, and changes his quest from heavenly attainment to the diabolism of pride:

> Then sweet Yillah called me from the sea; —still must I on! but gazing whence that music seemed to come, I thought I saw the green corpse drifting by: and striking 'gainst our prow, as if to hinder. Then, then! my heart grew hard, like flint; and black, like night; and sounded hollow to the hand I clenched. Hyenas filled me with their laughts; death-damps chilled my brow; I prayed not, but blasphemed.[174]

Humanity and other-worldiness are murderously incompatible. Just as Taji becomes the murderer rather than the saviour of Yillah, so Yillah in the divinity of her dual being, becomes the false lure, the horror, the beckoning of the skeleton finger. Hautia, mortal pride, can no longer hold the man who recognizes her. But he is a man who does not wish to combat her on earth. He wishes rather to flee in pursuit of the phantom, and when he does he cuts his last hold on life. Renouncing his last chance for the good fight and the good search, he remains merely the bleached specter of inhuman will. When Taji at last recognizes Hautia and renounces her, she makes the only logical answer to him: "Go, go, —and slay thyself: I may not

make thee mine; —go, dead to dead! — There is another cavern in the hill."[175] Rejecting his last place in the world, the cavern of the shallow joys of pride, Taji races to the cavern of the death pride wreaks, and finds Yillah (but only vaguely Yillah—he does not realise that she too has undergone the final transformation from ideal to monster) dead in the depths of—of course—a whirlpool. The dead ideal is swept out to sea by the eddies, and Taji then makes his most blind and final statement, and literally says goodbye to the world:

> "Ah! Yillah! Yillah! —the currents sweep thee oceanward; nor will I tarry behind. —Mardi, farewell!—Give me the helm...
>
> "And why put back? is a life of dying worth living o'er again? —Let me, then, be the unreturning wanderer. The helm! By Oro, I will steer my own fate...Mardi, Farewell!"[176]

The statement at this point exceeds the wildest blasphemy. In effect what Taji says is that he will not recognise the world, existence itself, humanity, man's plight, time, or man's limitations in time. He would be God, he would transcend time. In a pride far exceeding Hautia's, a pride not of this world but rather the pride which drives him to replace the cosmos with himself, he pursues Yillah into suicide. The enormity of this suicide is the atheism of denying man's vision in this world by hurling it into death with a loathing for man's existence. It is suicide not only of the corporeal Taji, but it is murder of man's possibilities. It is this complete denial of life itself, the unforgivable sin, which is intended in Yoomy's last, screaming plea, "Nay, Taji: commit not the last, last crime!" It is the unforgivable sin mentioned in Babbalanja's statement that one had "Better slay the body than the soul;

and if it be the direst of sins to be the murderers of our own bodies, how much more to be a soul suicide."[177] Soul-murder and soul-suicide: Taji's crimes can add up only to that final butchery. Taji's soul is now no soul. It has no heaven, its ideal is dead, it itself denies humanity. God is Satan, life is death; the ultimate, Time, wears both faces facelessly, and Taji's denial of limitations is Taji's final submission to them. Mohi shouts, "He's seized the helm! Eternity is in his eye!..." And Taji replies, "Now I am my own soul's emperor; and my first act is abdication! Hail! realm of shades!" One cannot be emperor of a soul which does not exist. Time, history, God, seizes Taji's bark as the emperor will of man, abandoning its dead subject soul, shoots out of the world. Only revengeful orthodoxy and guilt pursue the quester into the grave as he is seized by the hand of time.

> ...and turning my prow into the racing tide, which seized me like a hand omnipotent, I darted through.
>
> Churned in foam, that outer ocean lashed the clouds; and straight in my white wake, headlong dashed a shallop, three fixed specters leaning o'er its prow: three arrows poising.
>
> And thus, pursuers and pursued fled on, over an endless sea.[178]

The endless sea is the eternity of death. The suicide is the destruction of all the possibilities of man's consciousness and the white waves of time record the passage of all the sins of man's inhumanity to himself. The visionary who denies the needs and realities of society turns his guns inboard and calls down death and destruction. The nothingness of Time, if it allows anything to continue beyond the grave, allows the pursuit of the sins of history. The only immortality is racial, collective, not individual; the only ghost is not the visiting angel—it is human history.

Basically, Melville is concerned with human possibility and human limitation. It becomes inevitable that his books will encompass themes which are discussions of divine birthright, denials of immortality, and mortality's final and irrevocable limitation in Time. The theme of Time runs through all of Melville's major works. In Mardi, whenever Time is mentioned as an active agent, it is always capitalized, just as a reference to God would be in the same context. The most complete discussion of time is reserved for Pierre, where Melville offers one of the major keys to his symbolism: there is no heaven, no God but Time, Time impersonal, eternal, ubiquitous, empty, creative, and murderous. In subjection to time, Mardi argues, all men are truly Adam's sons. They must preserve this world and earth in the time they have it. Human action must emphasize brotherhood and must concentrate on unifying and strengthening human society rather than trying to regain a heaven which does not exist and never did exist except in a universal mythos by which man views his own present plight. It is this moral and sociological precept that allows Mardi to embrace a duality that puzzles readers, that is, that while there is often the suggestion that there is no heaven and that there is only a dead God, there is also the suggestion that all men, even the most disparate, will sit together cheek by jowl in a most complete democracy in heaven. The former is true for the concept of time. The latter is also true in the same way--all men will be enveloped by the unchangeable and imperturbable actions of time. In Mardi time is referred to more than once as the final democrat and

leveller, the first grower, the last killer. In turn, the dual action of time is often presented in images of green things, the greenness of new growth and fruition, and the greenness of rot and verde-antique. Both are different faces of the same welded entity. The entity as the thing complete in all its faces is represented by facelessness, as in Moby-Dick, just as the entity as the thing complete in all its colors is represented by an all embracing absence of color, or whiteness. This is true of Mardi as of Moby-Dick, which offers what is far and away Melville's best single symbol. Mardi is the focal book which demonstrates the bringing together of divergence and duality and ambiguity into single unity.

IV

The involved tale of what man does to his ideal and his consciousness and of what misdirected idealism and consciousness does to man is not Taji's story alone. Taji's demonism is, like Ahab's, the diabolism of frustrated human will. If man cannot meet God, he will turn to the devil--not realizing that he barters with the same entity. Babbalanja, who quests with Taji, is subject to the diabolism of the man of insight who, unable to find the last lost hope of immortality is unable to find the reconciling answers to the conflicts of mortal life. Babbalanja is the Hamlet, the man who tries to find a cosmic view which will at once explain, justify and dictate the answers which must be taken. Unlike his polar opposite, Samoa, for Babbalanja action alone is meaningless. Next to Taji, Babbalanja is the most distinct idealist in the book. Babbalanja plunges deep into the depths of experience, trying to

prune away manifestations and modifications, ripping away phenomena to find the essential reality. The essential reality lies in the definition of God and other-world, and Babbalanja's despair lies in the freezing suspicion that there is no God but Time by which to explain the diversity and chaos of earth.[179] In terms of sheer quantity, Babbalanja talks more about immortality and causality than about anything else.

Yoomy, the poet, tries to find the meaning of experience in beauty, but he too is a physically inactive man. He soars high into etherealizations of phenomena, also trying to find an essential reason. Yoomy, soaring into the magnificently awe-inspiring hopefulness and beauty of the universe, is the most optimistic of all the voyagers that Yillah will be found. Babbalanja, diving into the magnificently awe-inspiring deadliness of the universe tries to find the ultimate reason, and of all the voyagers he is the least optimistic that Yillah will be found. One simply sees the creativity of time, the other the murderousness of time. At one point, in a sudden feeling of kinship with Yoomy, Babbalanja declares, "Yoomy: poets both, we differ but in seeming; thy airiest conceits are as the shadows of my deepest ponderings; though Yoomy soars, and Babbalanja dives, both meet at last."[180] Without realizing it, Babbalanja makes the statement which demands the realizations given him by his Serenian dream, for it is the most accurate definition of existence which, in all its dualities, height and depth, life and death meets itself in the source of Time. The individual soul does not continue on in any happy ideal universe of

other-world. Taji's abdication assumes historic proportions, for it is not the mortal story of one man's sins, but the immortal story of mankind's slaughter of itself with the mammouth engine of delusion. Babbalanja's statement cuts through the delusion. Whether one soar to find God or dive with the devil inside him, he finds the same answer—empty, white, nothingness; and the soarer and diver meet in the truth of Time the Ultimate, both symbolically in realization if still in this world, and literally in death if in the other. Diabolism and God-ism are the same. The duality is the one and same body of the tortoise; go beneath, go above, to darkness, to brightness, there is only this one body. All is the unity of Time-nothingness hidden under various pasteboard masks. The appearance only is dual; the reality is an impersonal and unconquerable unity. The quester, striking through the mask, blinded by his monomaniacal will does not see that this is the one essential truth, but still he will strike through to the vacuum which kills him.

Babbalanja's Serenian vision of world beyond world takes him further and further into realms more intensely characterized by brightness, sadness, and silence. Finally, beyond the uttermost realm is a brightness, a silence comprehended by none, and this is the realm of Oro. Oro is Time, even in name (ὥρα hora). Man cannot reach that last boundless realm, indeed can hardly breathe in the realm but once removed from his own. Babbalanja's heavenly guide admonishes, "But know that heaven hath no roof. To know all is to be all. Beatitude there is none. And your only Mardian happiness is but exemption from great woes—no more..."[181] There can

be no beatific vision such as Taji would realize. Unlike Taji, Babbalanja accepts man's mortal limitations. His reaction is not to storm to the ultimate boundlessness of heaven, but to preserve himself in a manner compatible with earth. "My voyage now is ended. Not because what we sought is found; but that I now possess all which may be had of what I sought in Mardi...Taji! for Yillah thou wilt hunt in vain; she is a phantom that but mocks thee; and while for her thou madly huntest, the sin thou didst cries out, and its avengers still will follow."[182] When Babbalanja thought there was no other world, he despaired that Yillah would not be found. Now that he is convinced that if there is another world it is not available to man, he is sure that nothing which leads away from earth can be attained. In his realization that pride-killed Yillah is not a desirable goal but a mocking phantom, Babbalanja hints that the other worlder is herself a murderess by the very nature of her being. The interactions of limitations and consciousness create again and again the motifs of the murdered murderer, the guilty guilt-chasers, the pursued pursuers, the sharks and pilot fish. Always, looking into the patterns of Mardi's themes is like looking into the technique of circular reflexion, the set of facing mirrors that reflect themselves in alternate inversions into receding and infinite distances.

Babbalanja's answer, however, does not embrace all the necessities of action as set up in the qualities of Mardi's other characters.[183] Actually, Babbalanja's final position is one of retreat. It is not Taji's complete withdrawal; it is rather an action

consonant with Babbalanja's character, and is a retirement into a life of contemplative serenity. Babbalanja gently disengages himself from the Mardi of the Samoas and the Pikos and Hellos. He becomes the latter polarity in the twin possibilities of the vita activa or the vita contemplativa. Taji's career has demonstrated that the withdrawal from the world begins a chain of disastrous consequences, but the consequences accrue from the actions of the man who does not know how to read history, the man who would ignore human limitations rather than live within humanity. Babbalanja's decision to remain in Serenia, although strictly a first-person-singular solution, harms no one because it attempts to lead no one into unlivable spheres. Babbalanja's Serenian answer is a bit disappointing. Granted that his acceptance of limitations is one of the major needs, and granted that his new and serence life is in keeping with his character, there is still something evasive about it. True, Serenia emphasizes humanity, Christ's human principles and human reason, and is not other-worldly-centered. But still, it is the philisophical sweetness and goodness that is not accepted by the rest of the man-of-war world of Mardi. Mardi shows us that if you turn your other cheek, someone knocks your head off. Serenia would have us believe that repeated love will conquer the ornery streaks in man. Babbalanja had been caught in all the torture of wrestling out the definition of God, of trying to ascertain the best course of human action, of trying to define his own relationship to man, God, and society. All that emerges from his enormous mental anguish is the anticlimactic picture of the philosopher who dwells

by the side of road and is a friend to man. When he was demonized, Babbalanja's sententious and sometimes foolish pronouncements were tolerable. Now that he has taken the cure, he gives every indication that he may be a crashing bore were it not so close to the end of the book. Babbalanja has all the good insights and realizations, and he talks the good fight. But as his name implies, he only talks it. Had Melville meant to illustrate that Babbalanja is not the complete representation of proper human action, he should not have made him such a sympathetic character throughout so much of the book. If he offers Babbalanja as the proper course of action, then such action is sadly out of whack with the rest of Mardi's themes. Actually, of course, we need accept neither alternative; Babbalanja's solution is a solution for himself, for his Serenia certainly need not be equated with geographic isolation. Like all other aspects of Mardi, Serenia is also an aspect of behavior possibility. It might just as well be the seclusion within the insular and green Tahiti of the soul. Babbalanja's remaining in the peace of Serenia is the driving of the silver stake through Azzageddi's heart. The demon, which is the unanswered recognition of the horrors, hapistances, and inequities of living, will remain dead as long as Babbalanja retains his Serenian answer of love, limitation, and reason. But the ineffectiveness of Babbalanja's solution does not earn him the right to offer prescriptions for action to the other characters, as he does. On this point, Melville's art failed him in the job of theme-handling. Babbalanja should have accompanied Media as chief

spear-bearer--and this objection is made in terms of thematic structure rather than extrinsic morality. In terms of human action, Babbalanja's Serenian solution, in short, is the one example of unsuccessful thematic construction in the book.

The other major character who must be examined more closely is Media. In a particular way, Media emerges as more than just one more fragmented bit of human behavior. He is the only character who integrates heart, consciousness and action. As part of the thematic shortcoming of the Babbalanja story, the error is extended to Media: Melville missed his best bet by dismissing Media with second hand mention, for actually in Media he created the hero which the conditions of Mardi demanded. Whether Melville realized this and was too "written out" after his revision which included the political satire, thereby allowing the wrong man, Babbalanja, to make whatever kind of summary statements are made, or whether Melville was not yet ready to tell the story of the Media-Vere hero, is something I cannot determine. Perhaps the proper resolution was killed by a need as simple as Melville's haste to have his sister Augusta get the long overdue fair copy into the hands of the publishers. At any rate, Media should have been, with Taji, a coequal as major protagonist. His re-entry into society, armed with power and insight, would have been the true major resolution instead of one more episode which simply managed to get itself included into the most vital action of the book.

When we first see Media, we see a man who considers himself withdrawn from humanity by being above it. Or, to make the metaphor

more accurate, he is the insulated demi-god who is the center of things, surrounded by, affecting, directing the concentric rings of human classes subject to him, but isolated from humanity by the protective aura of divinity. In a beautiful bit of parallelism, the Media-way is equated at this point with the Taji-way. The reader knows that Taji is the deceitful isolato who presumes falsely to the superhumanity of demi-godship. Media does the same, but in blithe unawareness of his self-deceit and social delusion, believing himself entitled to godship by his origins.

> Entering the temple, as if he felt very much at home, Media disposed these mats so as to form a very pleasant lounge; where he defferentially entreated Yillah to recline. Then deliberately removing the first idol, he motioned me to seat myself in its place. Setting aside the middle one, he quietly established himself in its stead. The displaced ciphers, meanwhile, standing upright before us, and their blank faces looking upon this occasion unusually expressive. As yet, not a syllable as to the meaning of this cavalier treatment of their wooden godships.[184]

Media's detachment from human limitations is again symbolized by the custom in Odo whereby the subjects remove stone walls from the path of the king, demonstrating that he need swerve from nothing and that he is immune to all.

Yet in the midst of the treatment of Odo's religion, reminiscent in style and attitude of Typee, Media is exposed as a man after all, enjoying very much some of the necessary conditions of humanity.

> ...Did deities dine?...Self-sacrilegious demogod that I was, was I going to gluttonize on the very offerings, laid before me in my own sacred fane?...
>
> But hereupon, what saw we, but his cool majesty of Odo tranquilly proceeding to lunch in the temple?
>
> How now? Was Media too a god? Egad, it must be so.

> Else why his image here in the fane, and the original so entirely at his ease, with legs full cosily tucked away under the very altar itself. This put to flight all appalling apprehensions of the necessity of starving to keep up the assumption of my divinity. So without more ado I helped myself right and left...
>
> Our hunger appeased, and Media in token thereof celestially laying his hand upon the appropriate region, we proceeded to quit the inclosure.[185]

This pattern of presentation is the constant manner in which Media is presented: he is the central demigod untouched by mortality in the appearances of origin and bearing. Immediately after the appearance is the insertion of the humanity, the indication that this central man is fooling himself, for he is as human and as subject to the conditions of humanity as anyone else in the book. One aspect of the name Media emerges from the pattern of presentation: within the insular center of Odo's society is the more central reality of the human man in dead center media res.

A similar revelation of Media occurs in Chapter CLI, wherein Media angrily protests that he, a demigod, cannot be conquered by the bottle (the old toper!), rages that Babbalanja should think otherwise, stammers...and passes out in a drunken stupor. This incident, however, displays another of Media's characteristics. The man has a mind and a good one. Although unconscious of his real status, Media has all the necessary equipment for acute human consciousness. He confounds Babbalanja when he is inebriated, so well, in fact, that Mohi cannot believe the king is really drunk.

> Babbalanja rose to his feet, muttering to himself--"Is this assumed, or real? --Can a demi-god be mastered by wine? Yet, the old mythologies make bacchanals of the gods. But he was wondrous keen! He felled me, ere he felled himself."

> "Yoomy, my lord Media is in a very merry mood today," whispered Mohi, "but his counterfeit was not well done. No, no, a bacchanal is not used to be so logical in his cups."[186]

Media's ability to become involved in human controversy and to respond to human emotions discloses his ambivalent position, which lasts up until his education in Serenia. On the one hand he is harsh and dictatorial, as is shown in his treatment of the demagogical old men who come to him to plead for the common right to trial by jury.[187] He is also tyrannical and oblivious to human woe, unsympathetic to human suffering and feelings. He is a real dictator:

> ...The common sort, including serfs, and Helots, war-captives held in bondage, lived in secret places, hard to find. Whence it came, that, to a stranger, the whole isle looked care-free and beautiful. Deep among the ravines and the rocks, these beings lived in noisome caves, lairs for beasts, not human homes; or built them coops of rotten boughs—living trees were banned them—whose mouldy hearts hatched vermin. Fearing infection of some plague, born of this filth, the chiefs of Odo seldom passed that way; and looking round within their green retreats, and pouring out their wine, and plucking from orchards of the best, marvelled how these swine could grovel in their mire, and wear such shallow cheeks. But they offered no sweet homes; from that mire they never sought to drag them out; they open threw no orchard; and intermitted not the mandates that condemned their drudges to a life of deaths...
>
> Now needs it to be said, that Odo was no land of pleasure unalloyed, and plenty without a pause? —Odo, in whose lurking-places infants turned from breasts, whence flowed no nourishment. —Odo, in whose inmost haunts, dark groves were brooding, passing which you heard most dismal cries, and voices cursing Media. There, men were scourged; their crime, a heresy; the heresy, that Media was no demigod. For this they shrieked. Their fathers shrieked before; their fathers, who, tormented, said, "Happy we to groan, that our children's children may be glad." But their children's children howled. Yet these, too, echoed previous generations, and loudly swore, "The pit that's dug for us may prove another's grave."[188]

Again in this passage the motif of origins is introduced: Media's harshness and self-delusion continue the sins of history throughout the generations. The pit may someday enclose the digger. In his delusion of invulnerability and exemption from the sins of human history, Media is the Lear, the Richard II, the Oedipus, who is to learn through loss—in Media's case a realization of humanity which is his loss of status as demigod. In fact, Media goes one better. He does not become the redeemer through the external agency of an Albany, a Henry V, a Theseus, but through the agency of his own force. Media abdicates his other-worldliness and his isolation from humanity whereas Taji abdicates his humanity and races to the other world. Media abdicates the throne and retains the scepter. The Media story, even more than the Babbalanja story (but especially in conjunction with it) is the complement to the Taji story. Like Lear and Oedipus whose loss of sight becomes the gaining of insight, Media's loss of kingship becomes the gaining of true rule and of real completeness. Like Richard II, Media too late becomes aware of his common humanity and vulnerability, and this awareness, added to Media's other attributes, makes him the hero. If there is the stuff of tragedy in Mardi, it inheres in the Media story, for Taji's story is only the first half of tragedy, that of incremental sin with neither purgation nor resolution at the climax.

The ambivalence of Media's divinity-humanity is another definition of the name Media. He is a half-and-half man, not really a god, and not really a complete human being. The reality is

submerged in the midst of appearances, which we have seen as the first definition of the name. Even the description of the isle of Odo becomes an objective correlative for the isle's ruler.

The name Media has yet more connotations. As a ruler, Media is a harsh and immediate actor. As a thinker, while still deluded, as keen as he is, he is a passive follower of circumstance, a middle-of-the-roader. He follows the bland median way and will not become involved in extremes or divergences from the haphazard flow of events which have been good to him because of his origins. He will not disturb his thought with the sins of history, for that would undermine his royal, divine status, a status of which he is acutely aware. To be a centralist, to take things as they come, to disturb nothing with demonized views of the status quo is to give another identification for the name "Media":

> ..."Why, Babbalanja," said Media, "I almost pity you. You are too warm, too warm. Why fever your soul with these things? To no use you mortals wax earnest. No thanks, but curses will you get for your earnestness. You yourself you harm most. Why not take creeds as they come? It is not so hard to be persuaded; never mind about believing...
> "...why think at all? Is it not better for you mortals to clutch error as in a vice, than have your fingers meet in your hand? And to what end your eternal inquisitions? You have nothing to substitute. You say all is a lie; then out with the truth. Philosopher, your devil is but a foolish one, after all. I, a demi-god, never say nay to these things...
> "...Babbalanja, if you have any belief of your own, keep it; but, in Oro's name, keep it secret."[189]

This median way comes as an answer to a speech made by Babbalanja in which Babbalanja finally states the central theme: the otherworld is, but it is not for man. Let man grow and progress in human work and human wisdom and stop chasing the vapor trails of angels'

wings:

> ...Ah! let us Mardians quit this insanity. Let us be content with the theology in the grass and the flower, in seed-time and harvest.[190] Be it enough for us to know that Oro indubitably is. My lord! my lord! sick with the spectacle of the madness of men, and broken with spontaneous doubts, I sometimes see but two things in all Mardi to believe: --that I myself exist, and that I can most happily, or least miserably exist, by the practice of righteousness.[191]

Babbalanja's fevered sincerity is the belief underlying the rejection of the other-world. It is what underlies another "ambiguity" that crops up so often in Melville's pages: that the deepest doubter is the greatest believer; that the facile and orthodox believer is the man of little faith. Man must recognize the existence of Eternity, and, if he is to be human and live, he must reject it as the ultimate goal for human attainment. The facile believer will be convinced of one thing as easily as of another, and will believe or pretend to believe regardless of his own doubts or his own empirical wisdom.[192] When we understand Melville's definition of the other-world as vacuum of Eternity and the completeness of his rejection of and belief in that vacuum, we plumb the profoundest depth of Melville's own great and human devoutness.

Media's demigodship is an apprenticeship for his active humanity. When speaking of power politics, specifically the relationship of England and Ireland, Babbalanja asks, "And may the guardian of an estate also hold custody of the ward, my lord?" Media cuts short Babbalanja's implicit idealistic sense of what <u>should</u> be with an answer of stark realism and understanding of the political exigencies of Mardi. "Ay, if he can. What <u>can</u> be, may be: that's the

creed of demi-gods."[193] Although this answer is not cognizant of the fact that this demigod creed is devoid of direction, is an unoriented pursuit of power per se, the answer reveals Media's primary characteristics: great intelligence, an appreciation of the power-values of the world, and heartlessness. Were he not the haphazard follower of the median way, relying upon his origins, he would be the prime Machiavel.

But as the voyage continues, Media is worn down by the torments of humanity and his heart grows and greatens--just as Taji's harden's and shrinks. After the visit to Vivenza, Media, still the dictator, lets slip a remark (he is drunk again) that reveals he is no longer totally unconscious of the plight of the subject in his relation to the ruler, or that the harsh qualities of the ruler can and will endure only as long as there is dissension and war. Media is anything but blind to external realities. "Fools, fools!" cried Media, "these tribes hate us kings; yet know not that Peace is War against all kings. We seldom are undone by spears, which are our ministers. --This wine is strong."[194]

In Chapter CLXXII the change in Media becomes more apparent. He dreams that he has returned to Odo only to find that he has to prove himself as a demigod and king. There is as yet no real sign that Media will side with common humanity, but there is every indication that his exposure to the wailings of Babbalanja, the hopes of Yoomy, and the miseries of mankind seen during the voyage, have begun to have a telling effect and are undermining the delusions of infallibility and independence. When Media hears that on the isle

of Hooloomooloo the corpse of an ape has been confused with the corpse of a king, he maintains a thoughtful silence—no longer does he shout out against anything that detracts from kingship as he did when he witnessed the revolution in Franko.

During the visit with King Abrazza, it is Media who champions the right of Babbalanja's devil to speak his view of woe—even though Media's own peer, Abrazza, is estranged by the realities Azzageddi utters. It is the first time that Media actually sides with the subject, the diabolized human, rather than with the ruler and demigod. There is even another indication that there is hope for Media. When the company discusses Lombardo's Koztanza, that epic is associated with great heart, great truth, great humanity. Abrazza, characteristically, has never read it. But surprising all, Media rises and says, "And I have read it through nine times." Babbalanja, starting at this unexpected disclosure, exclaims, "Ah, Lombardo! this must make thy ghost glad!"[195]

Finally, on the Isle of Serenia, Media experiences his full conversion. Although the Serenian episode results in behavior out of proportion to the stimulus (one old man talks and all are miraculously convinced) the behavior itself is prepared for: whatever the old Serenian says about Serenia is what all the voyagers but Taji have long wanted to hear. But the conversion is disappointingly cheap and easy after all the talk and incident that led up to the Serenian episode.[196] In his conversion, Media renounces his delusion and recognizes the brotherhood of man, subject to the limitations of mortality. "No more demigod," cried Media, "but a

subject to our common chief. No more shall dismal cries be heard from Odo's groves. Alma, I am thine."[197] Insight has given Media a human heart. (It is highly significant that the redemption figure [Alma is cast in the lineaments of Christ] is named Alma--Soul, the transformation and murder of which we have watched in the Taji story.) Unlike Taji, the old Serenian makes the qualities of Christ, or soul, compatible with earthly felicity, not with what orthodox man believes to be dogma issued from the otherworld. Like every bit of all phenomena, Alma is the son of Oro, but he is not other-worldly: he is the human soul, the all-embracing collective consciousness and virtue of the total race. The Serenians, Alma's most sincere followers, insist on human values. In fact they would stand by human values rather than by Alma if there could be such a choice: "No, brother!" says the old Serenian, "Right-reason, and Alma are the same; else Alma, not reason would we reject."[198] The anti-absolutism, the rejection of dogmatic revealation is the final statement that humanity itself can gain heaven only on this earth and only by its own efforts. Again and again and again the choice, power, action, cause, and result are placed in this world. So Melville's use of God is not really inconsistent. When he suggests God in man he means that in earthly endeavor man must be his own God, and the reference points to man's most creative and wonderful possibilities. When he refers to God as a metaphysical concept, he refers to the vacuum of eternity, the other-world which is Time. Media becomes the true human when he renounces association with the metaphysical God to align himself

with the human God, the total humanity of Alma-Christ. And when we last hear of Media, he is the complete man. He does not flee, but fights against the sins of history, whose forces are led by the vengeful orthodox institutions of man as represented by the sons of Aleema. He will try to create a re-ordered and truly human state out of chaos, or he will die in the attempt.

> Arrived at Odo, Media had been met with yells. Sedition was in arms, and to his beard defied him. Vain all concessions then. Foremost stood the three pale sons of him, whom I had slain, to gain the maiden lost. Avengers from the first hour we had parted on the sea, they had drifted on my track; survived starvation; and lived to hunt me round all Mardi's reef; and now at Odo, that last threshold, waited to destroy; or there, missing the revenge they sought, still swore to hunt me round Eternity.
>
> Behind the avengers, raged a stormy mob, invoking Media to renounce his rule. But one hand waving like a pennant above the smoke of some sea-fight, straight through that tumult Media sailed serene: the rioters parting before him, as wild waves before a prow inflexible.
>
> A haven gained, he turned to Mohi and the minstrel: —"Oh, friends! after our long companionship, hard to part! But henceforth, for many moons, Odo will prove no home for old age, or youth. In Serenia only, will ye find the peace ye seek; and thither ye must carry Taji, who else must soon be slain, or lost. Go: release him from the thrall of Hautia. Outfly the avengers, and gain Serenia. Reck not of me. The state is tossed in storms; and where I stand, the combing billows must break over. But among all noble souls, in tempest-time, the headmost man last flies the wreck. So here in Odo will I abide, though every plank breaks up beneath me. And then, —great Oro! let the king die clinging to the keel! Farewell!"[199]

On one level, the three avengers are recognizable as the Furies. In keeping with the major themes of Mardi, there can be no deus ex machina from heaven, no Athena to appear to calm the troubled waters of the state. Man alone must provide for himself. Media does not withdraw now, but true to his new and complete stature, sends poetry

and history beyond the tumult, while he stays immersed in society to fight the Furies and the chaos engendered by the sins of the generations, sins which he himself had helped perpetuate. The name Media takes on its final meaning: the man who remains actively in media res of society; the new center who tries to reorganize about himself a new order from the chaos that howls around him.[200] Youth and age, poetry and history are unsafe in the chaotic state where past and future are suspended in the uncertainty of the reorganizing present. It will be in retrospect that the result can be recorded and placed in song and legend—a new and different pean to that which was celebrated on Flozella-a-Nina. And neither Media, Odo, nor Mardi could re-emerge from the chaos in the same pattern in which it entered—if Media is successful, there will be the cyclic swing forward to the golden age, and there will be a new mythos, a new history, a new youth, a new man who will be recorded and sung. Either that, either all active and earthly Yillahs, or else the murder of mankind by the three avengers. Media is the means—the media—which will reinvigorate the earth.

Mardi is too sprawling a book to be used as a good classroom text for an introduction to Melville. But for the student who would understand Melville well, Mardi is the focal book. It sets out on the tentative path of Typee's symbols and themes. It travels to new meridians of method, motif, and meaning, and it incorporates in its charted chartlessness all the basic patterns of the books which follow it. The social and sociological views of Redburn and Whitejacket are inherent in Mardi. The gods, angels, devils, and people

of Pierre are still growing on the allegorical archipelago. The call for the theme of Billy Budd is first sounded in Mardi. And Mardi sets up all the conditions for voyage into oceans of man's soul and soul's God, into the vast and swelling waters which hide the rushing form of the great white whale.

Clearly, in Mardi Melville does not relegate man's struggle only to philosophical and ethical considerations. The description of the serfs in Odo, the starving people in Abrazza's domain, the constant threat of revolution and further revenge, the description of the Chartist march on Parliament as the hammer-and-sickle bearing workers who are betrayed by agents of the ruler,[201] all show a sharp awareness of the social and economic forces working in the ferment of history and of the racial consciousness. The allegorical Mardi of Melville is by no means divorced from the world which saw the Paris Commune, the rise of Marxism, the sharpening of class conflicts, and the sincere attempts of earnest thinkers and deep divers on all sides of every ideology to find a resolution of tensions in a planet breaking into Mardian camps and fragments. In terms of the world against which Melville postulated his book in the day of Mars, the structure of Mardi is excellent. But the failure of the book only highlights the problem of the artist in his need to understand that recognition of the difference between art and life by no means demands a denial of reality or a need to ignore contemporary issues.

The final result of the dark-white, primitive-western tensions is a picture of a man whose divine reason could order all the other

faculties or could be destroyed and made to serve evil ends by the other faculties.[202] Yet as any Shakespearean tragedy indicates, the other faculties are also tremendously important when their roles must be called into action, just like Samoa's knife, which he put off only for "suitable occasions." Like Shakespeare whom he idolized, Melville was also searching for the Complete Man, but not against the background of absolutes which the Elizabethan dramatist was able to assume for himself and his audience. The result of quest is the rejection of those absolutes. Melville was acutely aware of his modernity, and he conducted his search in an increasingly scientific and naturalistic world of the nineteenth century. He took his symbols from the nineteenth century expansionism which set the white race to the global exploitation of the dark. Whether Melville saw plunder of planet, or plunder of race in the colonial parts of the world, or plunder of human happiness in the hell of nineteenth century mechanized industry, he saw the opposition of forces as the fragmentation of his own Mardi-world, and he sought to demonstrate the necessity for a unity of human heart, power, and consciousness. The willingness to conduct his search by means of symbols born of his own culture is what made Melville such a great writer. It seems to me that this willingness as much or more than any rejection of Calvinism, as much or more than any personal, family reversals, is what enabled Melville to reach conclusions so much more far-reaching and enduring than anything produced by his contemporaries. His contemporaries talked about beneficent cosmic tendencies. Or they talked about a man's first concern being his own soul. Whether apologists for a growing

industrialism, defenders of a middle-aged genteel tradition, or the transcendental avant guarde, Melville's contemporaries all ideologized their positions in terms of natural plans or universal design that is anthropocentric. That is, the idealism of the fountain, Plato, transmogrified and intensified by the middle and Renaissance ages, continued through the rationalism of the eighteenth century and did not really begin to die (if it ever has) until it reached the century of technology. The nineteenth century was really the first time that a Marx and a Carnegie, a Whitelaw Reid and an Emerson could exist within the same fifty year span, and whatever clothing language gave to ideology, there was an increasing need for an epistemology and an ontology based upon pragmatism and empiricism. Melville did not dismiss the railroads, whaleships, finance companies and factories, and he talked not only about the qualities of evil on the cosmos, but about man's prime responsibility to his century and his society. There is literally a world of significant idea that separates the literate nineteenth century self-helpers, optimists and individualists (as disparate and vague a grouping as it is) from the man who reasoned not from an ideal but according to the facts of his seen world, the man who rejected academic idealism, the man who summed up his contemporaneousness in the statement that a whaling ship was his Harvard and his Yale. When the reader interprets a single character like Hautia, for instance, he finds one of the many reasons why Melville rejected the boundless confidence of transcendentalism.

<u>Mardi</u> is not artistically successful. But it marks the major

direction in Melville's rich voyage, a path which has the unnerving tendency to drive straight on into the most pressing problems of our own century in our own real Mardi. And together with the symbolism, this applicable incisiveness marks the failure of Mardi as a great one.

NOTES

1. The same implication is strong in some of Melville's letters -- an implication which states his cognizance that his primary motivation for writing, at least at first, was money as well as a full heart ((remember the Koxtanza discussion in Mardi). In a letter to Evert Duyckinck, datelined London, Dec [sic] 14, 49, Melville says, "I am glad of [Redburn] -- for it puts money into an empty purse. But I hope I shall never write such a book again -- tho' when a poor devil writes with duns all round him, & looking over the back of his chair -- and perching on his pen & diving in his inkstand -- like the devils about St. Anthony -- what can you expect of that poor devil? -- what but a beggarly 'Redburn!' And when he attempts anything higher -- God help him & save him! for it is not with a hollow purse as with a hollow balloon -- for a hollow purse makes the poet sink -- witness Mardi. [See above for the poet's sinking,] But we that write and print have all our books predestinated -- for me, I shall write such things as the Great Publisher of Mankind ordained ages before he published 'The World'..." And again, in a letter about the "Whale" to Hawthorne, datelined Pittsfield, June, 1851, Melville wrote, "Dollars damn me; and the malicious devil is forever grinning in upon me, holding the door ajar...What I feel most moved to write, that is banned, -- it will not pay. Yet, altogether, write the other way I cannot." Both letters are quoted in Willard Thorp, Herman Melville (New York, 1938), 376, 390.

2. The letter to Hawthorne quoted in footnote 1, above, continues, "...write the other way I cannot, so the product is a final hash, and all my books are botches."

3. Besides nn. 1 and 2 above, there is also the significance attendant on the fact that Melville himself suggested changes and deletions in the "missionary" sections of Typee and Omoo so that the books would sell more copiously.

4. Later, when Herman was experiencing the torment of his own frustrations over his manner of earning a living, and when he was again verbalizing his artistic vision in poetry, his wife Elizabeth wrote to her brother, Lemuel Shaw, Jr., in a letter datelined New York, 19 June 1877, "I have just written...about rooms and hope we shall be able to compass a six weeks absence from New York -- the only doubt of which is the being able to leave Herman alone so long, in his state of mental health, with a free conscience -- I shall try to bring about some suitable arrangement and he will have two weeks vacation out of it..." MS. Am. 188 #150, The Eleanor Metcalf Collection of Melville Papers, Harvard College Library (Houghton).

5. This does not mean that White Jacket and Redburn are not good or true books. They are, on the contrary, much better than most critics have credited -- Melville's disparaging remarks about those books as potboilers have been taken too often at face value without examination. What I think Melville would mean by the potboiler is a book with a readily available narrative level that would continue the reader's interest at least on the level of diary-adventure, so that the book would sell. Inescapably, however, he did invest that level with submerged complexities and profundities. It is this artistic inability to stay away from the "something more" that is intended in Melville's statement that "altogether write the other way I cannot." Simply, he seems to have confused heavy writing with heavy profundities. The strange thing is that Melville -- of all men! -- seemed to have been taken in by an appearance: the nineteenth century emotionality and heaviness that seemed to think that great art had to appear profound at first blush. I think that Melville's books can be divided into three large genres according to their narrative levels. First, there is the "just plain story" group, which would include Typee, Omoo, Redburn, and White Jacket. Although except for Omoo they are anything but "just plain story," they all have the appearance of simple, chronological narrative. Despite the fact that they are greater than Melville himself realized, their surface would make them "beggarly." The second group is the "obvious-profounds" in which I include Mardi, Moby-Dick, Pierre, and The Confidence Man. They all have the characteristics of the "crazy" narrative level which obviously leads to greater depths, so much so, that the narrative itself tends to become thick, opaque, and heavy. It is about these books that Melville cared most as having the appearance as well as the actuality of art. The third group is the most modern, largely because in this group Melville's stylistic techniques have become refined. It is the group of "delicates," whose narrative levels are uncomplicated and light, but which offer unmistakeable and tantalizing hints of hidden symbol. In terms of craftsmanship alone, I think that they are Melville's best. With a narrative level less heavy than the "obvious-profounds," the more exquisite surfaces of the "delicates" offer hints much more discernible than those in the "just plain story" group. I can best define the three groups, as I sense them, by analogy to the madrigal, the romantic symphony, and the string quartet. The best representatives of the"delicates" are Benito Cereno and Billy Budd. Aesthetically, they are so redolent of twentieth rather than nineteenth century critical sensibilities that it is another tribute to Melville's greatness that he wrote them when he did.

6. I have tried to fit the narrative action of Omoo to larger symbolic meanings, but have found no really consistent patterns of action, imagery, or symbol with which to work. It may be a cry of "sour grapes," but I do not think it can be done without a twisting and forcing of the book by the critic's ingenuity. Finally, I had to leave Omoo alone (perhaps to the relief of the reader and Melville's ghost) admitting that Melville did write one book that is chiefly a picaresque adventure story. To be sure, there are hints about mind

and body, land and sea, communication and isolation, motifs like the hunt and the search, but they do not integrate.

7. For some of the approaches to the "break" in the story, see Melville in the South Seas, 343-344, where Luther S. Mansfield's explanation of change in story is presented from his Doctoral dissertation, Herman Melville, Author and New Yorker, 1844-1851 (University of Chicago, 1936). This explanation is largely the same as that presented by Leon Howard in his excellent study, Herman Melville (Los Angeles, 1951), 112-132; and by William Gilman in Melville's Early Life and Redburn (New York, 1951), 164-167; and by Merrell Davis in Melville's Mardi: A Chartless Voyage (New Haven, 1952), 66: "In brief, during these first months of 1848, Melville was experimenting with a whole range of new voices which the opening world of books helped to provide." Davis, whose book is the only published full length study of Mardi, divides Mardi into sections differing from mine: (1) The Narrative Beginning, (2) The Romantic Interlude, and (3) The Travelogue Satire. For pedagogical purposes of looking at the narrative level, Mr. Davis' divisions are more admirably suited. However, they do not illuminate the divisions of the symbolic and structural centers of the book.

8. Matthiessen believes that it is the symbolism which kills the allegory, and he is certainly not alone in this view. See American Renaissance, 384-385. See also Newton Arvin, "Melville's Mardi," AQ, II (Spring, 1950), 71-81; Stephen A. Larrabee, "Melville against the World," SAQ, XXXIV (1935), 410-418; "Melville's Journey," TLS (Jan. 12, 1946), 18.

9. See R. P. Blackmur, "The Craft of Herman Melville," VA.QR, XIV (1938), 266-282; and Arvin, "Melville's Mardi."

10. Leon Howard's and Merrell Davis' studies of Melville's reworkings show that before he gor very far into the plans for Mardi, he knew that he would commit himself to the allegory. Had he not wanted the narrative beginning, he could have deleted it if he felt that it bore little relation to the rest of the book. Or he could have condensed it. Yet Davis does not draw the same conclusion: "The apparent inconsistency in addition to the perfunctoriness of Jarl's dismissal from book would seem to indicate that the author as well as the Narrtor did not know what was to happen to his travellers when they reached the paradisiacal islands to the west." (Melville's Mardi, 109.) But this objection does not consider Jarl's symbolic value. However Davis shows cognizance of that value in the very same paragraph: "As Evert Duyckinck was to suggest in his review of Mardi, 'the unphilosophic friend Jarl' of the first volume was apparently not wanted in the learned company with whom the Narrator toured the islands of Mardi." Davis also hints at the

unity of the narrative beginning and the allegory: "Aside from the obvious device of chronology, the most significant structural device is the reiteration in almost every chapter of the theme of present and future danger." (110) Without ever pinpointing his objection in terms of the relationship of narrative level to symbol, Davis sees that the narrative level is not ordered and selected to fit the symbolism. He points out that many of the visits to particular islands are unecessary (196-197). For a study which does find symbolic meaning in all the islands, see Nathalia Wright, "The Head and Heart in Melville's Mardi," PMLA, LXVI (1951), 351-362.

11. Mardi, L. C. Page ed. (Boston, 1950), 75. All references are to this text. While certainly not the best text, it is the most available.

12. Mardi, 88.

13. Mardi, 25.

14. Mardi, 63.

15. Mardi, 118.

16. Mardi, 576-577.

17. One critic finds that the significance of the name of the whaling ship, Arcturion, dispells the "break" by uniting the "factual" beginning to the satiric design of the whole book. "None of the myths in which Arcturus figures...seems applicable to the situations in the book. But there is an association to be made with the name, and one with which we may be sure Melville was familiar, which also provides a clue as to what he intended." From 1840-1842, the Duyckincks published a magazine called Arcturus. The prologue to the first issue reads in part, "Neither by assuming this designation do we vouch for the literary character of the inhabitants of Arcturus as patrons of the present undertaking; it is sufficient that Arcturus is a star that shines high and brightly, and looks down with a keen glance on the errors, follies, and mal-practices of men."(Gordon Mills, "The Significance of 'Arcturus' in Mardi," AL, XIV (1942), 159-161.)

18. Besides having a real symbolic function, the introductory story is also a literary come-on. Davis, on page 75 of his book, quotes a letter from Melville to the publisher, John Murray: "Only forbear to prejudge it. — It opens like a tue narrative — like Omoo for example, on shipboard — & the romance and poetry of the thing thence grow continually, till it becomes a story wild enough I assure you & with meaning too." Anderson's study of Melville in the south seas shows that Melville lied to his publisher when he presented his books as true histories, which is all Murray was interested in underwriting. Melville did this purely and simply to be published and get money. He was quite willing to arrange his books so that they would sell — in

fact his correspondence with his publishers shows that he was quite anxious to please, almost desparate to sell. (See nn. 1, 2, and 3 above.) For instance, Melville, who was so irate about injustices in the south seas himself suggested that his view of those injustices be cut so that his books might sell. "He also found time to sell 'The Story of Toby' to John Murray for fifty pounds and to try to persuade him that an expurgated edition [of Typee] might be profitable in England." (Howard, Herman Melville, 100.) And again, "Yet Omoo was more sever on the missionaries than Typee had been, for, as Evert Duyckinck wrote his brother George, Melville owed them a 'sailor's grudge,' which he paid off in his accounts of Tahiti. He was not willing to pay it off, however, at any considerable expense to himself...he decided to drop three of the earlier chapters entirely..." (Howard, 102.) I do not doubt that Melville extended the "factual" adventure of Mardi because of his strong concern with selling his books.

19. Those chapters are XXXIX-LV, LVIII, LXI, LXII, LXIV, LXXXVIII, C, CI, CXVIII, CXXXIV, CXLI, CXLIX, CLXXIII, CLXXXIX-CXCV.

20. Those chapters are XXIX, XL, XLI-LIV, LVIII, LXI, LXII, LXIV.

21. This inverse parallel to Taji's development is really the positive thematic material of Mardi.

22. Mardi, 172. Italics mine.

23. American Renaissance, 384-386. Also see Gilman, Melville's Early Life and Redburn, 246.

24. However, Matthiessen is not wholly correct when he says that Melville "...was not in control...and was often whirled about by his abstractions. You can hardly construct a coherent view of man and society from the many counterstatements that are made..." (381.) Matthiessen, in what is otherwise one of the best studies ever made of Melville's work, makes the mistake of equating now Taji, now Azzageddi, now Babbalanja with Melville. In such a tacit equation there is certainly neither coherence nor symbolic unity. However, in the same passage just quoted, Matthiessen's critical acumen pulls the correct conclusion from partly erroneous premises: "...but you can follow the urgent drives of [Melville's] mind in the direction in which they were aiming."

25. Mardi, 526-527. That the discussion of the Koztanza reflects directly upon Melville's own creation was obvious at least to Melville's own family. Augusta, who finished the "fair copy" of Mardi, wrote to Melville's wife, "Mardi's a book...! Ah, my own Koztanza! child of many prayers! Oro's blessings on thee." Augusta Melville to Elizabeth Melville, New York, January 27, 1849. Quoted by Davis, 96.

26. Matthiessen, 386-387.

27. Mardi, 525.

28. Mardi, 524.

29. Mardi, 529.

30. Mardi, 529.

31. The a, i, and o signify the petty detail more than once. These same letters describe the girls of Pimminee (Chapter CXXIX, "A, I, and O.")

32. Mardi, 530.

33. "Melville was...anticipating the critical disapproval he was already beginning to expect. Yet he did not mean to give the impression that writing was simply an uncritical outpouring of any author's mind: 'Oh! could Mardi but see how we work,' he exclaimed..." Howard, 128.

34. Davis is one of the few critics to indicate a difference between Melville and the Narrator. See Melville's Mardi, 103, 94 n3, 107, and 107 n1.

35. Mardi, 21-22.

36. Melville's only alternative would be to show that Taji is "writing" Mardi as a running journal, while the events happen. But even this would be impossible for the last three pages of the book.

37. Mardi, 229.

38. Mardi, 251.

39. Mardi, 267. There is a possibility that Melville was creating an extreme subtlety in differentiating between a total, symbolic "I" character and Taji as the dominant, symbolic part of the "I." But to demonstrate this would be sophistry and ingenuity, for Taji exhibits essentially the same characteristics before and after he becomes a god. Indeed, such a differentiation, if Melville's or the critics, would be an added bit of preciousness and obscurantism rather than added illumination and communication.

40. Mardi, 580.

41. Mardi, 580.

42. For historical background for the events seen in the "actual" islands, see Davis, 79-94. Davis suggests (94, n 3) that after the visit to the "actual" islands is concluded, "the beginning of the voyage to

the fictitious 'world of mind' " is commenced. This is not tenable. The islands after the "actual" group are no different in quality than the islands before that group. Doxodox's island, for instance, or Abrazza's island, which come after the "actual" group, are no more or less symbolic of "mind" and no more or less symbolic in any way than the islands of Mondoldo or Valapee, which come before the "actual" group. I maintain that the "actual" islands are simply inserted right in the midst of the allegorical islands as vehicle for specific political satire, and that the entire book of Mardi, having as it does its symbolic center in Taji's story, is the exploration of the world of will and mind in the actual world. The "actual" islands were inserted after the completion of the first draft of Mardi. It is my contention that Melville added them for artistic as well as self-indulgent reasons, because by this time Melville must have been seeing the theme of Mardi in every leaf, rock, and event, and the actual islands were perfect cases in point, taken from the recognizable world, which satirically illustrated the allegorical behavior patterns of the manofwar world — behavior patterns which preclude Yillah's existence. The very repetition with which Melville says that Yillah is not here...or here...or here is the method by which Melville ties the "actual" islands to the allegorical quest. Davis himself recognizes this: "Thus the satirical representation of many of the islands and their inhabitants exposes obvious reasons for Yillah's not being discovered among them." (197.) For the composition of Mardi, particularly the later inclusion of the "actual" islands, see Davis, 81-94, and Howard, 112-113, 122-129. For the range of satire in the "actual" islands, see Davis, 151-159.

43. Mardi, 486.

44. Mardi, 487.

45. Davis gallantly attempts to suggest that such chapters are not extraneous. After giving sources for some of the extraneous incident, he says, "All of these incidents, though often introduced as digressions ('But all this is an episode made up of digressions'), are appropriate embellishments for the westward voyage in the Parki." (121.) However, just why and how these "embellishments" are "appropriate" is not explained — I doubt if it can be. Again, Davis says of Melville's discussion of phosphorescence, "This discussion, of its main outline and in many of its verbal phrases, follows Bennett's essay in his Whaling Voyage on 'Marine Phosphorescence and Its Dependence on Animal Matter.' The narrator's account, however, is not a dull recital of facts, but a lively and informal conversation about the phosphorescence of the sea, with the information of the source adjusted to the dramatic and humorous purposes of the Narrator. The whole chapter affords an appropriate conclusion, whether or not it was so intended, to the first part of the voyage to the western isles..." (123-124.) But again, more

must be attributed to Davis' generosity than to Melville's selectivity. Liveliness and informality cannot possibly be a serious justification for inclusion of material per se. Just what the "source adjusted to the dramatic and humorous purposes of the Narrator" means, or how the source is so "adjusted," or what the dramatic and humorous purposes are, are left unexplained, as is the judgment that the entire chapter is an "appropriate conclusion" to the narrative beginning.

46. R. P. Blackmur goes so far as to insist that Melville "made only the loosest efforts to tie his sermons into his novels; he was quite content if he could see that his novels illustrated his sermons and was reasonably content if they did not..." "The Craft of Herman Melville," Va. QR, XIV (1938), 281.

47. Mardi, 547-9.

48. Davis records a similar criticism of the dryly mechanical structure. "An attempt is also made to indicate a sea-passage... but there is no consistent system of keeping time...Such indications of the passage of time, however, appear most often as mere devices for giving an immediate time setting to the events or conversations of the moment." (144.)

49. Mardi, 444.

50. Mardi, 3.

51. Mardi, 3.

52. For one possible, but not very revealing explanation of Taji's name, see Davis, 69.

53. Mardi, 5.

54. See the unpublished Doctoral dissertation by J. R. Baird, Herman Melville and Primitivism (Yale, 1947). Baird stresses the Golden Age as the basis for primitivism correctly enough, although he mistakes Melville's concern with primitives for primitivism. Melville cannot really be considered a primitivist unless we extend the term to include any one who uses primitive characters, regardless of purpose, in his writing. As the motif of unconsciousness shows, primitive life is no goal for Melville, and the primitive man is no closer to the ideal, however defined. Primitive man (and this is most manifest in Billy Budd) is simply closer to the possibility of practising Christian idealism of the heart.

55. Mardi, 317.

56. Mardi, 6-7.

57. Davis points out that the captain of the Arcturion is the only one in the early books who is not a brute. The reason for this is that Taji's legalities are made yet more untenable as the motivating or justifying factor for the quest.

58. Mardi, 6.

59. Mardi, 367-368.

60. Mardi, 15.

61. The predisposition which prompts the quester, as an integral part of the Melvillean story, generally has been overlooked.

62. Note, for instance, the reactions of the unconverted Media.

63. Mardi, 22.

64. Mardi, 77.

65. See below,164 ff.

66. Mardi, 119-120.

67. See davis, 126-127.

68. See Robert Penn Warren's "Introduction" to Farewell to Arms, Scribner ed. (New York, 1953). This critical work is cited here because the discussion of the isolated hero offers many analogous insights into the plight of Melville's protagonists.

69. Mardi, 97. It is true that the savage Annatoo also stood night watch, but her actions have nothing to do with the unconsciousness of Samoa or the land qualities of Jarl. Her action is prompted by pride. For Annatoo as a burlesque of Yillah and a foreshadowing of Hautia, see below,

70. Mardi, 97.

71. Mardi, 10.

72. Mardi, 29-30.

73. Mardi, 30-31.

74. Mardi, 10.

75. Mardi, 10.

76. Mardi, 11.

77. "True to his calling, the Skyeman was very illiterate..." 11-12.

78. Mardi, 12.

79. Mardi, 30-31.

80. Mardi, 31.

81. Mardi, 12.

82. See Mardi, 12-13, for Jarl and Taji's chummying. For Taji it is almost all take and little give.

83. Mardi, 30.

84. Mardi, 37-38.

85. Mardi, 29.

86. Mardi, 37.

87. Mardi, 37.

88. Mardi, 38-39.

89. Mardi, 38.

90. Mardi, Ch. XV.

91. Mardi, 47.

92. Mardi, 52.

93. Mardi, 48.

94. Mardi, 98.

95. Mardi, 130.

96. Mardi, 272.

97. Mardi, 271. Note again that the quester bends the followers' will to suit his own. Taji has no assurance whatever of the brevity or success of his search.

98. Mardi, 271-272.

99. For the view that Jarl and Samoa have no real place in Mardi beyond the mechanical demands of suspense, see Davis, 119.

100. Mardi, 58.

101. Mardi, 130-131.

102. Mardi, 58.

103. For Melville, earthly happiness depends upon much more than sexual happiness alone, which is the one thing Samoa and Annatoo do share together, visiting eachother as they do whenever their needs dictate.

104. Mardi, 89.

105. For the view that the Parki episode has no real connection with the symbolic structure, see Davis: "Aside from its relationship to the 'Narrative Beginning,' the whole incident of the Parki is a separate narrative with a plan of its own, whose fifth and last act ends with the sinking of the brigantine." (117.) "As part of its immediate narrative sequence, the story of the Parki explains the presence of the brigantine and gives an entertaining sketch of its native occupants. Beyond this, in the narrative sequence of the whole book, the story has no function. No further references are made to these incidents. In addition, Samoa and Annatoo, who are introduced through the arrival of the Parki, soon disappear." (118.) Mr. Davis overlooks the disparity between the narrative and symbolic levels, which is the real basis for his objections. Nor is he the only Melville scholar to attribute to "entertainment" those sections which have no immediately apparent function. "Entertainment" in the sense in which the word "entertaining" is intended in the quotation above, is the last basis I should choose for a demonstration of Melville's work or worth.

106. Mardi, 67.

107. Mardi, 73.

108. Jarl is a distinctively Nordic name, and the man is referred to by his place of origin: the Skyeman. Samoa is distinctively a South Pacific name, and Samoa is referred to by his place of origin: the Upoluan.

"Jarl hailed from the Isle of Skye...Hence, they often called him the Skyeman..." (This passage continues on to relate Jarl with the Nordic. Mardi, 10.)

"But no more of Samoa; only this: that his name had been given him by a sea-captain; to whom it had been suggested by the native designation of the islands to which he belonged; the Saviian or Samoan group, otherwise known as the Navigator Islands. The island of Upolua, one of that cluster, claiming the special honor of his birth, as Corsica does Napoleon's, we shall occasionally hereafter speak of Samoa as the Upoluan, by which title he most loved to be called." (Mardi, 86.)

109. Mardi, 86.

110. "Samoa's aspect, sleeping at the tiller, was almost appalling. His large opal eyes were half open; and turned toward the light of the binnacle, gleamed between the lids like bars of flame. And added to all, was his giant stature and savage lineaments." (96.)

111. I do not intend to make these Capitalized Figures explicatory constants for Melville. They are simply convenient approximations from our own age and are used for illustration. Also, it is interesting to note that in his physicality, Samoa is the Soldier, always being likened to martial figures -- Nelson, Napoleon, etc/,and feeling immediate kinship with the "foot-soldiers" in Aleema's canoe.

112. Mardi, 121.

113. Mardi, 122.

114. I cannot prove that Melville was familiar with the medieval tradition of pearl as symbol of spotless pure being, and as an emblem of the purity of heavenly ideal. The same symbol occurs in Renaissance literature, which Melville did read. Moreover, the pearl symbol has a long literary and exegetical tradition which need not be limited to the medievals. See Don Cameron Allen, "Symbolic Color in the Literature of the English Renaissance," PQ, XV (1936), 81-92; also Allen's "Arthur's Diamond Shield in The Faerie Queen," JEGP, XXXVI (1937), 234-243.

115. For an account of Taji as the positive actor and of Yillah as "beauty and mystery and passion," see Stephen A. Larrabee, "Melville against the World," So. Atl. Q., XXXIV (1935), 410-418. For one of the traditionally accepted views of Yillah as chaste innocence and of Melville as the man afraid of experience, particularly sexual experience, see F. I. Carpenter, "Puritans Preferred Blondes," NEQ, IX (1936), 253-272.

116. See Davis, 197-199.

117. When speaking of Yillah as quest-object for all the voyagers, I constantly use terms like "astraea" and "Duessa." While such terms are not completely verbally substantiated in Mardi's text, they are good analogous terms for purposes of illustration. I think it is certain that the Astraea and Fairy Queen stories are implied in Mardi as well as is the Faustus story. It is significant that Melville had read Spenser carefully before he began Mardi, and that he increasingly discovered Renaissance writers and read them with startling perceptions (particularly Shakespeare). He found in those writers standards and ideals which were tailormade for his themes, and his mind constantly went back to them. For a good discussion of the Astraea ideal, which becomes highly pertinent to Melville, see Marjorie Hope Nicolson, The Breaking of the Circle (Cambridge, 1948), passim., and Francis Yates, "Queen Elizabeth as Astraea," Journal of the Warburg

and Courtauld Institutes, X (1947), 27-82. For Spenser material, see Nathalia Wright, "A Note on Melville's Use of Spenser: Hautia and the Bower of Bliss," AL, XXIV (1952), 83-85; and Leon Howard, "Melville and Spenser -- A Note on Criticism," MLN, XLVI (1931), 291-292.

118. One of the very best thematic analyses of Melville is Robert Penn Warren's "Melville the Poet," KR, VIII (1946), 208-223. Mr. Warren sees the "fundamental ironical dualities of existence," the relativity of one's own truth to the Truth, the irony of unanticipated consequences which make impossible an absolute definition of Good and Bad. In Melville's poetry of the Civil War, Warren finds the underlying key to the divergent views of Mohi, Babbalanja, and Yoomy -- that is, the meaninglessness of official Truth and official Celebration to those enlightened by the bullet or the whale or the demon.

119. For Yillah as "Ultimate Truth," see Tyrus Hillway, "Taji's Quest for Certainty," AL, XVIII (1946), 27-34.

120. See Davis, 184-190.

121. Mardi, 566.

122. Mohi's mind is the least metaphysical of the group. I cannot attempt to make of Mohi more of a searcher than he appears to be, or to make of his ideal a less pedestrian goal than it appears to be. Actually, he is associated with a search for ideal mostly by virtue of the fact that he is one of the characters joined in the search for Yillah. But it is interesting that as the man most dispirited by mention of death, Mohi speaks of death in images recalling voyage. See Mardi, 548-549. See also Davis, 166-173.

123. See Davis, 173-184.

124. Mardi, 576.

125. Davis sees the inclusiveness of Yillah's meaning and the error of equating Yillah with one particular thing only, as Hillway, Larrabee, Carpenter, and others have done. Yet specific qualities must be given to the component parts of Yillah's over-all definition. In the selection of King, Poet, Historian and Philosopher, in addition to the wide range of islands visited, and the addition of Jarl and Samoa, Melville presents a group representative of all humanity. The total meaning of Yillah is the goal of general, unspecialized man, and the point of the relativity of Yillah's meanings is to illustrate the need for human completeness in order that the goal be attained on earth.

126. Mardi, 362.

127. Thus too, the themes of appearance and reality, of Time, of cultural relativism, etc., etc., are all one and the same. In this sense Mardi is an artistic success, for the symbolic structure and the major theme are one and the same.

128. Mardi, 129.

130. Mardi, 130.

131. Mardi, 144.

132. Mardi, 112. In Mardi the bird imagery is almost always associated with the otherworld. It is a bird in the heavens that first stirs Taji's restlessness to a frenzy; Yillah's companion is a snow white bird that flies away, up to the heavens; it is one of the snow white sea-birds with which Aleema's craft is at first confused; when Taji forgets Yillah long enough to touch Hautia, a dead bird drops down from the sky.

133. Mardi, 113.

134. Mardi, 115-116.

135. Mardi, 114.

136. Mardi, 115.

137. Mardi, 115-116.

138. The unmistakeable parallels between Ardair and Maramma show that they are the same.

139. See Davis, 132.

140. Mardi, 126-127.

141. For a similar view, see George C. Homans, "The Dark Angel: The Tragedy of Herman Melville," NEQ, V (1932), 699-730. This early article is still one of the best, even though it caters to the earlier passion for Freudian overtones. It sees some of the major connections, such as that between Hautia and Fedallah, although it does not see Yillah properly. It makes the excellent statement that "The dualism of Mardi and Moby Dick becomes...a unity with mutually annihilating sides..." (723); and that "The moral of the Melville traged y... [is that] Even if the Titans had mastered the power successfully to pass the penultimate, they would have found the Ultimate a silence." (729.)

142. Mardi, 96, 139, 269.

143. Mardi, 97, 139, 269.

144. Mardi, 137.

145. Mardi, 137-138.

146. Taji has seen and acted upon the difference between his path and religion's. He sees through religion's appearance-tales. And again, tied to this consideration is another statement of Taji's predisposition. The otherworldliness of Taji's quest object is again implied when Yillah is presented as part of heaven: Taji swears not upon the cross, but upon Yillah's white arms crossed.

147. Mardi, 267-268.

148. Mardi, 269.

149. Mardi, 164.

150. For the flower symbolism in Mardi, see Merrell Davis, "The Flower Symbolism in Mardi," MLN, II (1941), 625-638.

151. The soaring and sinking of Yillah as quest object fits perfectly. In the chapter on "Dreams," Taji's soul sinks and soars in the torments of quest. Yoomy soars to seek his ideal, Babbalanja sinks to seek his.

152. Mardi, 234.

153. Mardi, 234-235.

154. Mardi, 235.

155. Mardi, 569.

156. Mardi, 571.

157. For an interpretation of the topography of the islands, see Nathalia Wright, "The Head and the Heart in Melville's Mardi," PMLA, LXVI (1951), 351-362.

158. Mardi, 568.

159. In Mardi alone there is no real textual support for an equation between female and purity, but generally female is quest object.

160. Mardi, 139. Davis would negate Yillah as a heavenly being and as a kind of universal being; he relegates the allegorical story of Yillah to the device of suspense built out of her real historym(128). It seems undeniable, however, that a complete view of the character-symbol must embrace the theme of unity in duality, oneness in ambiguity.

161. The head of the vale is where the stone profile of the god glowers.

162. Mardi, 139.

163. The diamond image is very apt. In the dive there is the frozen and momentary view of the quester in action, symbolically plunging toward another world. As Babbalanja's Serenian dream relates, and as the color symbolism prepares, the otherworld is characterized by brilliant whiteness, bottomlessness, rooflessness, emptiness. It is as brilliant and ahuman and heartless as the heart of a diamond.

164. Mardi, 577.

165. Mardi, 315.

166. Davis comes tantalizingly close to the definition of the pilot-fish and the sharks. See Melville's Mardi, 116.

167. Mardi, 569.

168. Mardi, 572.

169. "Is not that, the evil eye that long ago did haunt me? and thou, the Hautia who hast followed me, and wooed, and mocked, and tempted me, through all this long, long voyage?" 572.

170. Mardi, 576.

171. Mardi, 573. See Homans, "The Dark Angel," 727, for Ozonna as Ether and Rea as Rhea.

172. Mardi, 548.

173. Mardi, 567.

174. Mardi, 567.

175. Mardi, 578. Davis makes an Undine-Lamia myth of the Yillah-Hautia allegory. See 137-141.

176. Mardi, 579.

177. Mardi, 371.

178. Mardi, 580. See Tyrus Hillway, "Taji's Abdication in Herman Melville's Mardi," AL, XVI (1944), 204-207. "...the flight through the reef barrier into the outer ocean...[necessitates that] the belief that the search goes on in a world similar in form and substance to Mardi itself must be rejected...Taji is willing to sever all his ties with life." (205.) "And here 'abdication' is difficult to account for if it refers to something other than suicide." (207.)

179. In this respect, Matthiessen's idea in treating Mardi as a "source book for plenitude" is excellent and accurately suggestive.

180. Mardi, 382.

181. Mardi, 565.

182. Mardi, 565.

183. I do not mean to imply that Melville's complete man is simply an unselected hodge-podge of all possible behavior patterns. That Melville rejects non-selective eclecticism is evident in chapters LXVII and LXVIII ("Little King Peepi," and "How Teeth Were Regarded in Valapee.").

184. Mardi, 149.

185. Mardi, 150.

186. Mardi, 427.

187. This passage also reveals Media's insight into human conduct exterior to himself. For after all, the petition for trial by jury is presented semi-satirically, and the petitioners themselves are partial frauds.

188. Mardi, 169.

189. Mardi, 373-374.

190. Again the reference emphasizes the aspects of primal creativity and ultimate murder.

191. Mardi, 373.

192. Mardi, 278-338, 406, 431, 508, 555, 556, 557 are perhaps the most obvious selections.

193. Mardi, 431-432.

194. Mardi, 474.

195. Mardi, 532.

196. Here the flaw is not thematic; again it lies in the structure of the narrative, which at the wrong point substitutes dialogue for characterization revealed through action.

197. Mardi, 559.

198. Mardi, 558.

199. Mardi, 579.

200. For suggested sources for the names "Media" and "Mardi," see Davis, 77 and 77 n 2.

201. For the political satire, see Davis, 79-99, and 142-159.

202. For the divine-earthly, white-dark oppositions, see Davis, 130-131. See also Carpenter, "Puritans Preferrred Blondes, NEQ, IX (1936), 253-272. This early work concludes from its view of Yillah *versus* Hautia that Melville returned to the shrine of medieval Catholic purity in a submission which accounts for the violence of the modern literary revolt from taboos. I think there is no stronger misreading of Melville.

CHAPTER III

PIERRE

I

Both Taji and Ahab were western men. Heaped and tasked by world and God, lured and mocked by the emblem of the ultimate, they tried to gain heaven with the weapons of the battlement-storming Titan. They are introduced as Enceladus, but the predisposition that made them men of escalade is never fully explained. Just what happened to Ahab to make him spit on an altar long before he is injured by the great hooded phantom? Just why does Taji have the vision he has?

In Pierre Melville paints his broadest and deepest picture of the quester. The earlier books have shown that Typee and west cannot change places. The childlike ideals of Melville's Christ are fit only for the barbarian world of the primitive where complexities of personality and of civilization do not exist—a world where all behavior is spontaneous and childlike and where all behavior proceeds from the heart. Later, when Melville returns to an examination of the ideal Christ, in Baby Budd, the barbarian, the quester of the western world disappears. It is possible that the culminating Billy Budd dispense with the quester

because Pierre presents him fully, answering the questions raised by Mardi and Moby Dick. Pierre displays the hopelessness of the plight of the western man, Pierre, who is jarred out of the false confidence engendered by the childlike Typee life of Saddle Meadows. The book traces the career of a man who tries to act according to the dictates of heart, which is the standard of Typee-Christ--but Pierre's actions take place in New York city.

Taji and Ahab begin as men with hardened hearts, men whose hearts become progressively more shrivelled and stony. Pierre begins as the very young quester, the man with a full and overflowing heart. He tries to attain an other-worldly (chronometric) ideal using, at first, the weapon of that ideal: heart. Love, rather than hatred, humanitarianism rather than revenge characterize the early Pierre. Yet Pierre discovers that the other-worldly ideal is not for this world, neither for the west nor for Typee, for chronometrics in the world-as-is is no more than an appearance. When it is real, it is murdered. Pierre's discovery gradually destroys his confidence and optimism (The Confidence Man immediately falls into place in the totality of Melville's works) and hatred gradually hardens his heart to stone.

In Pierre, Melville allows his hero to attain the lure (what would happen if Taji had found Yillah alive; what would happen if Ahab had pierced the mask by killing the whale?) and then crashes the whole weight of his theme down upon Pierre's plight, showing that still beyond, there is nothing. "Even if

the Titans had mastered the power successfully to pass the Penultimate, they would have found the Ultimate a silence."[1] And in Pierre, largely by means of a beautifully worked pattern of stone imagery, of which the hero's French name is not the least pertinent, Melville defines the Ultimate, the God, over whom the quester and the reader sweat.

There is little doubt that Melville intended Pierre to probe the depths of the quester's problem. When he finished Moby Dick he wrote that he had now seen Leviathan, but that he had heard of still bigger fish in the sea—he had heard of Kraken. Many critics have pointed out that Pierre is devoid of even that amount of artistic distance Melville had been able to command in Moby Dick. Also the stylistics are more artificial. Whatever the reasons—whether Melville had poured himself forth too successfully in Moby Dick, whether he began Pierre with too short a rest, Pierre is not so good a book as its predecessor. However, because of the size of the problem defined in Pierre, the book certainly deserves second place among the long books, and it must be remembered that this is the book which Melville probably intended to be his masterpiece.

The problem shapes itself in familiar terms. There is the repeated motif of the characters' origins. There is the repeated motif of white-dark tensions among the characters. There is the repeated motif of a half-and-halfness or duality attributed to the major characters. And there is, in connection with origins, the familiar technique of illustrating the characters by

displaying their relationships to the particular worlds they inhabit. The symbol-values of the characters are further developed by the interrelationships of the characters; and these interrelationships in turn are developed primarily by the technique which was one of Melville's most important instruments: the multiple view. Multiple view enables Melville to pace the progress of his plots by a series of epiphanies, about which we shall have more to say later. For our purposes we can begin with Lucy Tartan, whose relationship to Pierre determines half the symbolism of the book.

Again, were the critic to shadow forth Lucy Tartan by working from symbol to character, he would reach a totally erroneous conclusion, as he would about Mardi's Jarl. Lucy is white, ethereal, described by words like "angelic" and "heavenly." Her very name, Lucy, suggests light, Lucifer, the bright angel. To extend this to the symbol-value of Lucy the character, is to see her as the pure ideal of heaven or at least as the "heavenly" nineteenth century blond heroine. In the heaven-earth, God-devil duality, we would then place Lucy in the first half of the Melvillean united dichotomy, and we should be wrong. When we think of the warfare between the amaranth (white heavenly flower) and the catnip (green, domestic plant) and extend from this symbol to character, we should conclude that in the warfare between Lucy and Isabel, Lucy is the amaranth. And again we should be wrong. One of the "ambiguities" in Pierre stems from a diabolic reversal of symbolism. In Mardi we saw that the dark maiden (earth and

pride) was simply one facet of a single entity, along with the fair maiden (the other world). In Mardi the quester never attains his goal, and is never able to see that the whiteness is but a disguise for the phantom horror of mocking emptiness. Heaven and its whiteness are never reached and held long enough to be examined. In Pierre, the quester does attain his goal, and when the values of what is good are examined, then in terms of character whiteness as emblem of goodness and purity pertains to earth, not to heaven, and the direction of Melville's theme develops consistently and powerfully in its inverted disguise. In brief, the theme remains constant, whereas the patterns of imagery shift. And it is multiple view applied to the characterization that gives the undeniable clue. When we look closely at Lucy's otherworldliness we see that Lucy is described as angel by the converging perspective of characters whose judgment we cannot accept at all.

For instance, we have this glimpse of Lucy.

> Wondrous fair of face, blue-eyed, and golden-haired, the bright blonde, Lucy, was arrayed in colors harmonious with the heavens. Light blue be thy perpetual color, Lucy; light blue becomes thee best--such the repeated azure counsel of Lucy Tartan's mother.[1]

But Mrs. Tartan is satirized as a brainless woman who has no real human heart and who can see no realities at all. She never sees the real strength of which her daughter is capable. When Lucy comes to live with Pierre, Mrs. Tartan furiously storms into Pierre's quarters in an attempt to reclaim Lucy, and she might have succeeded "Had Mrs. Tartan been a different woman than she

was; had she indeed any disinterested agonies of a generous heart, and not mere match-making mortifications, however poignant..."[3] Not only is her heart faulty, but her brainpower is weak, "for, like many other superficial observers, forming her previous opinion of Lucy upon the slightness of her person, and the dulcetness of her temper, Mrs. Tartan had always imagined that her daughter was quite incapable of any such daring act."[4] Like the lady-world she represents, Mrs. Tartan lives only by and for appearances, and has no insight into the true virtues and fitnesses of things: in trying to bring Lucy and Pierre together in the early portions of the book, she blindly and gaily and preposterously gilds the lily. She would hopelessly mate incompatibles in her matchmaking, as attested to by the rumor of the young men's club formed to warn eligibles away from her clutches. "Preposterous Mrs. Tartan...Exceedingly preposterous Mrs. Tartan!"[5] the omniscient narrator hoots at her. Her equation of Lucy and heaven is not to be taken seriously.

We can slip around to another perspective in the multiple view of Lucy. Mrs. Glendinning, proud queen of this world, proud of her appearances, her body, her sex and sensualness sees herself as the dark liquid of the earth earthy, attractive to men of this world, while she sees Lucy as a pale, ethereal, light liquid fit for boys who have not yet grown to earthly maturity. Lucy is "... a very pretty little Pale Sherry pint-decanter of a girl; and I—I'm a quart-decanter of- Port—potent Port! Now Sherry for boys, and Port for men..."[6] "There was ever a slight degree

of affectionate patronizing in the manner of the resplendent, full-blown Mrs. Glendinning toward the delicate and shrinking girlhood of young Lucy."[7] And Mrs. Glendinning is partially correct, for at this point in the lyrically satiric presentation of life at Saddle Meadows, Pierre is an unconscious little boy and Lucy an unconscious little girl--but with what latent potentialities lurking in each of them! That Mrs. Glendinning herself would reject the real man who does not meet her conventionalized appearance values is an added irony indicated by her rejection of her husband's chair portrait. Mrs. Glendinning's household is run by heartless and cold pride. There is merriment and warmth only as long as appearances are not disturbed, and Pierre himself later realizes that his mother loves him only because he is a perfect appearance, a mirror for her own values. Were he a cripple, he suspects, Mrs. Glendinning would not love him. For Mrs. Glendinning everything is but layer on layer of appearance to be manipulated into conformity with her will--all, ALL is vanity. Pierre's real love for Lucy is to Mrs. Glendinning nothing but a happy juxtaposition which fits her plans. "Mrs. Juxtaposition, ah! And in your opinion, Mother, does this fine glorious passion amount only to that?"

"Only to that, Pierre..."[8]

That it is Mrs. Juxtaposition is an insight into Mrs. Glendinning, just as is the sherry-port episode. It is a revelation of Mrs. Glendinning's superbly overriding wilfull maternalism, bending everything to its own queenly needs. It sees all in

its own image, finding only what it wants to find, perpetually lost in self-deceiving projection, casting from the world whatever threatens or annoys it. The effect of the multiple view is that in the opinions we get of Lucy we get the still instant of self revelation of the character and the symbol-value of the opinion holder.

But we need not rest our case simply upon the realization that as an actor of appearances Mrs. Glendinning is unable to place Lucy for us. The narrator steps in again to dominate our choice of realities and appearances.

> Looking beyond the present period, Mrs. Glendinning could not but perceive, that even in Lucy's womanly maturity, Lucy would still be a child to her; because, she, elated, felt, that in a certain intellectual vigor, so to speak, she was the essential opposite of Lucy, whose sympathetic mind and person had both been cast in one mold of wondrous delicacy. But here Mrs. Glendinning was both right and wrong. So far as she here saw a difference between herself and Lucy Tartan, she did not err; but so far—and that was very far—as she thought she saw her innate superiority to her in the absolute scale of being, here she very widely and immeasurably erred. For what may be artistically styled angelicalness, this is the highest essense compatible with created being; and angelicalness hath no vulgar vigor in it...Therefore, benevolently, and affectionately, and all-sincerely as thy heart, oh, Mrs. Glendinning! now standest affected toward the fleecy Lucy; still, lady, thou dost very sadly mistake it, when the proud, double-arches of the bright breastplate of thy bosom, expand with secret triumph over one, whom thou so sweetly, but still so patronizingly stylest, The Little Lucy.[9]

Mrs. Glendinning's vigor is the vigor of world enough and pride, but Lucy's is to be the vigor of the highest and most completely human activity. In comparison, Isabel's "vigor" is the pliable, elastic nothingness of Time, and in this will be a clearer hint

about the basic tensions between the symbol-characters. At any rate, we cannot accept Mrs. Glendinning's definition of Lucy. It is Lucy herself who by her actions will reveal what she is, as we will see shortly.

Mrs. Tartan and Mrs. Glendinning represent the appearance world of human society, and they provide no insight. Isabel represents the other-world, and she does not meet Lucy until the end of the book, so she provides no clue. Pierre is the only remaining character whose opinion of Lucy can be heard, and through Pierre's eyes we get another modified view of Lucy as angel. For him she is not even the fragile pearl of girlhood that she is for Mrs. Glendinning. For him Lucy is not of this world at all. "I to wed this heavenly fleece? Methinks one husbandly embrace would break her airy zone, and she exhale upward to that heaven whence she hath hither come, condensed to mortal sight. It cannot be; I am of heavy earth, and she of airy light."[10] When Pierre first greets Lucy at the very beginning of the book, he introduces her as his view of the angelic.

> Truly, thought the youth, with a still gaze of inexpressible fondness; truly the skies do ope, and this invoking angel looks down.—"I would return thee thy manifold good mornings, Lucy, did not that presume thou hadst lived through the night; and by heaven, thou belong'st to the regions of an infinite day!"[11]

But the Pierre who feels this way about Lucy is the early Pierre whose eyes have not yet seen truth, whose soul has not yet known grief. He is a magnificent animal, like one of his well fed and well bred colts, but he and his horses can see just about equally far into realities. The early Pierre is a satirized

creature, revolving like a well trained satellite about the strong gravitational pull of his mother's dominion. We cannot believe what the early Pierre believes, not only about Lucy, but, as we shall see, about anything.

The transition into the reality of Lucy, which is quite the opposite of her appearance, is provided by the narrator. On the one hand the narrator satirizes Lucy and on the other he furnishes directly stated hints about Lucy's earthly mortality and common humanity. Says he:

> My proper province is with the angelical part of Lucy. But as in some quarters, there prevails a sort of prejudice against angels, who are merely angels and nothing more; therefore I shall martyrize myself, by letting such gentlemen and ladies into some details of Lucy Tartan's history.[12]

After all the sugar and treacle of the too too pretty life at Saddle Meadows, the satire is of course obvious in the words "I shall martyrize myself;" at the same time the narrator implies that Lucy is something more than angel and is allowed to introduce the motif of origins in order to bind Lucy to strictly non-angelic guideposts for the reader. With the technique of the direct hint (Melville uses it about as delicately as a sledge hammer) the narrator presents a picture of the early, unconscious Lucy and then in an immediately following statement tells us that this is the false picture:

> At this moment, Lucy just upon the point of her departure, was hovering near the door; the setting sun, streaming through the window, bathed her whole form in golden loveliness and light; that wonderful, and most vivid transparency of her clear Welsh complexion, now fairly glowed like rosy snow. Her flowering, white, blue-ribboned dress, fleecily invested her. Pierre

> almost thought that she could only depart the house by floating out ot the open window, instead of actually stepping from the door. All her aspect to him, was that moment touched with an indescribable gayety, buoyancy, fragility, and an unearthly evanescence.[13]

This is at once contradicted by a continuation of the multiple view which gives further realization of Pierre's limited sight at the same time that it negates the picture of the angel:

> Youth is no philosopher. Not into young Pierre's heart did there then come the thought, that as the glory of the rose endures but for a day, so the full bloom of girlish airiness and bewitchingness passes from the earth almost as soon; as jealously absorbed by those frugal elements, which again incorporate that translated girlish bloom, into the first expanding flower-bud. Not into young Pierre, did there then steal that thought of utmost sadness; pondering on the inevitable evanescence of all earthly loveliness; which makes the sweetest things of life only food for ever-devouring and omnivorous melancholy.[14]

So much for what others think of Lucy—all the opinions are but so much clatter, none of them correct. "Yet how would Lucy Tartan shrink from all this noise and clatter! She is bragged of, but not brags. Thus far she hath floated as stilly through this life as thistle-down floats over meadows. Noiseless, she, except with Pierre; and even with him she lives through many a panting hush. Oh, those love-pauses that they know—how ominous of their future; for pauses precede the earthquake, and every other terrible commotion! But blue their sky awhile, and light-some all their chat, and frolicsome their humors."[15] The stilly essence of Lucy's being is sufficiently pictured in actions so that she need not communicate herself in words to the reader. In fact, except for the minor character Plinlimmon, of all the characters, Lucy communicates least in directly revealing words,

and in comparison, Isabel, Pierre and Mrs. Glendinning are relatively open books. The real essence of Lucy is something strong, not fragile; something intensely serious, not gay; something buoying rather than buoyant; and above all earthly—it is the essential symbolic value which, when revealed, amazes all the characters, who had judged Lucy wrongly by judging her appearance.

What is this essence? It is what Sedgwick accurately defined as the land sense. There is little sea-land tension as such in terms of actual imagery in Pierre but the exact same opposition of worlds that includes the general Melvillean sea-land tension does exist here. Lucy, for instance, was "born among brick and mortar in a sea-port, [but] she still pined for unbaked earth and inland grass."[16] And "though her home was in the city, her heart was twice a year in the country."[17] Isabel, Lucy's direct opposite and otherworld counterpart, highlights the tension by her longing for the sea. The sea is but a dim memory for Isabel, buried deep in her Yillah-like vague remembrance of her origins; and when she once more feels the motions of the land-departing sea waves, her frenzy to travel outward to the infinite blue becomes so uncontrollable, that Lucy and Pierre have to restrain her by force from irrevocable immersion in the otherworldly element of ocean.

But the land sense which Lucy represents must be defined specifically. It is not the landishness of the world of Mrs. Glendinning, or the man-of-war conventionality of Lucy's own brothers. It is not the cold cruelty of the city, for Lucy

wishes to flee from the city in order to return to the area of peace and fertility, the ultimate humanity of the singular green Tahiti of the soul:

> So the sweet linnet, though born inside of wires in a lady's chamber on the ocean coast, and ignorant all its life of any other spot; yet, when spring-time comes, it is seized with flutterings and vague impatiences; it cannot eat or drink for these wild longings. Though unlearned by any experience, still the inspired linnet divinely knows that the inland migrating season has come. And just so with Lucy in her first longings for the verdure.[18]

Lucy as land must be divorced from land as the symbol of smug convention and dry rot, the land from which the Bulkingtons, those true seers of reality flee. On the debit side of the ledger are the Aunt Charities, the Pelegs and Bildads, the exponents of hypocrisy and false heart and brain. On the credit side are the Lucys who see through to reality once they shed their unconsciousness. In the early books of Pierre, Lucy is unconscious. She is a gossamer thing like Yillah, unexposed to experience; but whereas experience kills the otherworldly Yillah, it brings out the steel in the land sense which is Lucy, and so at the end of the book Lucy reappears as a being divested of the roseate glows of superficial appearances, whitened and hardened to a fine determination to support and protect Pierre as long as he remains on earth. She leads <u>back</u> to the human community at the same time that she herself rejects the hypocrisy and dry-rot of that community as symbolized by her rejection of her family. As soon as Lucy appears at the Apostles, otherworld Isabel feels a strong displacing agency. All the rest of humanity constitutes what Isabel calls

the "banded world"—it includes the conscious pride of rule and appearance of Mrs. Gldinning; the flighty and unconscious love of appearance of the lady-like world of Mrs. Tartan; the stupid and dangerous love of appearance of the man-of-war world of Lucy's brothers; and the mixture of heartless and/or mindless mass, the Typee subjects who live by appearance either in the lush meadows of the country or the harsh stones of the City. Lucy is <u>related</u>—unlike Isabel—to <u>all</u> these aspects of humanity. In contrast to the others, Lucy represents what later in the book Melville is to define as man's earthly domestic felicity, a domesticity which expands to the felicity of the entire race, which is not self-centered and which need not be blind. But in all cases, it is of this world and earth, and so, like the rest of the banded world is also ultimately aligned against Isabel. In fine, except for her infection by Pierre, Lucy points in a direction which would lead Pierre to completion were it not already too late for her ministrations.

When she does reappear, purged of softness and blindness, she herself is the new enthusiast, beginning the cycle all over again by believing herself prompted by God, by aiming toward heaven. Like Pierre and because of Pierre, the element of humanity that can provide the proper answers becomes misdirected by a mis-seeing of its own proper function and its own proper goal. The reader is allowed glimpses of Lucy's underlying true definition even when the view of the other characters is limited. While still the unconscious rosy-white girl in Saddle Meadows bliss, ..."at bottom

she rather cherished a notion that Pierre bore a charmed life, and by no earthly possibility could die from her, or experience any harm, when she was within a thousand leagues."[19] The irony is inherent not in Lucy's notion but in the fact that her unconsciousness prevents the activation of her preservative essence until Pierre has already been ruined by the initial action of an other-world character—and even when it is too late, Pierre feels in Lucy's presence a force which would return him to human warmth. Significantly, at the very moment when Pierre would treat Isabel according to human and earthly needs rather than according to the dictates of ideal virtue, at the moment that he is on the point of bodily, incestuous relations with her, he appeals to her with a term that would be incomprehensibly strange were it not reflexive to the symbolic value of Lucy: "'Hark thee to thy furthest inland soul'—thrilled Pierre in a steeled and quivering voice."[20] Pierre has enough of quest within him; like Ahab, his greatest need is for land-humanity.

The whiteness and rose-ness of Lucy would tend to confuse Lucy with Yillah, but even here, at the very opening of the book, Melville gives a hint about the inversion of his symbolism. Pierre looks up at Lucy's open casement and sees "a rich, crimson flower" resting against Lucy's pillow, just as "not an hour ago, [Lucy's] own cheek must have rested there." Pulling at the shrub to reach the blossom, Pierre "dislodged the flower, and conspicuously fastened it in his bosom. —'I must away now, Lucy; see! under these colors I march'."[21] It is not for long that Pierre

is to march under the colors of this world, but while he does it is the rich, red suggestion of earthly humanity, not the sterile color of the God-hungering amaranth.

It is not only in her own thoughts and flower associations that the as-yet-unconscious Lucy is related to earth: her very actions betray her fear and unwillingness to depart the level plain of earth for the chilly mountain heights of God-seeking. In Pierre as in the other books, sea, mountain, and brooding forest are associated with God and the quest for otherworld values. The Delectable Mountains are really the mountains of the Titans, a reminder of the unassailable otherworld. The earthbound pine tree which reaches upward higher than any tree of the forest is the mournful reminder of Isabel's enigmatic face. And the sea is a familiar story. Just as the narrator reveals Lucy's negative relationship to sea when he has her restrain Isabel from suicidal immersion in the otherworld, so, in one revealing instance, the narrator exposes Lucy's negative relationship to mountain.

When Pierre and Lucy ride to the mountains for a picnic together, Pierre turns passionately to Lucy, mistakenly seeing in her an Isabel, a being of mystery by whose depth he has already been attracted. The very traditional imagery with which Pierre addresses Lucy is imagery which applies to the otherworldly Isabel. "Thou art my heaven, Lucy; and here I lie thy shepherd-king, watching for new eye-stars to rise in thee. Ha! I see Venus' transit now; —lo! a new planet there;—and behind all, an infinite starry nebulousness, as if thy being were backgrounded by some

spangled veil of mystery."[22] Lucy is too inexperienced to realize that she has just heard the voice of Pierre's predisposition which demands the passionate mystery of the quest. Yet, the land-sense which holds no secrets, which is all open and unambiguous is vaguely troubled by the outburst, as if it senses the operation of powers inimical to her well being. "Is Lucy deaf to all these ravings of his lyric love? Why looks she down, and vibrates so; and why now from her over-charged lids, drops such warm drops as these? No joy now in Lucy's eyes, and seeming tremor on her lips.

"'Ah! thou too ardent and impetuous Pierre!'"[23] And in Lucy's reaction is the clue to Pierre's plight. The latent frenzy, the predisposition for ideal absolutes will murder Pierre in quest as it did Taji and Ahab, and the land sense of common humanity intuits that the fierce fires of the quest burn too hot for life, burn along a path that leads away from life. The bursting of the hot heart's shell, the lurid and satanic fires of the soul's try-works will kill earth and humanity and quester in Pierre as it has in every other book, and the direct hint of this has been supplied by the narrator immediately after Lucy had been introduced at the beginning of the book: "Thus, with a graceful glow on his limbs, and soft, imaginative flames in his heart, did this Pierre glide toward maturity, thoughtless of that period of remorseless insight, when all these delicate warmths should seem frigid to him, and he should madly demand more ardent fires."[24] The early Pierre does not burn actively for the ideal absolutes because he believes that he has them, that they exist all about him in the appearance world

of his youth. It is only when the appearances are pierced by remorseless insights that the fires of truth roll their smokes of black billows in Pierre's soul and that the flames of his predisposition burn upward fiercely to consume all in the activated desire for the ideal which in specifics are termed absolute Truth, Virtue, and Honor. Lucy, vaguely stirred to uneasiness by the sudden hint of what lies within Pierre, correctly senses the source of the quest beneath the smiling appearances of the supposedly ideal life she leads with Pierre: she asks Pierre to tell her of Isabel, and the remainder of the section continues in repeated images of the demonic fires that harden the heart to stone:

> Blue is the sky, oh, bland the air, Pierre; —but—tell me the story of the face [Isabel's], —the dark-eyed, lustrous, imploring, mournful face, that so mystically paled and shrunk at thine. Ah, Pierre, sometimes I have thought—never will I wed with my best Pierre, until the riddle of that face be known. Tell me, tell me, Pierre; —as a fixed basilisk, with eyes of steady, flaming mournfulness, that face this instant fastens me.[25]

She wishes to know the power with which she has to contend for Pierre, and again she correctly senses the area of her opponent's power when she continues to plead with Pierre that he share with her every last agitation and troubling thought "that ever shall sweep into thee from the wide atmosphere of all things that hem mortality."[26] And again Lucy is defined as the catnip rather than the amaranth. And while in the mountains, the home of the amaranth, Lucy is exposed—via Pierre's outbursts—to the appallingly vast and vacant opposition of the other world. Mountain is not her world. She must return to earth, the dooryard, the human

habitation of the catnip. "Up, my Pierre; let us up, and fly these hills, whence, I fear, too wide a prospect meets us. Fly we to the plain...lo, these hills now seem all desolate to me, and the vale all verdure...Now they rolled swiftly down the slopes; nor tempted the upper hills; but sped fast for the plain. Now the cloud hath passed from Lucy's eye; no more the lurid slanting light forks upward from her lover's brow. In the plain they find peace, and love, and joy again."[27]

The specific determination of the kind of land sense Lucy symbolizes is to be found also in her origins. As usual, the origins are double. On the one hand, her father was "an early and most cherished friend of Pierre's father." Pierre's father as a young man pursued not the conventional and proud world of Mrs. Glendinning, but he pursued the otherworld.[28] Through association with Pierre's father when he was a young man, part of Lucy's heritage is the aspiring, the heaven assaulting. Part of Lucy's heritage is connected with the divine, or otherworldly; but for Lucy divinity will be manifested in existence dedicated to this earth rather than to heaven. Mixed with this small strain of heaven, is the more preponderant element of world and earth. Her brothers are naval officers, conventional, obtuse, and proud. They are not sea-men as Bulkington or Ahab was; rather they are guardians of the cold proprieties of the glittering society which landlords this man-of-war world. Lucy's mother has already been seen. Yet there is one more element in Lucy's origins which associates her most deviously and subtly and yet most strongly with an earthly

anti-idealism and anti-heavenism. She is Welsh. In that one moment when she is pictured as an angel caught in the rays of the setting sun, the narrator curiously introduces her clear Welsh complexion. It is also curious that Lucy's Aunt, the most minor character in the novel, one who is mentioned but once or twice, is twice mentioned by name—and this name is unmistakably Welsh: Aunt Llanyllyn. Even were the aunt a major character, it would be curious that Melville should employ such a name. Yet this name serves a purpose. In sound and in national origin it recalls another Welsh name that plays an important role in the book: Plinlimmon. And the name Plinlimmon is directly associated with a philosophy that warns men to abstain from idealism in action, to be expedient, to realize that the morality of heaven and God and the teachings of Christ are not only inoperative but are inapplicable to this earth. Yet there is one important distinction between Lucy and Plinlimmon. Plinlimmon is non-benevolent.[29] Lucy is motivated by her highest, divine humanity; she is benevolent and joins heart and head. Lucy is primarily heart, like Pierre, but her heart leads to different avenues of existence. Indeed, when Pierre first tells her that he is claimed by the otherworld and not by earth—when he tells her that he has "married" another, Lucy clutches her breast and cries "My heart! My heart!" It is by means of a wounded heart that Lucy's consciousness is informed. It is the quester's first murder. The early Lucy dies and her unconsciousness is dropped like scales from the eyes, and the heart becomes activated. When she reappears after the purging and maturing heart-wound, she is symbolically clean-white. The

loss of semi-consciousness is loss of a world, loss of the Typee humanity of the early Lucy. Through Pierre she has been touched by the other world and in the gained whiteness of consciousness, she has lost the blissful rosiness of Saddle Meadows. She is now the human being who is ready to attempt to control the conditions of life rather than to ride haphazardly upon the tide of events, pushed and prodded here and there willynilly by the landlords of the conventional world. It is Lucy who introduces the topic of bread-winning in the poverty stricken household of Pierre. It is Lucy who initiates action by voluntarily and with determination coming to Pierre. Even Lucy's instrument of work (work, which in itself is something new to Lucy), the easel, is stripped of the last vestige of the clinging greenness of her earlier unconscious Typee life: the potted ivy in which the legs of the easel had been formerly planted are gone. Pierre smoulders with the baleful and fiery light of Lucifer, the diaboman who would climb to heaven by escalade. Lucy shines with a pure, white light--in this case the real and only light for mankind, the light of heartful humanity which would sustain itself by the work of this world but which deceives itself into believing in and representing itself as the light of heaven. And, of course, Lucy's new whiteness, the whiteness of "heaven" is the mark of the quester: she too is now sterile, minus rosiness, minus green leaves. Again the name unites all the facets of appearance into one entity: in origins, Lucy, Pierre and Isabel have common meeting grounds. The fire of man's aspiration is common to them all. It is the divergence of <u>goal</u>

which splits the basically single entity of mankind, common to itself in mortality, into needlessly warring camps.

The inversion of whiteness as symbol of human character is completed by Melville in his creation of Lucy and Isabel, although the symbol of whiteness for thing, i.e. amaranth, remains constant. Again there is the clue to the meaning of Melville's insistence that Moby Dick is not a mammal—for that would be too close to humanity—but is a fish, a thing, a true denizen of all that the sea suggests. Summarily, in her predominantly human and anti-heavenly origins, and in her color and her goal, Lucy sets up the first point of tension in her direct and irreconcilable opposition to Isabel. Were there no mountain of evidence concerning the definition of Lucy, we would need no more than one question placed by the narrator in Pierre's mind. The question states the basic equation and defines Lucy and the opponent she sensed so vaguely during the picnic in the mountains. Pierre has to choose between the humanity of Lucy and the otherworldly absolute values which underlie his championing of Isabel, and the narrator says: "Then, for the time, all minor things were whelmed in him; his mother, Isabel, the whole wide world; and only one thing remained to him; —this all-including query—LUCY OR GOD?[30]

In order to see the thematic pattern of this equation, we have to turn back a moment to scrutinize the life of Saddle Meadows in order to understand why the tension of Pierre's choice is the entire book in miniature.

II

The introduction of Saddle Meadows sets up the three major characters in relation to the world in which the action is to take place. Saddle Meadows is presented in honeyed phrases of an ideality which is not to be taken seriously. Mr. Braswell is undoubtedly correct when he says that "Instead of showing a sudden and inexplicable loss of taste, or the debilitating influence of cheap, sentimental fiction he [Melville] is known to have thought ridiculous, his style reveals a satirical purpose."[31]

It is especially important to notice that the gaudy gift-book dialogue in which Pierre abounds is largely fitted to a satirical revelation of the speaker. Thus, a typical mid-nineteenth century horror such as this:

> "Curses, wasp-like, cohere on that villian, Ned, and sting him to his death!" cried Pierre, smit by this most piteous tale. "What can be done for her, sweet Isabel; can Pierre do aught?"[32]

reveals Pierre's conventional reaction to fornication in which later in the novel he himself would like to indulge--incestuously to boot--and which, suggests not sin but the complex interconnections of all men in the motions of history.

Although any reader can select stylistic atrocities almost as bad throughout the novel, most of them serve the function of exposure. What seems to have happened is that once caught in the cadence of artificial dialogue, Melville never completely freed himself. However, although the dialogue admittedly is often pompous and stilted, it must be noted that in scenes in which the narrator is in dead earnest, truer and more natural diction and

speech rhythms emerge as the more constant standard of that elusive thing we call style. When the book is read carefully, one finds that it is really only in the dialogue that stylistic excesses are jarringly noticeable.

The satiric tone extends beyond the dialogue itself. The satire includes the entire lyrical quality of the descriptions of existence in Saddle Meadows. We are as much as told that such existence may be pure milk and honey, but that it is also a lot of unreal nonsense, perpetuated for and by blind people and children. In the narrator's own words, "In a detatched and individual way, it seemed almost to realize here below the sweet dreams of those religious enthusiasts, who paint to us a Paradise to come, when etherealized from all drosses and stains, the holiest passion of man shall unite all kindreds and climes in one circle of pure and unimpairable delight."[33] After Mardi we know what to expect of Paradise to come, and when we balance the passage against the career of Pierre as enthusiast, all the sweetness and delight crumbles under ridicule. Indeed, the very next sentence points up the satire by interjecting a neatly counterpointing touch of reality: "There was one little uncelestial trait...[Pierre] always had an excellent appetite and especially for his breakfast..."[34] If we wish to find the satire more subtly, we can recall that during the idyllic breakfast scenes with his mother, Pierre always eats tongue; and ironically it is during those scenes that Pierre can communicate with his mother only in terms of appearances and that he must remain mute when he would talk about realities. The

interjection of the breakfast epitomizes Melville's constant technique of juxtaposition. After the lyrical bit of description or attitudinizing, the narrator usually follows up either by introducing the markedly "uncelestial" traits, or else he makes a warning statement which negates the labored lyric and reduces it to satire so that the total effect of the early books of Pierre is a constant and heavy sarcasm.

The steady condescension with which the narrator views the early Pierre as a very, very young and docile boy intensifies the sarcasm, for in the multiple view, the omniscient narrator's view of Pierre is never in agreement with the view of the characters who see the boy. It is not until the last third of Book Two that the tone relents at all. And even then, from there until the end of the novel, the tone seldom entirely loses its edge of distaste and sarcasm. That there is love for Pierre is true. But I must insist upon rejecting what many critics find: an identification between the narrator and Melville on the one hand and Pierre on the other. In fact, unless we see the tone as almost always edged with sarcasm, the theme would run directly contrary to the plot and would break the book into the pointlessness of a thousand unresolvable portions leading to the final conclusion that the book should never have been written. Simply and briefly, the tone always works and works hard to enable the narrator to show the reader that Pierre's goal is hopeless, foolish and murderous.

Satire further helps to define character. It prepares for a rejection of the apparent values of Saddle Meadows and thereby

sets the value judgments with which the reader evaluates the leaders of Saddle Meadows life. The descriptions of Mrs. Glendinning supply the reason for satire and rejection; the ethical hierarchies of Saddle Meadows' values are only apparent.

That Mrs. Glendinning stands for appearance as opposed to reality is evident in her presentation. She "...had never betrayed a single published impropriety..[She never displayed] one known pang of the heart...With Mrs. Glendinning it was one of those spontaneous maxims...never to appear in the presence of her son in any dishabile that was not eminently becoming."[35]

Mrs. Glendinning, is "...a lady who externally furnished a singular example of the preservative and beautifying influences of unfluctuating rank, health, and wealth, when joined to a fine mind of medium culture, uncankered by any inconsolable grief, and never worn by sordid cares."[36] Again we meet the early King Media in feminine disguise. Her relationship with her son is based upon appearances and allow for no real communication of basic human needs and feelings: "...a reverential and devoted son seemed lover enough for this widow...This romantic filial love of Pierre seemed fully returned by the triumphant maternal pride of the widow, who in the clear-cut lineaments and noble air of the son, saw her own graces strangely translated into the opposite sex...There was a striking personal resemblance between them; and as the mother seemed to have long stood still in her beauty, heedless of the passing years; so Pierre seemed to meet her halfway...where his pedestaled mother so long had stood...they were wont to call each

other brother and sister. Both in public and private this was their usage; nor when thrown among strangers, was this mode of address ever suspected for a sportful assumption; since the amaranthiness of Mrs. Glendinning fully sustained this youthful pretension."[37] Herein, at the very opening of the novel, is a complete picture of the Typee Queen. The appearances are fully indicated by the accented seemingness of her false relationship with her son—which also is reflexive to the incest-Enceladus motif as well as to the final murder of sex, generation, and history in Pierre's becoming neuter. Mrs. Glendinning is unconscious of mankinds common democracy in the universal capitulation to time, and she lacks what Media obtained through the canker of grief and sordid care—a time-wise and consciously informed heart. In this consideration is the nub of the book's theme. Pierre is Mrs. Glendinning made male—he is the early King Media. What is it then, that prevents him from becoming the complete man? The answer to this question is the "lesson" which emerges from the book's theme: whereas Media reimmerses himself in world and society in the fight to institute correct human behavior, Pierre immerses himself in the chronometrics of the other world and thus he too becomes suicide and murderer on a vast historical scale. Mrs. Glendinning, in the apparently unchangeable bloom of her wealth, health, and beauty (she is called "this widow Bloom") cannot admit realization of realities without admitting a changed view of the world she landlords. Unlike Media, to her the view, the appearance is all, for to her all phenomena, even her own son, is but a mirror of herself; to see the mirror smashed would be

the exact equivalent of the impossibility of Hautia's committing suicide. In this penultimate (penultimate because it is earthly) hauteur inheres her "amaranthiness," which, when placed in context of the warfare between amaranth and catnip sums her up as something cold, sterile, and inhuman. As earthly pride, she is as opposed to the amaranth itself as Hautia is to Yillah, and it is Mrs. Glendinning, Pierre realizes, who would be the last person to admit Isabel into the society she governs. Yet in terms of the effects of her action, she, like Hautia, denies the true generative and conscious aspects of earth just as much as does her otherworldly opponent. So again, part of the theme emerges as it did in Mardi: opposite aspects of existence are united in the very fact of their existence, in the effects of their actions the consequences of which become inseperable from the act itself. And again Melville's basic pragmatism emerges. We could, if we chose, try to find this aspect of Melville's thought in the Dutch Reformed Calvinism which accepted Jonathan Edwards, but I believe that the stronger argument exists for seeing it as Melville's own original metaphysic which informs his democracy. Indeed, in one of the sharp juxtapositions with which the narrator highlights the vast difference which underlies the surface resemblance of Pierre and Mrs. Glendinning, the narrator says:

> ...I beg you to consider again that this Pierre was but a youngster as yet. And believe me you will pronounce Pierre a thorough-going Democrat in time; perhaps a little too Radical altogether to your fancy.[38]

The anti democracy of the narrow-viewed Mrs. Glendinning

continues in the imagery which relates her to Queenliness. Even the land she rules is presented in Queen-imagery. "...But the country, like any Queen," says the narrator, "is ever attended by scrupulous lady's maids in the guise of the seasons."[39] In a parallel that reemphasizes the guise and appearance of the mother-son relationship, Pierre attends Queen Glendinning with the superficialities of ribbons and bows, calling himself "First Lady in waiting to the Dowager Duchess Glendinning."[40] On the one hand, the Queen imagery fixes Mrs. Glendinning's origins: the words noble, haughty, aristocratic, privilege of rank, landlord are constantly associated with her so that she becomes delineated as the traditional and historical force which has always perpetuated Saddle Meadows life by hereditary and unchanging rule. There is nothing dual about her origins as there is on the paternal side of Pierre's ancestry; she is descended on both sides from heroes; Mrs. Glendinning was sired and born by Mrs. Glendinning, self-generating under differing names and appearances throughout the ages, going back to the beginning of hauteur, so that pride is not even a matter of choice for Mrs. Glendinning.[41] And this unchanging position of Queen of this world is what invests her with the false appearance and insightlessness and grieflessness of being set apart from and above the rest of mankind.

On the other hand, her queenliness and her name—Mary—places her squarely in position in the tension of opposing characters.

When talking about Lucy's beauty, the narrator introduces a brief and heavily satiric section on Queens in general (of course relating Lucy to the beautiful queens of earth) and in this section

both Mrs. Glendinning and Pierre's father are simultaneously exposed.

> ...A beautiful woman is born Queen of men and women both, as Mary Stuart was born Queen of Scots, whether men or women. All mankind are her Scots; her leal clans are numbered by the nations. A true gentleman in Kentucky would cheerfully die for a beautiful woman in Hindostan though he never saw her. Yea, count down his heart in death-drops for her; and go to Pluto, that she might go to Paradise. He would turn Turk before he would disown an allegiance hereditary to all gentlemen, from the hour their Grand Master, Adam, first knelt to Eve.
>
> A plain-faced Queen of Spain dwells not in half the glory a beautiful milliner does. Her soldiers can break heads, but her Highness can not crack a heart; and the beautiful milliner might string hearts for necklaces. Undoubtedly, Beauty made the first Queen. If ever again the succession to the German Empire should be contested, and one poor lame lawyer should present the claims of the first excellingly beautiful woman he chanced to see—she would thereupon be unanimously elected Empress of the Holy Roman German Empire; --that is to say, if all the Germans were true, free-hearted and magnanimous gentlemen, at all capable of appreciating so immense an honor.
>
> It is nonsense to talk of France as the seat of all civility. Did not those French heathen have a Salique Law? Three of the most bewitching creatures,--immortal flowers of the line of Valois--were excluded from the French throne by that infamous provision. France, indeed! whose Catholic millions still worship Mary Queen of Heaven, and for ten generations refused cap and knee to many angel Maries, rightful Queens of France. HERE IS CAUSE FOR UNIVERSAL WAR.[42]

This passage, in its tone as well as its contents explodes the appearances. Men will act according to more basic realities of self-interest or interest of the quest, be they sons and Pierre's or German politicians. And just as the beautiful Isabel was rejected and scorned by a heartless world, so the beautiful and heartless Mrs. Glendinning is killed by the heartful Pierre when their most personal goals lie at cross purposes. The Kentucky gentleman, when the chips are down, bleeds not one drop, but quietly enjoys

his planter's punch. The last paragraph of this passage, however, reveals the relationships of Queenly forces in the fundamental and universal war between homage to otherworld or homage to this world. The primary competitor of the firm of Mary Glendinning of Saddle Meadows, Ltd. is the firm of Mary of Heaven, Unltd. Mary Glendinning is "Sister Mary" to Pierre only in terms of the greatest irony, for the "Brother" will reject the offerings of the first firm in an enthusiastic attempt to take a seat with the board of directors of the second, and be a "brother" to Isabel.

In that France is associated with other world, with pursuit of other-world and homage to otherworld, there is an exposure of Pierre's father which further reveals the relationship of Pierre's parents.

Once upon a time Pierre's father loved and pursued the Mary that was not Glendinning. He was the incipient quester, seeking values not allowed by the Queens of this world, and the narrator himself provides the symbolic value of the Frenchwoman that was the father's first love.

> Once upon a time, there was a lovely young Frenchwoman, Pierre. Have you carefully, and analytically, and psychologically, and metaphysically, considered her <u>belongings</u> and <u>surroundings</u>, and all her incidentals, Pierre?[43]

At the time, the father was a man of heart, and as such he masked his true self from the conventional world, even from the unconventional family member who wished to paint his portrait. He masked himself from the conventional world with a smile, "the vehicle of all ambiguities." And of course, Mrs. Glendinning is unable to tolerate the portrait of that smile because she senses

that it reveals at the moment it disguises a man she prefers not to remember as her husband; she senses alien and hostile values in the portrait, and she will allow it to hang only in the secrecies of Pierre's closet. At once Pierre becomes universal in history as the final male member, the inheritor of the paternal origins of the house of his fathers. The father, however, as the fathers before him, succumbed to the rule of Queen Glendinning, and under the impact of time and the impossibility of the early and rebellious love, yield to the continuing rule of heartless convention. In the final action which ends the house of Glendinning, Pierre, unlike his fathers who "returned to earth" by following the wrong action of surrender, plunges from earth in the wrong action of continued quest. And just as Mrs. Glendinning rejects the smiling chair-portrait, she rejects the son who becomes the summation of that portrait, as the horologicals always reject the chronometricals.

The chair portrait tries to explain the surrender at the same time it apologizes for surrender. It tells Pierre that the glimpse of humanity in rebellion, following the heart, may be the true and essential reality of human greatness, but it asks forgiveness; Time, it says, allied with convention (again the pragmatic unity of opposed forces) makes men knuckle under at last because weakness is also an essential truth of humanity:

> Pierre, believe not the drawing-room painting; that is not thy father; or, at least is not all of thy father ...In mature life, the world overlays and varnishes us, Pierre; the thousand proprieties and polished finesses and grimaces intervene, Pierre; then, we, as it were, abdicate ourselves, and take unto us another self Pierre;

> In youth we are, Pierre, but in age we seem. Look again. I am thy real father, so much more the truly, as thou thinkest thou recognizest me not, Pierre.[44]

Pierre comes to understand the weakness of humanity, while refusing to forgive it, and while applying his own great strength in the wrong pursuits. When Pierre makes his final rejection of Mrs. Glendinning, he turns in fury on the portrait whose living self had been the cause of Pierre's sudden realization that "the time is out of joint; —Oh cursed spite, That ever I was born to set it right!"[45] At the moment he burns the portrait, he commits himself to a rejection of humanity past (the father) and present (the mother), and the father's sight of history is horrified by seeing Pierre embark upon a course which can only result in suicide and murder. The appeal, the apology of the father shines out one last time as Pierre places the picture in the flames; symbolically, as Pierre commits his own human heritage to the hell fires of his heart which now hungers for more ardent fires.

> Steadfastly Pierre watched the first crispings and blackenings of the painted scroll, but started, as suddenly unwinding from the burnt string that had tied it, for one swift instant, seen through the flame and smoke, the upwrithing portrait tormentedly stared at him in beseeching horror, and then wrapped on one broad sheet of oily fire, disappeared forever.[46]

Because of his initial sin, the surrender to convention, it is too late for the father to prevent the visitation of incremental sin upon the son. At the same time, from Pierre's side of the multiple view of the historical tableau, the scene is already viewed "through the flame and smoke," and once committed to the mania of his predisposition and rejection of humanity, it is also too late

for Pierre:

> Yielding to a sudden ungovernable impulse, Pierre darted his hand among the flames, to rescue the imploring face; but as swiftly drew back his scorched and bootless grasp.[47]

The scorched and bootless grasp is the evident objective correlative for Pierre's entire plight. Once he enters the hell of his own now Satanic (Satanic because it is Godlike) heart, he cannot come back out through the archway over which stands the inscription

> Through me you pass into the city of Woe;
> Through me you pass into eternal pain;
> Through me, among the people lost for aye.
> . . . . .
> All hope abandon, ye who enter here.[48]

And here, he abandons world for otherworld, only to find that the choice upon which he gambles all, the choice which is irrevocable, is a loser: the otherworld for which he abandons all is a nothing, a silence, a zero. This is his grief that is woe, his woe that is madness, the fine hammered steel of woe which discovers that God and Satan (or all of history) are only Man in his unified and opposing aspects, that the traditional God and the traditional Satan are nonexistent on the cosmic scale and that good and evil, birth and death are but the unified and opposed aspects of Time which in itself is again nothing and silence. Melville's quarrel properly is not with God, but with man.

The relationship of the Mrs. Glendinnings and the fathers makes the plot inevitable by allowing Pierre only a one directional thrust through the mask. For the conventional world allows the quester an either-or choice of rejection or submission. The transformation of the father from chair portrait to drawing room

portrait is all Mrs. Glendinning's doing. That portrait was made "during the best and rosiest days of their wedded union; at the particular desire of my mother; and by a celebrated artist of her own election, and costumed after her own taste...as he had really appeared to her," Pierre muses. If there is a villain of the piece, it is Mrs. Glendinning, not Pierre or God. For God cannot help being a nothing and Pierre cannot help having a full heart which predisposes him to search for other values than those of the drawing room portrait. In not allowing change, in not admitting realities, the conventional world forces the quester to seek a direction for his activities which point away from the hostility of world. At the moment Pierre challenges his mother on the basis of appearance versus reality ("You are too proud to show toward me what you are this moment feeling, my mother."), Mrs. Glendinning says, "Beware of me, Pierre. There lives not that being in the world of whom thou hast more reason to beware, so you continue but a little longer to act thus with me."[49] The haughty strength of the conventional world acts toward Pierre as it had toward the fathers, again making Pierre a universal in time.

Pierre's great-grandfather was also once a rebel and a fighter. He led the fight against man's primitive heritage, against the wilderness Typee dwellers who are translated into the American setting of the novel as the Indian. On behalf of western man, the great-grandfather made inroads of consciousness against those primeval children of the earth. But Pierre's great-grandfather was unhorsed in the struggle just as Pierre will be.

> On the meadows which sloped away from the shaded rear of the manorial mansion, far to the winding river, an Indian battle had been fought, in the earlier days of the colony, and in that battle the paternal great-grandfather of Pierre, mortally wounded, had sat unhorsed on his saddle in the grass, with his dying voice, still cheering his men in the fray.[50]

But by the time we come to Pierre's grandfather, another rebel and fighter, we discover that the great-grandfather had simply defeated the Typee with which Melville's first book familiarized us in order to make way for the stronger western Typee ruled by Mrs. Glendinning. His taking the land became not an act of liberation, but of expropriation, for the very deeds to the land itself, "those deeds, as before hinted, did indeed date back to three kings—Indian kings—only so much the finer for that."[51] The battle loses its appearance of the struggle for consciousness and becomes reduced to the spoilation of earth in the conflict of cultures as seen in Typee.

The grandfather in turn rebels against the colonization of Britain. The mansion is full of mementos of the grandfather's victory in his rebellion against a traditional rule. Yet the grandfather too makes no new synthesis of human society, but returns to his own kind of convention, acceptance of the rule of the Mrs. Glendinnings. The fight has been meaningless and the revolution lost in the counterrevolution. Pierre's "grandfather had for several months defended a rude but all-important stockaded, fort, against the repeated combined assaults of Indians, Tories, and Regulars. From before that fort, the gentlemanly, but murderous

half-breed, Brant, had fled, but had survived to dine with General Glendinning, in the amicable times which followed that vindictive war."[52] After the war, the grandfather becomes an archetypal picture of the polite and benevolent aristocrat in his own turn:

> ...in a night-scuffle in the wilderness before the Revolutionary War, he had annihilated two Indian savages by making reciprocal bludgeons of their heads. And all this was done by the mildest hearted, and most blue-eyed gentleman in the world, who, according to the patriarchal fashion of those days, was a gentle, white-haired worshiper of all the household gods; the gentlest husband, and the gentlest father; the kindest of masters to his slaves; of the most wonderful unruffledness of temper; a serene smoker of his after-dinner pipe; a forgiver of many injuries; a sweet-hearted, charitable Christian; in fine, a pure, cheerful, childlike, blue-eyed, divine old man; in whose meek, majestic soul, the lion and the lamb embraced—fit image of his God.[53]

Chapters could be spent on the ironies and double meanings in this passage alone, but for the moment we can leave it with the reflection that unmarked by any woe of madness in all his experience, the grandfather also fights the vain fight. The banners and drums and batons he captured become ornaments in the household of Mrs. Glendinning, who made the father a colony in his turn, and who attempts to keep the son as another colony in her British rule of conventionality. So just as the rebels, great-grandfathers, grandfathers, fathers all become exponents of Typee, they hand down the double heritage of Titanism and submission to the son.

The unhorsing image helps to relate the fight against Time to the fight against convention. The act of rebellion is the same in both instances. Pierre, when considering the consequences of his choice between Lucy and God, invoked the widsom of the Terror Stone. "If the miseries of the undisclosable things in me shall

ever unhorse me from my manhood's seat...then do thou, Mute Massiveness, fall on me."[54] Pierre is, of course, unhorsed from his manhood's seat. And at the same time he snatches the reins from Mrs. Glendinning's hands and ceases to be a trained horse himself. In one highly revealing and adumbrative speech, Mrs. Glendinning reveals her view of Pierre and he emerges as a picture of a splendidly trained and magnificent horse. The animal imagery of the Typeean and the mindless soldier is recalled all over again.

> "A noble boy, and docile"—she murmured—"he has all the frolicsomeness of youth, with little of its giddiness. And he does not grow vain-glorious in sophomorean wisdom. I thank heaven I sent him not to college. A noble boy, and docile. A fine, proud, loving. docile, vigorous boy. Pray God he never becomes otherwise to me. His little wife that is to be, will not estrange him from me; for she too is dociel,—beautiful and reverential, and most docile. Seldom yet have I known such blue eyes as hers, that were not docile, and would not follow a bold black one, as two meek, blue-ribboned ewes follow their martial leader. How glad am I that Pierre loves her so, and not some dark-eyed haughtiness, with whom I could never live in peace; but who would ever be setting her young married state before my elderly widowed one, and claiming all the homage of my dear boy—the fine, proud, loving, docile, vigorous boy!—the lofty-minded, well-born, noble boy; and with such sweet docilities! See his hair! He does in truth illustrate that fine saying of his father's, that as the noblest colts, in three points—abundant hair, swelling chest, and sweet docility—should resemble a fine woman, so should a noble youth."[55]

And the lack of essential humanity in Mrs. Glendinning's ideal description almost does characterize the early Pierre who, as a noble colt is in the same relation to the noble name of Glendinning that his own noble colts are to him. When he sees the clothes and trophies and pictures of his sires, his feelings are mingled pride and inferiority, and the haughty hope that some day he too may

measure up to the great Typee masters of the generations. See how perfectly the colts parallel Pierre's relationship with his mother.

> They well knew that they were but an inferior and subordinate branch of the Glendinnings, bound in perpetual feudal fealty to its headmost representative. Therefore these young cousins never permitted themselves to run from Pierre; they were impatient in their paces, but very patient in the halt.[56]

Lucy and Pierre go riding in the huge old phaeton that symbolizes the great girth--in every sense-- of the grandfather's past generation. And, "Though the vehicle was a sexagenarian, the animals that drew it were but six year old colts."[57] The son, the new, as yet unconscious generation draws the burden of the heritage of the generations. Pierre is collared and saddled in Saddle Meadows. He is horse and is horsed. He is both the well trained and docile colt and at the same time the young new commander of the Typee world--and will remain horsed as long as he remains horse. When Pierre puts his colts through their paces, showing their obedience by crawling between their legs, he is rewarded by foam-flake epaulets, himself being made general like the grandfather before him, through approbation of the horse-citizens of Saddle Meadows. He is at once an obedient animal himself, showing himself off as well trained, and he is himself a Mrs. Glendinning, showing off the obedience, lealty, and docility of his subjects. The generations lead him on as both horse and master in their double heritage. Pierre feels the attachment between his own slave-master position and that double heritage. He himself but follows in their footsteps, and Pierre's pride wheels to new heights. "How proud felt Pierre: in fancy's eye, he saw the horse-ghosts a-tandem in the

van. 'These are but wheelers'—cried the young Pierre-- 'the leaders are the generations.'"[58] And it is perhaps here that Melville's satirical irony reaches its height in the lyrical early books of Pierre. The tableau epitomizes the theme emerging from the origins-motif: man's moral responsibility for man past, present and future. On and on it goes in incremental spiral, the generations past leading on the generations future, harnessed and collared, head to buttock, drawing the horseslave-humanmaster Queens and colonies of the Saddle Meadows world.

But the young Pierre, as yet untouched by woe, is blind to the real essence of his burden. Drawing the burden of Typee is pleasant indeed, as long as that is the only burden in life. "Well, life's a burden, they say; why not be burdened cheerily?" asks Pierre. The horse imagery continues as Pierre, laden like a horse, "laden with shawls, parasole, reticule, and a small hamper," sees his burden simply in terms of appearances. "But look, ye, Lucy, I am going to enter a formal declaration and protest before matters go further with us. When we are married, I am not to carry any bundles, unless in case of real need; and what is more, when there are any of your young lady acquaintances in sight, I am not to be unnecessarily called upon to back up, and load for their particular edification."

"Now I am really vexed with you, Pierre; that is the first ill-natured innuendo I ever heard from you. Are there any of my young lady acquaintances in sight now, I should like to know?"

"Six of them, right over the way," said Pierre; "but they

keep behind the curtains. I never trust your solitary village streets, Lucy. Sharp-shooters behind every clap-board, Lucy."[59]

When Pierre is unhorsed and ceases to be horse-man, he also is unhorsed in the withdrawal of support by the horselike and heartless world of the very appearances by which the early Pierre lives. When he journeys to the city, his first difficulty is with a horse-cabby, and the horse-driver is not only insolent but refuses to obey Pierre's will. Pierre even has difficulty in finding a cab with which to make his necessary arrangements. Again, Pierre is caught in the hostility of worlds which, as a theme was first set up in the early Typee.

III

When we follow Pierre's career, our first introduction to him discloses why this enthusiast-rebel in his emotionally and intellectually young age does not invoke the hostility of Typee. When we first see him "issuing from the embowered and high-gabled old home of his fathers," he is "dewily refreshed and spiritualized by sleep," and "half-unconsciously" he wends his gay way to Lucy. The countryside is also one "verdant trance" and even "the brindled kine [are] dreamily wandering."[60] Yet before Pierre can do much more than show that he is at this point a perfect member of the animal-body-sleep-unconsciousness team, such as we have met in the Typees, and Samoas the Upoluans and in the gallant hams of Westphalia he reveals himself as a potential quester, one who has within him the predisposition which dictates his actions. At the same time he is placed in relationship to a God whose very answer

to prayer is a swindle.

> "Oh, had my father but had a daughter!" cried Pierre; "some one whom I might love, and protect, and fight for, if need be. It must be a glorious thing to engage in a mortal quarrel on a sweet sister's behalf! Now of all things, would to heaven, I had a sister!"
>
> Thus, ere entranced in the gentler bonds of a lover; thus often would Pierre invoke heaven for a sister; but Pierre did not then know, that if there be any thing a man might well pray against, that thing is the responsive gratification of some of the devotedest prayers of his youth.[61]

And again:

> But his profound curiosity and interest in the matter—strange as it may seem—did not so much appear to be embodied in the mournful person of the olive girl, as by some radiations from her, embodied in the vague conceits which agitated his own soul. There, lurked the subtler secret: that, Pierre had striven to tear away. From without, no wonderful effect is wrought within ourselves, unless some interior, responding wonder meets it.[62]

Pierre is an idealist, whose inner view of absolute should-be's has never come up against the woe which will make him see exterior realities are not the should be's. While blind to woe, time, and reality, he fully believes that the circumstances of his life, his history, and the external world are not mere appearances, that they are realities which are not only in accord with the absolute idealities but which prove them by the very fact of existence. And it is for this reason that he is a perfect, conforming representative of Typee. The predisposition of his very enthusiastic idealism marks him as animal-man, only in appearance, only while be believes and conforms to appearances. Rather he is the man of heart and consciousness who as yet has experienced no reason to realize that the idealistic dictates of his heart and consciousness run counter to the dictates of the world. And therefore the early

Pierre himself is an appearance rather than a reality, for it is not true that he has neither heart nor brain; there simply was no reason for their activation. In fact, his entire being is directed by his pride in his origins. For him, mankind never fell from grace, there was no Adam, or in more Melvillean terms, man had never played his own Satan to his own God. His father, for him, is at once a combination of God the Father (a smiling and benign One), the prelapsarian Adam, and in his purity and continuance of mankind's redemption into goodness and summer mornings, he is also Christ. Pierre simply has never read history and it is impossible for him to conceive of the heritage of history as a heritage of error and sin. When he discovers that his father himself had not lived up to the smiling appearances of world and history then the very cornerstone of the shrine to appearances built in Pierre's heart crumbles and the whole ediface topples into the dust of a total cosmas out of joint, inverted in world and in time. But Pierre has already established himself as an enthusiast and idealist. When Truth rolls black billows in his soul, he will not deny truth--cannot by the very definition of his being. He has to cast off everything as a lie, has to abandon the appearance of all phenomena as a guidepost to action and find the true motivating force for life and history. In short, he has to find God in order to be faithful to truth and the absolutes within him. And once Pierre places himself in this position, he is off on the old familiar chase, and once again the problem is not in defining the quester, but in defining God.

Immediately Pierre is caught in the dilemma of the quester. He abandons humanity and earth for God; this would be no dilemma if the leaving were also a coming, but there is no God or heaven to welcome the searching wanderer. But this is the conclusion. First we see that in the very instrument with which he must search, the quester is foredoomed: he can only search with the being that is natural man, and natural man cannot reach an ideal with non-ideal weapons—the ultimate irony of course is that there are no ideal weapons for man can not be anything else but man. The down-fall of early American Puritanism gave enough of a historical pre-cedent for the conclusion, but Melville the artist had to take the facts of raw history and schematize and thematize them, give them form, so that the meanings of those facts resolve into a guide whereby humanity can take its bearings. For instance, when Pierre burns his father's chair portrait, he says, "...so, so—lower, lower, lower; now all is done, and all is ashes! Henceforth, cast-out Pierre hath no paternity, and no past; and since the Future is one blank to all; therefore, twice-disinherited Pierre stands un-trammeldly his ever-present self! --free to do his own self-will and present fancy to whatever end!"[63] The "twice-disinherited Pierre" is to be the Pierre disinherited by heaven because it is not, as well as by the world that is.

He casts himself out, rejecting humanity and history in the one moment of casting himself adrift from the mother-ship of earth and society. This act of second hand murder, reaching backward through the generations is, as Taji has shown, an inconclusive

thing. The slate cannot be wiped clean in this way. Paradoxically, the feverish desire to embrace absolute truth makes the quester deceive himself by not reckoning with the truth of history at the moment he recognizes it. Because of the casting adrift which allows the ascension to the throne of self will, the only act which follows can be abdication—neither world nor time will be denied. Pierre falls into this trap as would be expected. For him the question is not, "What must I do?...such question never presented itself to Pierre; the spontaneous responsiveness of his being left no shadow of dubiousness as to the direct point he must aim at. But if the object was plain, not so the path to it. How must I do it? was a problem for which at first there seemed no chance of solution. But without being entirely aware of it himself, Pierre was one of those spirits, which not in a determinate and sordid scrutiny of small pros and cons—but in an impulsive subservience to the god-like dictation of events themselves, find at length the surest solution of perplexities, and the brightest prerogative of command."[64] There is at once the parallel to Tommo and Taji, the planning and scheming for withdrawal from the world, along with the consequent stealing—the taking of his belongings from the ancestral house from which he was already banished. So too this selection reveals the lie of independent self-will: the quester in his act of assertion, idealism, independence paves the path for this act with sustenance taken from the very world of humanity he rejects. The idealist is forced to non-ideal means of pursuit. In this case, the very Pierre who rejects history and

burns it in the fires of his idealism, becomes the most helpless pawn in the enthusiast's surrender to the river of events which flows not to the brightest prerogative of command but to the ultimate unmanning of the self-deluded "commander." Heros and Hero worship simply were not for Melville, for the flow of time always proves greater than the individual in all the novels.[65] And in comparison with Captain Vere, who does weigh consequences and goals before he acts, this passage highlights an "ambiguity" that is central to Melville's theme: the man who bows to Time and remains in the world in recognition of events is the only man who can attempt to manipulate futurities by carefully weighed action in the present; the man who leaps to command in an attempt to pierce Time, who believes himself superior to events, is unkinged, uncaptained, unmanned, unhorsed and has no command.

The now familiar motifs of murder and theft and deceit carry through in Pierre again. Pierre's preparations for withdrawal are accompanied by deceit not only to self but to world. He lies to Mrs. Glendinning about Isabel three times. He lies to Lucy. And he lies to himself and Isabel by pretending that he, a terrestrial inland being, can enter a relationship that will be governed by non-terrestrial, sea-like absolutes. Melville's irony is heightened by his own italics when he foreshadows the very blindness and lack of experience with which the youthful Pierre undertakes a task which is too much even for the Captain Ahabs: "...do not blame me if I here make repetition, and do verbally quote my own words in saying that it had been the choice fate of Pierre to have

<u>been born and bred in the country</u>."[66] The rest of the section from which this quote is taken is a continuation of satire and warning, but this one italicized clause is most germane to the attitude of the narrator who hoots and laughs and even sorrows a bit over this rash boy, Pierre. This very narrator states the basis of Pierre's unforgivable sin when he says of Pierre in his inversion of worlds:

> Thus, in the Enthusiast to Duty, the heaven-begotten Christ is born; and will not own a mortal parent, and spurns and rends all mortal bonds.[67]

The association of Pierre and Christ continues the heritage of the generation. Pierre's Father-God is one of duplicity, but only because in terms of what the world believes, he does not exist at all. Pierre himself now becomes at once the fallen Adam and the Christ, who, as he writes his novel would expose the lies of the world to mankind and would thus redeem man from appearances. But again the human heritage of the father is the only real heritage: Pierre is human, and as he undergoes crucifixion by the world he changes from lover to hater, from redeemer to murderer. In Pierre's own career is the working out of Plinlimmon's thesis: the heavenly Christ is the killer of the race because he espouses impossibilities by which man cannot live. The quester rejects the false appearances of human life and, as a false corollary, rejects humanity. He turns to the otherworld for absolutes by which to know and live—he must strike through the mask. But because the otherworld to which he turns is but the product of human illusion, he lives the greatest irony: rebuffed in both worlds he becomes

not the optimistic confidence man but the diabolized confidence man whose confidence in the existence of an attainable ultimate may be merely the last illusion of hatred rather than reverence. It is the old idea that Satan is the devoutest believer in God. As with Taji, we find within Pierre himself the tension which is externalized in the dualities of Isabel and Lucy, Isabel and Mrs. Glendinning. In theme as well as in symbol, Pierre is truly the central character, universal mankind in whose mind and heart the "universal war" of heaven and earth is fought throughout history. In Pierre's apostrophe to the God which is not there, the entire theme and plot are laid bare:

> Buide me, gird me, guard me, this day, ye sovereign powers's! Bind me in bonds I cannot break; remove all sinister allurings from me; eternally this day deface in me the detested and distorted images of the convenient lies and duty-subterfuges of the diving and ducking moralities of this earth. Fill me with consuming fire for them; to my life's muzzle cram me with your own intent. Let no world-siren come to sing to me this day, and wheedle from me my undauntedness. I cast my eternal die this day, ye powers. On my strong faith in ye invisibles, I stake three whole felicities, and three whole lives this day. If ye forsake me now,--farewell to Faith, farewell to Truth, farewell to God; exiled for aye from God and man, I shall declare myself an equal power with both; free to make war on Night and Day, and all thoughts and things of mind and matter, which the upper and the nether firmaments do clasp![68]

Every sentence of this apostrophe holds a novel-full of meaning. In the imagery alone there is the recreation of Melville's major characters even to the upper-nether soaring-sinking duality of Babbalanja and Yoomy. And so Pierre too, by soaring to heaven finds hell and by plunging into hell finds heaven. And by finding they are one and the same, sees the creating killing of Time which

is itself the God-hero. And thus the woe. For the man who realizes he has abandoned all for a nothing, the woe becomes murderous and suicidal madness. The important thing here is that Pierre, more than Ahab or Taji, has some insight into the possibility that there is nothing to strike to through the pasteboard masks. And when Pierre realizes that the quest is a futility and that there is no quest (Taji and Ahab were dead before the realization could come with certainty) he realizes that he is indeed twice disinherited and exiled for aye and that furthermore he is not an equal power with both earth and heaven but that he is shorn of all power. The further extension of Pierre is that the hero survives to be his own commentator, as if in this book Melville wished to take no chances of leaving his theme unclinched. Pierre has not warred with the diving and ducking moralities of this world in the proper or effective Media-manner; he cannot return to humanity. Lucy, who would return him, is the good angel who is committed to the impossible task: she cannot return the Christ-Satan down to humanity any more than Pierre can vault man up to heaven. For Pierre the salvation of human love she offers is now unobtainable: "Dead embers of departed fires lie by thee, thou pale girl; with dead embers thou seekest to relume the flame of all extinguished love!"[69] And in his final malediction upon Lucy and Isabel, he announces to the reader that he finally understands the idiocy of his carreer: "the fool of Truth, the fool of Virtue, the fool of Fate, now quits ye forever!"[70] When Lucy and Isabel visit him after the actual murder which is the logical extension of his gamble, he

places himself precisely in his point of balanced disinheritance from man and God; he himself is now only the neuter-hero fulcrum that balances the Terror Stone. Isabel, who would lure him to God becomes the bad angel, the Satan in man. Lost to the world that is and the world that isn't, Pierre's only choice is extinction. "Away!--Good Angel and Bad Angel both!--For Pierre is neuter now!" But the final statement and the final irony is not yet. Pierre's heart like Taji's, hardens to stone when broiled in the hellfires of his own idealism and the scorn of the world. His consciousness is made a blank, for the goal toward which it strove is itself a blank, like the Future that Pierre would master. In his total loss of humanity he is made a stonelike neuter by the "French" heritage of the fathers. (Is it too obvious to point out again that the French for stone is pierre?) In the rejection of the ducking and diving moralities of earth is the realization that man jails himself with delusion. At the moment of insight into the conventional appearances of his mother and her world, Pierre cries, "Oh, men are jailers all; jailers of themselves; and in Opinion's world ignorantly hold their noblest part a captive to their vilest...The heart! the heart! 'tis God's annointed; let me pursue the heart!"[72] And he proceeds to jail himself to death. For just as Pierre kills himself with a different kind of delusion, he is jailed by the world which cannot admit the reasons for his world-rejection. Lucy, when she reappears, senses that Pierre is more than terrestrial man: she makes the mistake of trying to make earth a place for Christ. Because she does not yet see the meaning of Christ and God, she, on

a lower level than Pierre, commits Pierre's basic sins all over again. When, in Pierre's word "brother" uttered to Isabel, Lucy realizes that he has been living a lie himself, (just as was Pierre's father before him) making her own sacrifice the meaningless action of another fool of virtue, she also dies. The final stone-qualities of Pierre kill her. On an allegorical level, she is the good angel of earth; insofar as she would become another Pierre, acting toward him as he had acted toward Isabel, she, on a subtler symbolic level, becomes bad angel too. In toto, Pierre the stone kills earth and quester when he kills Lucy. Isabel on an allegorical level is the bad angel of other-worldliness. Insofar as she activates Pierre's heart and consciousness, she is the good angel. Thematically, the "Good Angel and Bad Angel both" refers to each of the girls as it does to them together. Again, at the conclusion, Melville wraps up all the ambiguous dualities in one magnificent unity. And Pierre kills Isabel just as Isabel kills him. In toto, Pierre the stone kills man and quester when he kills Isabel. And when we reconsider Pierre as the embodiment of all the external tensions, we see that he again performs the double murder of man and quester when he commits suicide. Now, at this point, when visitors come to the jail to find Pierre and Lucy, the jailer admits them both at once, and as he throws open the door, he makes a remark which reaches far from the literal level of his conversation with two peripheral characters. In the heartbreaking irony that it is a <u>jailer</u> who says it and that he is totally blind to the referents of his words, plot meets theme at the one point

where the action is symbolized in seven words of dialogue:"'Kill 'em both with one stone, then,' wheezed the turnkey gratingly throwing open the door of the cell."[73] The structure of the plot becomes the structure of the theme; the structure of the whole book becomes the structure of the Terror Stone.

IV

Pierre is a more hopeless book than is Mardi. For there is no informed, heartful Media left to fight Mrs. Glendinning on earth with human weapons. Charlie Millthorpe is a good and heartful man, but he is an unconscious child. He has not earned the right to sum up Pierre in a final statement, and as he bends over Pierre saying, "Oh, I would have rallied thee, and banteringly warned thee from thy too moody ways, but thou wouldst never heed!" Melville makes up for what could have been an all-defeating thematic error (as it is, this reintroduction of Millthorpe is no more than another stylistic atrocity) by having Isabel repudiate Millthorpe: "All's o'er, and ye know him not!" No indeed. The apostles themselves, when men of little faith, were asked by Christ "Know ye not me?" How utterly impossible for the Apostle, Charlie Millthorpe (he is to Mrs. Glendinning what Jarl was to Hautia) to recognize the real aspects of the murderer-Christ Pierre or that other murderer-Christ Plinlimmon. At this point one might demand that we settle this "Christ business" once and for all. Just who is Christ, just how consistently is he presented? Simply, Christ is all the characters except those of the "banded world." At one point or another, Lucy, Isabel, Pierre, the father, Plinlimmon all act or

think in terms of otherworld--become questers of the active or inactive, articulate or inarticulate, heartfull or heartless, Apostle-leading or non-Apostle-leading kind. The repeated mentions of Christ place him as the archetypal, human quester. His equation, at one point or another, with the different characters are the dualities, the fragmented ambiguities which become the unity of the total-Christ character. This character can be summed up as one who has the highest moral and ethical perception (the true and earthly "divinity" or "God" in man—the good angel) but who centers these perceptions upon otherworldly origins rather than in the true origins of the history of mortality (the Titan, the Satan in man--the bad angel). Because he misdirects (bad, chronometrically-based) his perceptions (good, horologically originated) he 1. directs humanity to its murder and to the murder of his perceptions, or 2. fails to communicate the social realities he sees, so that a false picture of him is made by the world, and he is associated with the false view of otherworld which he himself directed. In either case, the wrong aspect of the Christ is what the Christ leaves to men. The right aspect could be the heritage only if the banded world changed its appearance-deluded concept of Christ. So in all events, the action must be earthly, not heavenly. In Pierre, Melville does not make the mistake he made in Mardi. In the earlier book, an unemphasized Media really became the thematic hero of the story. In Pierre there is no sudden and mechanical development of a character who will carry the information of Pierre's career into social action. In its greater

artistic purity, Pierre inevitably is further than Mardi from fitting the demands of real tragedy. The integrity of this book remains intact: "...from the fingers of Isabel dropped an empty vial —as it had been a run-out sand-glass—and shivered upon the floor; and her whole form sloped sideways, and she fell upon Pierre's heart, and her long hair ran over him, and arbored him in ebon vines."[74] Pierre's time-glass had run out and time conquers. Isabel claims Pierre's heart, but there is nothing left to claim. All that remains is the dark covering of the lure which points to God. The end is silence and stone.

V

The silence and sadness of heaven characterize the person who leads Pierre to the quester's doom. The pine tree which is Isabel's introductory symbol presents her primary qualities; "...while both trees are proverbially trees of sadness, yet the dark hemlock hath no music in its thoughtful boughs; but the gentle pine-tree drops melodious mournfulness." And as Pierre sits at the tree's "half-bared roots of sadness," he says, "How wide, how strong these roots must spread! Sure, this pine-tree takes powerful holdof this fair earth! Yon bright flower hath not so deep a root. This tree hath outlived a century of that gay flower's generations, and will outlive a century of them yet to come."[75] The thing which has its roots in earth (just as Isabel has her human origins) and which echoes the mournful melodies of God (just as Isabel's songs echo the echos of her heavenly mother's guitar) is the aspiring heaven assaulting divine in man, the conscious mournfulness of woe, and

as such it has its deepest roots in the earthly, human histories of man's development. (The tree introduces sadness to Pierre, and makes him think of woe: "Yet I have never known thee, Grief...but thou, Grief! art still a ghost story to me," says Pierre to the tree.) It is stronger than the as-yet unconsciousness of that bright flower, Lucy, and woe outlives generations of appearances. And so Isabel, the exact duplicate of Yillah in inverted coloring, also has strongest roots in earth, but the memories of origins are made otherworldly. Therefore, while this malleable and unconscious ideal wishes to enter the world, at the same time it believes the heavenly appearances of its true history and has its strongest urges to leave the world. In concrete terms, Isabel is then related to the earthly-otherworldly aspects of mournful, Godlike tree. Pierre continues, "...the wind, —that is God's breath! Is He so sad? Oh, tree! so mighty thou, so lofty, yet so mournful! ...Hark! as I look up into thy high secrecies, oh, tree, the face, the face, peeps down on me! —'Art thou Pierre? Come to me'—oh, thou mysterious girl...What, <u>who</u>, art thou? Oh! wretched vagueness—too familiar to me, yet inexplicable—unknown, utterly unknown! I seem to founder in this perplexity."[76] Here again is the tantalizing familiarity in which Yillah's Taji foundered; again the lure and the answering predisposition. And behind the lure are the attributes of God, is God himself. Yet Pierre, who is as yet unconscious and cannot fathom the identity of the mysterious beckonings, senses the ultimate consequences of his answering the call. The terms the narrator uses in Pierre's apostrophe

to the tree are all reflexive to the stone imagery, the fire imagery of Pierre's doom. "Hark, now I hear the pyramidical and numberless, flame-like complainings of this Eolian pine..."[77] And when Pierre begs God for the meaning of the mysterious Isabel, he sums up unconsciously the result of his Enceladus-attempt to storm heaven for the absolutes that following Isabel and the heart demands.

> Now, never into the soul of Pierre, stole there before, a muffledness thike this! If aught really lurks in it, ye sovereign powers that claim all my leal worshippings, I conjure ye to lift the veil; I must see it face to face. Tread I on a mine, warn me; advance I on a precipice, hold me back; but abandon me to an unknown misery, that it shall suddenly seize me and possess me, wholly, —that ye will never do; else Pierre's fond faith in ye—now clean, untouched—may clean depart; and give me up to be a railing atheist...deprived of joy, I feel I should find cause for deadly feuds with things invisible.[78]

Pierre's temporary reversion to Typee is understandable. As yet Isabel offers but presentiments. There is yet no experience which will verify the presentiment into a view of inverse reality. "Now, then, I'll up with my own joyful will; and with my joy's face scare away all phantoms: —so, they go; and Pierre is Joy's and Life's again. Thou pine-tree!—henceforth I will resist thy too treacherous persuasiveness. Thoul't not so often woo me to thy airy tent, to ponder on the gloomy rooted stakes that bind it."[79] But once the touch of God is made actual, once the letter is received, in one stroke, Joy becomes meaningless and the entire structured world of appearances collapses. Pierre needs no more verification of the letter than Hamlet needs of the ghost's words. At Isabel's beckoning, Pierre is off on the quest for the most illusory

appearance of all, and in the familiar irony is the entire story of Pierre at the first introduction of Isabel, just as there was the entire story of Taji at the first introduction of Yillah. The repetition here discloses the manner whereby Melville prepares for the doom of the quester. In all cases—Moby-Dick also has its share of omens and portents—the introduction of the lure is accompanied by reflexive language and a statement by the quester in which, at the same moment, the relationship of quester and lure is established and the doom of the quester is incorporated in symbolic language which afterwards becomes established in incident.

Isabel's characteristics are a repetition of Yillah's in every way. Isabel too is malleable, shaped by the will and purpose of the quester. Again and again Isabel tells Pierre that he forms her moods and molds her ideas, and again we see the informing ideal itself amorphous without the concrete facts of experience to activate it.

> "Thy hand is the caster's ladle, Pierre, which holds me entirely fluid. Into thy forms and slightest moods of thought, thou pourest me; and I there solidify to that form, and take it on, and thenceforth wear it, till once more thou moldest me anew. If what thou tellest me be thy thought, then how can I help its being mine, my Pierre?"[80]

Once the shape and activation have been found in the being of the quester, the lure really has no further function. Yillah could disappear—had to disappear by the very essence of her definition. Isabel continues to exist only so that the plot can continue Pierre's isolation. But even this consideration is not really valid, because Pierre can never go home again whether Isabel lived

or died. And in the attainment of Isabel, there is no solace of the ultimate. In fact, Pierre lives to see that the Yillah-Isabel does indeed become a mocking phantom, a bad angel, a root of destruction, a sterile flower.

> "The small white flower, it is our bane!" the imploring tenants cried. "The aspiring amaranth, every year it climbs and adds new terraces to its sway! The immortal amaranth, it will not die, but last year's flowers survive to this! The terraced pastures grow glittering white, and in warm June still show like banks of snow: --fit token of the sterileness the amaranth begets! Then free us from the amaranth, good lady, or be pleased to abate our rent."[81]

With Lucy there was the possibility of generative reproduction and continuation of human life into history--at this point the kind of human life is not the central consideration. But Isabel's sterility is of the Amaranth. Her bosom hides a vial of poison, the death dealing thing that is like an hour glass, and it is with this symbol of Time that is Isabel's contribution to Pierre's career that Pierre and Isabel find death.

> "...Girl! wife or sister, saint or fiend!" [cried Pierre] --seizing Isabel in his grasp--"in thy breasts, life for infants lodgeth not, but death-milk for me and thee!--The drug!" and tearing her bosom loose, he seized the secret vial nestling there."[82]

When we consider that Isabel contributes the vital elements of consciousness and heart to Pierre as well as death, we find a repetition of the Media theme. Incorrectly oriented consciousness and heart are as bad as lack of either. Death and suicide are the results. Consciousness and heart must be directed <u>to</u> not <u>from</u> earth.

Isabel is yet further specified. She longs for sea and sky, the Time-spheres wherein man cannot exist. Her desire to enter the

world "for which the dear Savior died" (again remember Yillah's attraction to Jarl's tattoo) is satisfied once the quester is claimed. Then Isabel, like Yillah, wishes only to return to Time and lifelessness, feeling that it is the goal toward which her life is tending. It is the premonition of reentrance into the still point of the turning world, the zero from which all birth and death derive. It is complete non-action, complete disinterest in man and earth. Isabel says of herself in relation to the world, "...my spirit seeks different food from happiness; for I think I have a suspicion of what it is. I have suffered wretchedness, but not because of the absence of happiness, and without praying for happiness. I pray for peace—for motionlessness—for the feeling of myself, as of some plant, absorbing life without seeking it, and existing without individual sensation. I feel that there can be no perfect peace in individualness. Therefore, I hope one day to feel myself drank up into the pervading spirit animating all things. I feel I am an exile here. I still go straying."[83] The transcendentalist's Brahma may make fancy theory, but in face of the realities of the Time God, it is self-deluding murder. Isabel, in short, never does go home until she dies. For Pierre, Isabel is the concretization of all the virtues which cry for a champion. As a general symbol, Isabel is the illusion that man believes to be his heavenly and immortal soul, his absolute, champion-deserving idealities attainable only in heaven. And again we come full circle in the mutually exclusive ironies of the quester's plight. It is soul, lure, Time, heaven and God that Melville sums up when he says,

"Appallingly vacant as vast is the soul of man." When Isabel sees the symbol of time, the sea-horizon, she displays no inland soul whatsoever. "Bell must go through there!" she cries. "See! See! out there upon the blue! yonder, yonder! far away—out, out!—far, far away, and away, and away, out there! where the two blues meet and are nothing—Bell must go!"[84] The sea-horizon, where depth meets height, where soul meets Time and all dualities merge in the unity of zero, that place, heaven, is—nothing. Indeed, Melville iterates, it is better that a man should be pushed beyond the furthest verge of physical space than to once feel himself fairly loose and adrift within himself. And again, the central character becomes the allegorized figure of everyman who symbolizes, in his relationship to all the characters external to him, humanity a prey to all its own conflicting beliefs and necessities within the total realm of racial memory and consciousness.

Isabel herself journeys as does Pierre. Her journey is the search for the champion-quester. And like Pierre, Isabel also is universal in time. As the stone imagery will show, before each crumbling world was a crumbled world preceded by a crumbled world. Like the sharks and the pilot fish, the history of the Mrs. Glendinnings and the Isabels is a set of mutually and infinitely reflecting mirrors. Isabel's first home is a crumbling remnant of a once proud civilization. The only inhabitants of the glory that was Europe—in this case France—are two old people, inhuman, black with age. So these ancient histories witness and abhor Isabel, the God-child sin-child who yearns for the divine parents ("earthly

mother had I none"). Just so the contemporary world witnesses Pierre, the sinning child, in his yearning for the divinity which will replace his fallen father. The book constantly goes back to ultimate beginnings in the history of mortality's plight and finds none, constantly hints forward to the end of mortality's plight and finds none. There is no China Wall that man can build in his history and say, this is the final conquest. But ever the sterile and frozen and uncreative North creates teeming hordes (here again is Time) which it sends out as evidence of Time's timelessness. No sooner is the whale killed and the ship cleared, than the shout goes up again, "There she blows!" and all weary mankind rushes out once more for another bout with the limitations of mortality. So Isabel's first home is a beginning and an end. A remnant. Empty, once grand rooms, crumbling marble mantlepieces, boarded up, once-glassed windows are all she sees. Beyond the house is the immortal and timeless forest, and somewhere beyond that another outpost of humanity in the mountain eternities, outposts from which dependent man lugs back his watery wine and black bread. Non-human earthly existence, is no more hospitable to Isabel the God-child than the last remnants of a decaying conventional society. The cat, the only other inhabitant of the house, scratches on the floor, claiming a room in the world, and when Isabel attempts to befriend it it hisses and claws at her. She runs terrified back to her own fainting loneliness. In all the world there is neither hope nor heart for the reality, the Time-child which lurks beneath the conventional appearances of religion's silken sash, beneath the accepted

child in the manger.[85] Mankind will not be hospitable to evidence that the appearance which it invests with anthropocentric interest and which it worships is a disinterested murderer. When we see present history acting toward Pierre as the cat and the old couple acted toward Isabel, man content with living but one more lie on the thin veneer of the present which coats the decay of the past, we come full circle back to the theme of Time as the only absolute, to the theme of the world's never having been redeemed from mortality, Jesus of Nazareth or no. All is a Palmyra. And the refusal to accept this one basic fact of existence makes all vanity.

Isabel's second home, the madhouse, is another view of mortal society. The house is peopled with creatures whose hearts were broken by their inability to attain God. They argue Fate and Hell and Heaven and Free Will, and they clutch their breasts and murmer, "Broken—broken—broken." They are all Pierre's who have not been lucky enough to die. They are all Pips, whose introduction to God has given him a wisdom that is madness in man's eyes. And, of course the conventional world locks them up and once again Opinion makes jailers all of men. Yet Isabel wishes to find the very escape from mortality which drove these people mad. She is hardly human and the madmen are completely human. The sea drives Pip mad, but it would have been home to Isabel, just as it was the final home for Yillah. Isabel constantly has to remind herself of her humanity. "When I saw a snake...I said to myself, That thing is not human, but I am human. When the lightning flashed, and split some beautiful tree, and left it to rot from all its greeness

[here is God again], I said, That lightning is not human, but I am human."[86] Yet Isabel never really gains the human experience, despite her life of hard work, which can ever allow her to feel that she is anything but a stranger in and to life. China's time and Greenwich's time simply do not exist on the same terms. And once more we come full circle in Melville's characterization to find the reason for the muteness, the confusedness, the fantasy, the malleability of Isabel and Yillah. Once more it must be emphasized that the informing ideal is itself a shapeless, will-less thing which, when it touches the human, active quester, is able to activate his own will and iron-grooved determination for all the wrong purposes. The tragedy is all in the narrator's view in Pierre. The heartbreak is not that Ahab and Taji and Pierre were activated by the whale, Yillah and Isabel, but that they could not be activated by Starbuck, Jarl, and Lucy. Once more we have an adumbration of Captain Vere's true greatness.

So the passive Isabel finds that in the world all that happens to her is imposed from without, wherein is the large differentiation between the quester and the lure. Just as she lies within the hollow of Pierre's hand, she lies in the hollow of Time-imposed events. Even the succession of houses wherein she lived, in mountain or in plain, were all in hollows, slope-surrounded. And the narrator observes about God: "He holdeth all of us in the Hollow of his hand—a Hollow truly." And truly nothing is more hollow than zero.

Counterpointing Isabel's tale of woe, punctuating the story of

the almost non-human child whose griefs are all consequences of the parents, are the footsteps of Delly Ulver, the all-human whose counterpointing woe is a consequence of her childbirth. The motifs merge into unity with the introduction of Delly. The world that lives by appearances casts out the child resulting from the incest of Coelus and Terra, the heaven and earth coupling of the earthly father and the heavenly mother of Isabel, for the conventional world will not tolerate the change of worlds. But the same world casts out the child and parents who on a very terrestrial level do not conform to the rigors of Opinion and convention. In the affinity of like predicaments, Isabel allies herself to Delly, who in terms of her humanity is really Isabel's "opponent" just as is Lucy. And again, the more we explore the book's characters, the more we find that action is pragmatically judged in a fine parallel to the total view of the book's anti-idealism. Like Pierre, the only solution Isabel can offer Delly is isolation, seclusion and withdrawal from the world.[87] Effected the same by the banded world of convention, Delly's history is part of Isabel's. Isabel can no more renounce Delly than the pine-tree can renounce its own roots that strike deep into the earth, nor any more than she can renounce her own father and human heritage. No more can Pierre renounce his human heritage as much as he deludes himself that he can. Ironically, it is the very act of apparent renunciation (and it is this that makes Pierre "fool, fool, fool") which leads to the acceptance of Delly—Delly who is merely Lucy minus potentialities. In a fine symbol of the irony of Pierre's and Isabel's situation, Delly is

the humanity that they forsake and yet bring with them as an inescapable burden of their very history and their very act of renunciation.

When the three move to the Apostles, it is Delly who is closest to the warmth of life and everyday common humanity. Her room is the kitchen, where the warmth-bearing stovepipe originates. Isabel comes between Pierre and humanity. Once she activates him, she cannot, even when she will, induce him to return closer to the roots that he can never deny in the first place. There is no room for compromise in the choice between Lucy and God. At the very beginning, Pierre "became vaguely sensible of a certain still more marvelous power in [Isabel] over himself and his most interior thoughts and motions; —a power so hovering upon the confines of the invisible world, that it seemed more inclined that way than this; —a power which not only seemed irresistably to draw him toward Isabel, but to draw him away from another quarter—wantonly as it were, and yet quite ignorantly and unintendingly; and besides, without respect apparently to anything ulterior, and yet again, only under cover of drawing him to her."[88] So Isabel's room in the Apostles pushes Pierre to the furthest corner from warmth and common humanity. The stovepipe just enters Pierre's room, and then turns out of it through the wall: "...moreover, it was in the furthest corner from the only place where, with a judicious view to the light, Pierre's desk-barrels and board could advantageously stand."[89]

To sum up Isabel, we can say that she, like Yillah, is heaven's representative. The ambiguity exists in that she is human, for

always the tensions of theme must be resolved on earth for Melville. She is pictured like the pine tree rooted to earth but making mysterious and mournful melody with her guitar as she yearns for the other world. In fact, there is only one mistake Melville made with her, a mistake which he happily avoided making with Yillah. As the representative of ultimate silence, she, like Yillah, is mute, noncommunicative, to be interpreted only by her relationship with the book's other characters. Yet Yillah was truly mute. The narrator was able to present her history second hand, either through Taji's recapitulation or through the sons of Aleema. But in Pierre Melville makes the mistake of allowing Isabel to tell her own story, so that the person who is supposed to be inarticulate becomes one of the most articulate characters in the novel. Melville tried to live up to his intentions by emphasizing Isabel's confusions and lapses of memory and her repeated admonitions to Pierre that he be silent while she collects herself from her mystical mazes in order to arrange her thoughts. But after three or four pages of semi-poetic articulation, the sudden interjections of "But let me be silent again. Do not answer me. When I resume, I will not wander so, but make short end," become peremptory and unconvincing.[90] The admonitions come at regular and mechanical intervals that do not have any special connection with Isabel's story at the moment, so that even though they have a definite symbolic function, they become artificial and irritating, like the appearances of Hautia's messengers. Secondly, Yillah was always kept in seclusion, and had good cause to be steeped in otherworldliness. But Isabel has had a

life of work and experience. On the one hand, her earthly life points up even more Isabel's essential non-earthly being, which even in adult fears is still vague and mystical. On the other hand, it is just plain unconvincing. In getting away from the figures of cardboard allegory he created in Mardi, Melville, in creating Isabel, partly defeated his own purpose. The self defeat, though is in itself a revelation of theme: how can a human represent the non-human in Melville's terms? How can she have so much voice to tell of so much silence? Melville needed not a person, but a little brown stone as independent as the sun, the silent essence of casual simplicity of Emily Dickinson's poem. But faced with the necessity of creating a living person, Melville could not avoid the difficulties which after all, do not negate Isabel's effectiveness in the book.

VI

The view of the God that Isabel represents is refracted further through the introduction of Plotinus Plinlimmon. It is important to notice that there is a difference between the man and the pamphlet, "IF," which Pierre reads on the coach. Briefly, the pamphlet espouses a doctrine of comfortable expediency. God and Greenwich time are one, earth and China time are one. (The very metaphor of time is significant.) The absolute ideals of Greenwich time are practicable only in heaven, where there is no need to strive for ideal in the first place. Therefore, man must live by China time, and must model his actions after whatever behavior will make things most comfortable for himself <u>individually</u>. The individual should benefit

others only if it is comfortable at the moment to do so, only if it preserves the individual and does not bring him into danger of the Greenwich-time action that the rest of the China world will not accept or understand. In brief, turn your back on the otherworld and Christ's ideals, and live according to the necessities of earth.

At first glance, this pamphlet, highlighting Pierre's plight as it does, would seem to advocate the very doctrine that Melville calls for thematically in all his books. Yet, when we stop to consider, we find that it is exactly this kind of action which characterizes the conventional world, and it is exactly by these standards that Glen Stanley performs his acts of heartlessness. In its emphasis on personal rather than racial security, the pamphlet implies (what happens when it is not convenient to be beneficient?) a continuation of the social realities of woe that ostensibly it seeks to ameliorate. The pamphlet offers a doctrine of heartlessness that is masked by cheerful comfort, just like its author, Plotinus. It is by these very standards that Reverend Falsgrave acts, the Reverend who in selling whatever absolute ideals may originally inhere in Christ-ianity for the comforts of his breakfasts, is the complete time-server.[91] The pamphlet, the reverend, Glen Stanley, make up the rationale and the manifestation of the conventional world. The pamphlet is not a reformation; it is an apologia. The Reverend, when cornered in a choice between a right and a wrong, cannot find an answer according to the dictates of heart, cannot find an answer that is compatible with the realities of humanity but incompatible with the appearance values of the formidable Mrs.

Glendinning. He evades by saying that there are no absolutes or ideal moralities that can govern every situation. In one sense, the book's theme agrees with this. But in the most basic sense, the book's theme discards this in the context it is given, as the diving and ducking moralities of a conventional world which is not willing to accept moral responsibility for man to man, for human history. If there is an absolute morality for Melville, its basis has nothing to do with appearances. Its basis would depend upon whatever the human heart demands in the strengthening of human community and realization, so that humanity will not aid time by killing itself and jailing itself with appearances and time-serving. Falsgrave demonstrates that the time-serving qualities of the pamphlet are time-serving in the largest, most pragmatic sense: it is inimical to real humanity. In his time serving, the blind and unchristian Christian manofgod ironically serves the reality of a God that he rejects, whose appearances only he would accept. He leads to a false grave in terms of what he believes and espouses. He leads, ironically, to the true grave of murderous extinction, in the actualities of his actions. As with all of Melville's characters, the action taken in accordance with accepted appearances turns out ironically to have consequences in accordance with the rejected realities. Thus Pierre's rejection of humanity leads to his forced acceptance of his most common mortality; Falsgraves time-serving refusal to help the true God-seeker results in true Time-serving and the destruction of the very appearances (the Glendinning estate and family) from which he drew his sustenance and which he tried to preserve. Thus all the characters embrace the

false God and the true God, the heaven and the hell, the delusive innocence and the illusive sin. It is at the moment that Falsgrave demurs that there are no absolute moralities to apply to the case of Delly and Ned, that his white, surplice-like napkin drops from his chin, revealing a cameo brooch depicting the union of the dove and the serpent. And this epiphany expands symbolically to every level, from appearance and reality in the conventional world, to the view of God, to the technique of the novel itself, which, like the Encanatadas tortoise is both black and bright, uniting mutually contradicting meanings and aspects in the one body of Time in terms of theme and of irony in terms of technique and of origins in terms of motif.

The objection to Plinlimmon's pamphlet, then, becomes an objection not of emphasis, but of direction. Plinlimmon's pamphlet has no goal for the total race. Community disappears in individual selfishness, and the human heart is denied all over again. Moreover, the pamphlet is based upon an assumption that even though the ideal absolutes of heaven are not for man on earth, they at least exist, and can at least inform a saint here, a saint there, despised as he may be. Pierre's career demonstrates that the "saint" thus informed is more than an object of dislike: he is, like the Christ, the murderer of race as well as of self. In short, man murders himself with the mammoth engine of delusion. The underlying reality that the pamphlet sees for Greenwich time is in itself a misleading appearance. Characteristically, the pamphlet is correct about expedient action, in telling man why he should turn

his back on heaven; it is incorrect in its definitions. It does not strike through to truth, and expediency remains a meaningless expediency per se. In the pamphlet is no shock of recognition.

But when we see the man, we see something else again. Plinlimmon, we are told, did not write his pamphlet. It is the garbled version constructed by disciples from Plinlimmon's lectures. The pamphlet is garbled heartlessness; Plinlimmon is meaningful and intentional heartlessness. Plinlimmon does not write, Plinimmon does not read, Plinlimmon does not communicate, and it is this that is central to his definition. The pamphlet was a directionless and unprofound heartlessness. The man is something quite more deceptive and dangerous. Plinlimmon is also a Christ figure. He leads a band of Apostles, none of whom understand him, all of whom think they understand him and who interpret him. But he is more than that. He is withdrawn both from this world and otherworld. He is totally withdrawn into self. Not only does Plinimmon not communicate, but he lives apart and above, in the loftiest room of the Apostles' tower.

> Very early after taking chambers at the Apostles', /Pierre/ had been struck by a steady observant blue-eyed countenance at one of the loftiest windows of the old grey tower...Only through two panes of glass--his own and the stranger's--had Pierre hitherto beheld that remarkable face of repose,--repose neither divine nor human, nor anything made up of either or both--but a repose separate and apart--a repose of a face by itself.[92]

The selfishness, the anti-heavenly orientation of whatever ideas the apostles had written into the pamphlet "IF," indicates that Plinlimmon has had his insight into the true nature of God as a zero. At one time, the narrator muses, Plinlimmon must have read,

written, searched. Plinlimmon, like the God he recognizes, is totally disinterested in humanity and its destiny. But Plinlimmon is man, not God, so his heartlessness attainment of ahumanity is the utmost self-ishness. He locks himself away with the truth because his only interest is perpetuation of the repose which is the perfect balance between reality and realization, between preservation and annihilation—the balance of the Memnon Stone, the balance of the book itself. Plinlimmon becomes, like Time, ahuman, still, the center of feverish activities and fevered actors. He has reached the Nirvana-like state for which Isabel yearns, and he will not abandon his withdrawal and thereby jeopardize his state of equilibrium and repose.

> Vain! vain! vain! said [Plinlimmon's] face to [Pierre]. Fool! fool! fool! said the face to him. Quit! quit! quit! said the face to him. But when he mentally interrogated the face as to why it thrice said Vain! Fool! Quit! to him; here there was no response. For that face did not respond to anything. Did I not say before that that face was something separate and apart; a face by itself? Now, any thing which is thus a thing by itself never responds to any other thing. If to affirm be to expand one's isolated self; and if to deny be to contract one's isolated self; then to respond is suspension of all isolation.[93]

This self-contained face hermetically sealed between two panes of glass is Melville's view of the quietist. He has not been introduced before into the list of Melville's characters—indeed, "One adequate look at that face conveyed to most philosophical observers a notion of something not before included in their scheme of the Universe."[94] Plinlimmon is the quietist who reaches the full realization that Media had reached—a realization superior to Ahab's and equal to Pierre's just before Pierre dies, except that

Plinlimmon will not risk involvement in the world as does Media and will not court extinction as do the activist world-spurners, Ahab and Pierre. He is not the needed hero. He is not the complete man. His selfishness is the superiority of the man who does not risk the possible failure inherent in the activation of human insights. In his complete and selfish willingness to let the rest of the world bash its brains out against stone walls against which he will never tilt, Plinlimmon is the essential heartlessness that characterizes the unconscious conventional world for which his pamphlet becomes an apologia. He is beyond caring in any way, beyond wishing good or ill to anything exterior to himself, and in this he is malignant.

> The whole countenance of this man, the whole air and look of this man, expressed a cheerful content. Cheerful is the adjective, for it was the contrary of gloom; content—perhaps acquiescence—is the substantive, for it was not Happiness or Delight. But while the personal look and air of this man were winning, there was still something latently visible in him which repelled. That something may best be characterized as non-Benevolence. Non-Benevolence seems the best word, for it was neither Malice nor Ill-will; but something passive. To crown all, a certain floating atmosphere seemed to invest and go along with this man. That atmosphere seems only renderable in words by the term Inscrutableness. Though the clothes worn by this man were strictly in accordance with the general style of any unobtrusive gentleman's dress, yet his clothes seemed to disguise this man. One would almost have said, his very face, the apparently natural glance of his very eye, disguised this man.[95]

In the self-sufficient nothingness of the man is God. He is a lie. The aspects of his humanity are a lie, for he has attained ahumanity and is not to be judged by the unavoidable familiarity of exterior form. In one sense he truly is Christ. But in his quietism he goes beyond any kind of morality, even the absolutes of the apparent

Christ. He hides his realization beneath the mask of mystic inscrutability. To describe the zero which in his insightful view of God is his acquiescence, is to expose himself and to lose his secluded apartness. Rather, then, than be the Prometheus with his knowledge, he chooses his own cheerfulness (there can be no happiness or delight in realizing that God does not exist) at the cost of universal woe. In this heartlessness he becomes Melville's worst villain. To the Pierre who pours his heart out trying to instruct humanity away from woe, writing from the depths of his own woe, the self-centered quietism of Plinlimmon begins to assume its real villainy: in effect of its nonaction, the repose is more than non-Benevolence: "Though this face in the tower was so clear and so mild; though the gay youth Apollo was enshrined in that eye, and paternal old Saturn sat cross-legged on that ivory brow; yet somehow to Pierre the face at last wore a sort of malicious leer to him."[96] In comparison with this new monster, Pierre finally begins to merit some sympathy. While it may be true that Pierre hurries life to death, Plinlimmon knows it—and lets him. The maliciousness and villainy need not be conscious or active. Death is the result in either case, and it is the results that are judged; and we find that Pierre's murder stems from altruistic intentions, whereas Plinlimmon's acquiescence to murder stems from selfishness. In short, the man who knows and does nothing is the conscious deceiver and murderer. The man who does not know but who tries is the enthusiast who is the inadvertant (to a point) deceiver and murderer.

His disguise hides his double aspect: he is Christ and he is fraud. (As far as Melville's other-world is concerned, the two are one.) He cares not what his followers believe or what they believe he believes. He lets them scrub away with their flesh-brushes because otherwise he would have to replace all the peripheral nonsense of their transcendentalism with the central core of his own realizations. And of course he will not share the repose of his quietism for, as the narrator explained, the very act of sharing, the very act of communication and response destroys the isolation which is central to Plinlimmon's quietism. He is a fraud to the whole world.

> Finding Plinlimmon thus unfurnished either with books or pen and paper, and imputing it to something like indigence, a foreign scholar, a rich nobleman, who chanced to meet him once, sent him a fine supply of stationery, with a very fine set of volumes, —Cardan, Epictetus, the Book of Mormon, Abraham, Tucker, Condorcet and the Zend-Avesta. But this noble foreign scholar calling next day—perhaps in expectation of some compliment for his great kindness—started aghast at his own package deposited just without the door of Plinlimmon, and with all fastenings untouched.
>
> "Missent," said Plotinus Plinlimmon placidly: "if any thing I looked for some choice Curacoa from a nobleman like you. I should be very happy, my dear Count, to accept a few jugs of choice Curacoa."
>
> "I thought that the society of which you are the head excluded all things of that sort" —replied the Count.
>
> "Dear Count, so they do; but Mohammed hath his own dispensation."
>
> "Ah! I see," said the noble scholar archly.
>
> "I am afraid you do not see, dear Count" —said Plinlimmon; and instantly before the eyes of the Count, the inscrutable atmosphere eddied and eddied round about this Plotinus Plinlimmon.[97]

There is no need to live by the concept of idealistic absolutes which have no otherworldly basis, Plinlimmon realizes. But in the

very choice of gifts is the repeated statement of his refusal to share realizations: he rejects a gift which is composed of means of communication in favor of a gift which would be composed of personal comfort. By now Plinlimmon as a character should be sufficiently clear. He is our first view of the Conscious Confidence Man and he is the archetype of that man. There is the delusion of the Typee dwellers, in which man is confidence man to man; but this is a lesser swindle because it is unconscious. There is the swindle which pride makes upon the world, and this is a little worse because it is an act of strength, and act which leads the blind Typee into further delusion. Then there is the confidence man who is the quester, and this swindle is even worse yet because it utilizes the very instruments that can free man from delusion in a search for the ultimate illusion. Then there is the confidence man who is Plinlimmon, who deceives blind humanity and proud humanity consciously, and who deceives the quester with silence. Plinlimmon is the archetypal confidence man, but he is cosmically only the penultimate. The ultimate confidence man is God, Time, not because it consciously works a swindle, but because it is totally unconscious of the attributes it is supposed to have and of the existence which endows it with those attributes. Plinlimmon who is conscious of God's true being is man's worst swindler, man's worst jailer for he activates nothing, illuminates nothing, liberates nothing; his realizations could make a Media of every quester, but his conspiracy of selfish silence only aids and abets all the crimes and deceptions and swindles and jailings and murders

and suicides of history.

It becomes less important that Plinlimmon's followers are fools than that they are human. In relation to Plinlimmon, Charlie Millthorpe, Pierre's boyhood friend, is exposed as the lesser kind of confidence man who is not malicious or harmful in action—or lack of it. He deceives himself with his egotism; he deceives himself into believing that he has insight and brilliance, when he is but a good natured fool. "Our Grand Master, Plotinus Plinlimmon!" says Charlie to Pierre. "By gad, you must know Plotinus thoroughly, as I have long done."[98] Of course this man can never know the real Plinlimmon, but he is, in a way, more important than Plinlimmon. Plotinus reduces himself to an inoperative zero. Charlie has beneath the coverings of egotism and goodnatured stupidity, a genuinely good heart, the element which when informed would champion Delly as Plinlimmon's advocate, Falsgrave, would not. Millthorpe scatters good quite as easily and unconsciously as he scatters stupidity, but he is at least, like Jarl, necessary, wholesome, and filled with the potential which could regenerate mankind. After helping Pierre, Charlie skips gayly out of the apartment, and Pierre muses after Millthorpe, "Plus heart, minus head," muttered Pierre, his eyes fixed on the door. "Now, by heaven! the god that made Millthorpe was both a better and a greater than the god that made Napoleon or Byron [and certainly better than the god that made Plinlimmon]. —Plus head, minus heart—Pah! the brains grow maggoty without a heart; but the heart's the preserving salt itself, and can keep sweet without the head."[99]

The God that made all, however, is the same God that destroys the heart; here a brief look at the novel's stone imagery will disclose the definition of the god that becomes the book's most powerful character.

VI

The first stone we see is the supposedly eternal marble of the shrine which Pierre builds in his heart to the memory of his family. It is the stone of ideality and vanity. We remember the narrator's purpose in emphasizing that Pierre was born in the country. It is the apparent Eden, and "in Pierre's eyes, all its hills and swales seemed as sanctified through their very long uninterrupted possession by his race. That fond ideality which, in the eyes of affection, hallows the least trinket once familiar to the person of a departed love; with Pierre that talisman touched the whole earthly landscape about him."[100] This is the first stone to crumble, the fond ideality which will disappear and leave the world unhinged. The early Pierre, "the only surnamed male Glendinning extant...in the ruddiness, and flushfulness, and vain-gloriousness of his youthful soul...fondly hoped to have a monopoly of glory in capping the fame-column, whose tall shaft had been erected by his noble sires."[101] The appearance of the glory-stones erected by men is supposedly condoned by the traditionally accepted God: "Thus in Pierre was the complete polished steel of the gentleman, girded with Religion's silken sash; and his great-grandfather's soldierly fate had taught him that the generous sash should, in the last bitter trial, furnish its wearer with Glory's shroud; so that what through life had been

worn for Grace's sake, in death might safely hold the man."[102]

And then immediately the narrator presents the juxtaposition of warning that Religion's God's secret reality gives the lie to conventional faith and that the realization of the lie is humanity's burden of woe.

> But while thus all alive to the beauty and poesy of his father's faith, Pierre little foresaw that this world hath a secret deeper than beauty, and Life some burdens heavier than death.[103]

But what is the quality of the reality of God that should tumble all appearances into meaninglessness? Picking up the stone imagery again, the narrator gives the answer in an identification of God that is the key to Melville's symbolism. Directly after the introduction of Pierre's marble shrine, the narrator adds this all-important paragraph:

> In all this, how unadmonished was our Pierre by that foreboding and prophetic lesson taught, not less by Palmyra's quarries, than by Palmyra's ruins. Among those ruins is a crumbling, uncompleted shaft, and some leagues off, ages ago left in the quarry, is the crumbling corresponding capital, also incomplete. These Time seized and spoiled; these Time crushed in the egg; and the proud stone that should have stood among the clouds, Time left abased beneath the soil. Oh, what quenchless feud is this, that Time hath with the sons of Men![104]

The parallel to the early Pierre is no less obvious than the parallel to the later Pierre as Enceladus, the Titan who tried to storm the ramparts of heaven to regain equality with God. God becomes removed from any Christian concept; but for purposes of symbolic imagery, he is clothed in the disguising Christian terms of God and Satan. Thus Melville's Satanism and demonism is no more than the recognition of life's secret of woe, Melville's Titanism is no more

than man's attempt to conquer and abolish the cause of that woe: mortality. God, Satan, Hell, Heaven are all man, are all man-made concepts manifesting the facts of existence, all within man the quester, all of man the quester, all subordinated to and enveloped in the nothingness that is the killer-creator, Time. And so all men are mortal sons of Adam, sons of Men, not sons of God with which man can never be equal. And of course, Enceladus, who like the quester has an earthly heritage in the incest of early origins, can never conquer zero, can never be equal with Time and is abased beneath the soil figuratively and literally by the facts of his mortality. There is no doubt about the definition of God. In presenting Pierre's dream of Enceladus, Melville ties in the stones of Palmyra, the origins of Isabel, the goal of the quester, all made specific in the identification between Pierre and the Titan. A heap of rocks and stones on the approaches to the mount of the Titans has been cast from the heights so that they form a rough-hewn form of the sky-assaulting Enceladus, the Titan. Abased like the stones of Palmyra, there was "Enceladus the Titan, the most potent of all the giants, writhing from out the imprisoning earth; —turbaned with upborne moss he writhed; still, though armless, resisting with his whole striving trunk, the Pelion and the Ossa hurled back at him; --turbaned with upborne moss he writhed; still turning his unconquerable front [this is timeless, this is all of human history] toward that majestic mount eternally in vain assailed by him, and which, when it had stormed him off, had heaved his undoffable incubus upon him, and deridingly left him there to bay

out his ineffectual howl."[105] Also characterizing the approach to the unassailable mountain is the warfare between the catnip and the amaranth. "Soon you would see the modest verdure of the [catnip] itself; and wheresoever you saw that sight, old foundation stones and rotting timbers of log-houses long extinct would also meet your eye [remember Isabel's first home?]; their desolation illy hid by the green solicitudes of the unemigrating herb. Most fitly named the catnip; since, like the unrunugate cat, though all that's human forsake the place, that plant will long abide, long bask and bloom on the abandoned hearth. [Remember the cat scratching on the hearth, the cat that hissed at the God-child, God-hungerer, Isabel?] Illy hid; for every spring the amaranthine and celestial flower gained on the mortal household herb; for every autumn the catnip died, but never an autumn made the amaranth to wane."[106] Then, in order that there be no doubt left about the symbolism, the narrator adds, "The catnip and the amaranth! —man's earthly household peace, and the ever-encroaching appetite for God." And lest even at this point there be any doubt that Pierre, under the amaranth influence of Isabel is really assaulting Time, questing for God, the narrator makes the last equation that the unconvinced reader may now need. In his dream, Pierre watched as the stone Titan "turned his vast trunk into a battering-ram, and hurled his own arched-out ribs again and yet again against the invulnerable steep.

> "Enceladus! it is Enceladus!" —Pierre cried out in his sleep. That moment the phantom faced him; and Pierre saw Enceladus no more; but on the Titan's armless trunk, his own duplicate face and features magnifiedly gleamed

> upon him with prophetic discomfiture and woe. With trembling frame he started from his chair, and woke from that ideal horror to all his actual grief.[107]

In this selection is a further theme which is continued in the stone imagery. Enceladus is "that deathless son of Terra."[108] The green catnip dies each fall in autumnal rot and yet is reborn each spring. The cat, for Pierre, is still around after all the symbolic centuries have passed since Isabel's first home. There is a growing hint that the mortal sons of man are as immortal as the Time they mistakenly war against. Yet how can this be? The images of stone and green once again create Melville's view of history to show that man's only immortality is in his collective and historic mortality—the heritage of each generation handed down to the next in all the awful responsibilities of Time.[109] For instance, the Mount of the Titans is presented as sterile and hideous upon the close view which belies the distant appearances. "Nevertheless, round and round those still enchanted rocks, hard by their utmost rims, and in among their cunning crevices, the misanthropic hill-scaling goat nibbled his sweetest food; for the rocks, so barren in themselves, distilled a subtle moisture, which fed with greenness all things that grew about their igneous marge."[110] To pick up the answer to how the zero of Time, or God, as you will, can be both killer and creator, we have to turn to another example of the stone imagery.

When the narrator equates Pierre's proud marble glory-structure with the stones of Palmyra abased beneath the soil, he makes a transition into the next section, in which he examines human

history in relation to Time. "Certainly that common saying among us, which declares, that a family, conspicuous as it may, a single half-century shall see it abased; that maxim undoubtedly holds true with the commonalty."[111] In this observation, Melville couples Pierre's present American history with Isabel's ancient European, French history—in their mortality they are basically the same: there is cycle beyond cycle. Indeed, in this entire section, the narrator not only makes European history as transient as American, but in tracing the unchartered aristocracy of old American families, he makes American history as permanent as European, and then in the next section he follows through from the generalizations to place the deed's of Saddle Meadows in the aboriginal beginning point of three Indian Kings. Throughout, history, the implication is, goes back everywhere to the symbolic Adam who is simply the first mortal man. Using the abased stone as the point of departure, Melville adds the motif of greenness and explains the common history and heritage of all men.

> The monarchical world very generally imagines, that in demagoguical America the sacred Past hath no fixed statues erected to it, but all things urreverently seethe and boil in the vulgar cauldron of an everlasting uncrystalized Present.[112]

Once he associates Time with history, the narrator goes on to explain why the American everlasting and uncrystallized Present is a truer picture of the fact of eternity than the vainglorious pretensions of the European "eternal" aristocratic families. At once he introduces France, which here becomes representative not only of the crumbling European history that was concretized in Isabel's

early home, but also of the otherworld of Time as suggested by Isabel's divine mother-heritage. And he unites the two with an image of greenness that works both ways:

> In our cities families rise and burst like bubbles in a vat. For indeed the democratic element operates as a subtile acid among us, forever producing new things by corroding the old; as in the south of France verdigris, the primitive material of one kind of green paint, is produced by grape-vinegar poured upon copper plates. Now in general nothing can be more significant of decay than the idea of corrosion; yet on the other hand nothing can more vividly suggest luxuriance of life, than the idea of green as a color; for green is the peculiar signet of all-fertile Nature herslef.[113]

In short, Time as eternal, by the very nature of its definition and its relationship to mortality, supplies the passage of ages which rots one mortal structure only to supply more ages which create new structures out of the fertilizing rot of the past. And so the barren rocks, themselves sterile, distill the liquids which birth the greenest things. Thus the act of Time's creation is necessarily the act of Time's killing; coupled with the woe which is humanity's realization that no single thing lasts forever--not the physical man nor the man's soul safely bound in Religion's silken sash--is the potential strength of humanity's realization of its own collective and racial immortality. Only the quester, only man can really murder man with no regenerative results. Time left alone to itself must create by the fact of its killing, and so Terra is as immortal as Coelus; mortality is as immortal as eternity. This is the explanation for Pierre's sin in rejecting humanity. It is the rejection of the very immortality, God, Time, absolute which he as Enceladus seeks.

And again, in order not to let his theme escape the unconvinced reader, Melville returns to a statement about American history, in its democratic everchanging eternal present, as the most compatible with the actualities of Time:

> Herein by apt analogy we behold the marked anomalousness of America; whose character abroad, we need not be surprised, is misconceived, when we consider how strangely she contradicts all prior notions of human things and how wonderfully to her, Death itself becomes transmuted into Life. So that political institutions, which in other lands seem above all things intensely artificial, with America seem to possess the divine virtue of a natural law; for the most mighty of Nature's laws is this, that out of Death she brings Life.[114]

Melville here takes his place with his contemporaries in the nationalism with which American history is viewed in comparison with the European. It is part and parcel of the anti-traditionalism of Whitman, Howells, Emerson, Twain. With all his contemporaries, Melville reasoned from a view of God to the human institution. But unlike his contemporaries, Melville with his view of God was able to create a modern theme out of an outmoded methodology. Melville's democracy depended not upon a transcendent or idealistic view of God but upon a view of God which necessitated modern relativism and pragmatism. It is in this basic view rather than in basic methodology that Melville stands apart from all his contemporaries except possibly Emily Dickinson and the late productions of Mark Twain. The naturalist and realist and all the strictly 20th century American writers (regardless of the 19th century chronology of Crane, Dreiser, etc.) saw that since there is no traditional God, man cannot reason from a view of God to a view of man. And in this, the 20th century largely split from the 19th..

Melville saw God much as many 20th century writers see God, but he insisted that man can still reason from God to man, but must use new methodologies and new conclusions. If we find a non-existent God, Melville implies, we do not say that we can find no guidepost simply because men up until now have been saying that emulation of God and his universe should be the proper work of man. Melville implies that perhaps the word emulation should be changed to control, and this is the basic theme emerging from the motifs of Fate, or pragmatically viewed history. And this is the basis that makes Melville more completely modern than any of his contemporaries.

Pierre, the enthusiast and country bred, does try to emulate what he considers to be God. At least he tries to emulate the chronometric Christ which the horologic Falsgrave denies. When Isabel's letter sends him off on his search for God, Pierre realizes that his appeals to the traditional view of God, all the heavenly and invisible powers he had so freely invoked while bound by Joy instead of Grief, are no longer either operative or meaningful. And when he invokes this new reality, this new and unknown God who lurks behind the drawn visor of events and truth, he says, "Thou Black Knight, that with visor down, thus confrontest me, and mockest at me; lo! I strike through thy helm, and will see thy face, be it Gorgon!"[115] Of course the zero he finds beneath the disguise of events does turn him to stone; it <u>is</u> Gorgon, and Pierre is frozen into being neuter and nothing for he has rejected all of life for a no-thing. It is the thought that perhaps there

may be nothing behind the mask that Ahab finds the most "freezing" possibility. To find out the truth about God is not annihilation, contrary to the old myths of the pagans. Plinlimmon proves that. But to find out that all one's actions and life and sacrifices have been based upon an appearance which is not there, is to make one the utter fool and to freeze one out of mobility and life. To see God is not death. But to try to be God, to be one with Time, is death in Eternity. So far, Time is the stone of Gorgon, the view of Medusa. It is also the continuing ruin of Palmyra and the regeneration of ever new green life. The equilibrium of Time poised between killing and creating is extended in an explanatory section that describes the Memnon or Terror Stone. This stone is related to earthly existence only by the one tiny point of equilibrium. Otherwise, Time's aspects of life and death do not touch earthly cares and needs: Time is the Ultimate Indifference as well as the ultimate silence.

> It was shaped something like a lengthened egg, but flattened more; and, at the ends, pointed more; and yet not pointed, but irregularly wedge-shaped. Somewhere near the middle of its underside, there was a lateral ridge; and an obscure point of this ridge rested on a second lengthwise sharpened rock, slightly protruding from the ground. Beside that one obscure and minute point of contact, the whole enormous and most ponderous mass touched not another object in the wide terraqueous world. It was a breathless thing to see. One broad haunched end hovered within an inch of the soil, all along the point of teetering contact; but yet touched not the soil.[116]

The other end of the stone rests above a vacancy large enought to admit a crawling man. The stone is described as ageless, as belonging to the history of the whole world—the theory even being offered that perhaps the stone was transported by some members of

the wandering tribes of Israel. The time-blind Typee dwellers do not account the stone any great miracle, for they are unable to comprehend this new God, "because, even, if any of the simple people should have chanced to have beheld it, they, in their hood-winked unappreciativeness, would not have accounted it any very marvelous sight."[117] The stone is inscribed with initials that "in their antiqueness, seemed to point to some period before the era of Columbus' discovery of the hemisphere." The initials are "S. ye W." "But who, —who in Methuselah's name, —who might have been this 'S. ye W.'?"[119] Once, a "not-at-all-to-be-hurried white-haired old kinsman" after "reading certain verses in Ecclesiastes...had laid his tremulous hand upon Pierre's firm young shoulder, and slowly whispered—'Boy; 'tis Solomon the Wise.'" The young Pierre, when told this curious conceit,[120] had laughed. But it is the young Pierre who builds in his heart the marble shrine of appearances, "For at that period, the Solomonic insights [had] not poured their turbid tributaries into the pure-flowing well of the childish life."[121] The ungriefed youth, the very, very young Pierre, the country bred, has yet to learn that Methuselan age's curious conceit has more meaning and truth in it than he suspects.[122] For Pierre, as a single book we need not go outside the book itself to find in Pierre's gradual education the greater insight that old age has into the vagaries of indifferent Time. For Melville's works as one developmental totality, we find the meaning for "S. ye W." given in Moby-Dick. In the chapter on "The Try Works" the narrator says:

> The truest of all men was the Man of Sorrows, and the truest of all book's is Solomon's, and Ecclesiastes is the fine hammered steel of woe. "All is vanity." ALL. This wilful world hath not got hold of unchristian Solomon's wisdom yet. But he who dodges hospitals and jails, and...graveyards...not that man is fitted to sit on tombstones and break the green damp mould with unfathomably wondrous Solomon.

The paragraph which follows this not only sets up the isolation of the true seer, but underscores his realization that man cannot remove himself from his human heritage, from the death and birth of the evidence in the green mould:

> But even Solomon, he says, "the man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain" (i.e. even while living) "in the congregation of the dead." Give not thyself up, then, to fire, lest it invert thee; as for the time it did me.

Ishmael's intrusion with "(i.e., even while living)" emphasizes the ironic inversions, especially when so closely followed by the word "invert." Every death is a reality for grief, but in turn is only an appearance which masks more life, which is a reality for blind Joy of Typee, but which in turn is a mask for more death. Again, we see Melville's repeated technique of using irony to give dual and apparently mutually exclusive meanings for everything, so that his images become the symbol-mirrors that reflect alternate inversions into infinity. And the dualities become a unity in the wisdom of Solomon the Wise, which is the wisdom of Melville. Solomon warns, remove thyself not from the ways of understanding, as does Plinlimmon in his way, as does Pierre in his. The fire is "evil" only secondarily. It is the means by which man mistakenly tries to conquer Time—it is the try made in the try works to boil out whales, and the greatest, blindest, most indifferent, ubiquitous whale is

but the mask of Time. When Ishmael is blinded by the fires of the ideal, or of the Satanism—the two now are one, the terms no longer make any difference in this unchristian view of God and Man—he almost kills society. The isolation of his fire reveries momentarily removed him from mankind, from common understanding. Ahab, who is completely given over to fire and fire worship (Fedallah) does kill "man's earthly household peace" with his "ever encroaching appetite for God" —exactly as does Pierre. Pierre and Ahab and the Parsees have not yet been convinced that God is the Ultimate Indifferent, the Impersonal, and they see in the flow of events that upsets ideality and appearance, not the error-filled increments of the immortality of mortal history, but the concerned efforts of a malignant Deity which the parsee worships, which the quester assaults. It is the mistake of some critics to stop there and not see that this is not the final view of Deity—that this view is Ahab's, not Melville's, that there is the further unchristian rather than anti-christian Solomonic insight yet to be achieved: the view of God as impersonal Time which touches earth only in the balance between life and death, the organic balance of the green mold. Melville does not deposit responsibility for history into the hands of any God, malignant or beneficent. Man must return to the ways of understanding armed with heart and Solomonic consciousness in order to begin to control the frustrations and ironies of history which so heap and task and block the Ahabs and Pierres. And therein, "Melville's" diabolism is not the Satanism of the Black mass.

And so Pierre makes the Taji mistake and the Ahab mistake. He appeals to the Terror Stone as to an intelligent Deity: "if Duty's self be but a bugbear, and all things are allowable and unpunishable to man; —then do thou, Mute Massiveness, fall on me! Ages thou hast waited; and if these things be thus, then wait no more; for whom better canst thou crush than him who now lies here invoking thee?"[123] As far as Time is concerned all things are allowable and unpunishable: man does not meet his just rewards in eternal afterlife. It is no use invoking a stone (How, Pierre is to demand, can men say that they get a voice from Silence?), for man must himself answer his own prayers. Time's point of contact with men does not include the enormous area of man's desires and aspirations. The Mute Massiveness of time, like the corposants which never heard Ahab's most central and impassioned plea, is not even interested by its very nature in the very plea which asks if Time is interested. All that Pierre foresees in his most gloomy presentiments comes to pass. But God gives no indication one way or the other. All that there is following the plea is the "deception" and appearance of life itself. No thunder rolls. Rather, "A down-darting bird, all song, swiftly lighted on the unmoved and eternally immovable balancings of the Terror Stone, and cheerfully chirped to Pierre."[124] In seeking omens in the first place, man plays confidence man to himself and makes a God, who has no values or moralities, appear to be the most malignant traitor and swindler.[125]

When we see Oro in Mardi, his qualities are adumbrated; they

are not reached through institutionalized religion but they are not equated with anything as clearly definititive as Pierre's Time. When God first appears in Moby-Dick, he is to Ishmael the universal joker who passes the smarting thump all round to all shoulders. He is the startlingly familiar God of Emily Dickinson's ironic poem

> I know that he exists
> Somewhere, in silence.
> He has hid his rare life
> From our gross eyes.
>
> 'Tis an instant's play,
> 'Tis a fond ambush,
> Just to make bliss
> Earn her own surprise!
>
> But should the play
> Prove piercing earnest,
> Should the glee glaze
> In death's stiff stare,
>
> Would not the fun
> Look too expensive?
> Would not the jest
> Have crawled too far?

By the time Moby-Dick is well under way, God has retreated even further from intentional connection with life and death and is, in the corposants, the personified impersonal. By the time we come to Pierre, God has reached his last stage for Melville. He is limited by his own being, his own omnipotence.[126] Time, limited by its own nature, is beyond any idea of interest, and will not, can not look down to laugh at the heartbreaking follies of men as do even the inhabitants of Mardi's red star, Arcturus.

NOTES

1. George C. Homans, "The Dark Angel: The Tragedy of Herman Melville," NEQ, V (1932), 729.

2. Pierre, 37-38. The text used for this study is edited by Henry A. Murray, Hendricks House-Farrar Strauss, New York, 1949.

3. Pierre, 384.

4. Pierre, 385.

5. Pierre, 31-32.

6. Pierre, 69.

7. Pierre, 68.

8. Pierre, 64.

9. Pierre, 69. Italics mine.

10. Pierre, 68

11. Pierre, 2.

12. Pierre, 28.

13. Pierre, 67.

14. Pierre, 67.

15. Pierre, 28.

16. Pierre, 28.

17. Pierré, 28.

18. Pierre, 28-29.

19. Pierre, 24. Italics mine.

20. Pierre, 321. Italics mine.

21. Pierre, 2.

22. Pierre, 41.

23. Pierre, 41.

24. Pierre, 5.

25. Pierre, 42.

26. Pierre, 42.

27. Pierre, 44.

28. See below, 242-244.

29. See below, 279-289.

30. Pierre, 213.

31. William Braswell, "Melville's Opinion of Pierre," AL, XXIII (1951), 285.

32. Pierre, 183.

33. Pierre, 17.

34. Pierre, 17.

35. Pierre, 15. The coverings-up constitute a major motif. Everything is covered by something else. The chair portrait's smile covers what to Pierre first seems to be rot. Isabel's true history is hidden by a recital of vague memories that she can scarcely communicate. Plinlimmon's pamphlets are written not by him but by disciples. Reverend Falsgrave's snowy white napkin covers the symbol of his own shortcomings. Pierre 's father's cousin lays the chair portrair face down so that it cannot be seen, and paints it in secret. Words are sublimated into the disguising muteness of pictures, which play as constant actors. The disguise motif parallels Pierre's plight. Nobody in the world can be completely honest for the world does not life by chronometers. But Pierre is the only person who attempts complete conscious honesty (I will write it! I will write it!) and he is killed by his own chronometric attempt. His death was inevitable long before he made the suicidal act ofcommission.

36. Pierre, 2.

37. Pierre, 3.

38. Pierre, 13.

39. Pierre, 13. For a Freudian view of the Queen imagery, see Henry A. Murray's "Introduction" to Pierre, xxxiii-xxxix.

40. Pierre, 14.

41. Pierre, 105:"Then, high-up and towering, and all-forbidding..." etc.

42. Pierre, 27. Capitals mine.

43. Pierre, 98. Italics mine.

44. Pierre, 97.

45. Pierre, 198. The introduction of Hamlet is not only a fine stroke of thematic parallelisms, but it is also an indication of Melville's insight into Shakespeare. Like Hamlet, Pierre also turns to a frenzied search for otherworldlt, cosmic justifications for his earthly actions.

46. Pierre, 233.

47. Pierre, 233.

48. Pierre, 197-198. See G Giovanni, "Melville and Dante," PMLA, LXV (1950), 329; and "Melville's Pierre and Dante's Inferno, PMLA, LXIV (1949), 70-78.

49. Pierre, 152-153.

50. Pierre, 4.

51. Pierre, 12.

52. Pierre, 4.

53. Pierre, 33.

54. Pierre, 157-158.

55. Pierre, 21.

56. Pierre, 23-24.

57. Pierre, 23.

58. Pierre, 36.

59. Pierre, 25.

60. Pierre, 1.

61. Pierre, 6. Italics mine.

62. Pierre, 59.

63. Pierre, 233-234. When we consider the backward reaching of this language -- to Pierre's distaste for humanity when he reads Isabels letter -- and the forward reaching of the language -- to Mrs. Glendinning's disinheritance of Pierre and to Pierre's realization that he is cast off by the other world (Pierre is neuter now) -- we have but one of any number of examples of the richly reflexive character of Melville's use of words. In the same sense is the association of "Future" (Time, God) with "blank".

64. Pierre, 103.

65. Lawrance Thompson's exposition of the basic divergence of the Carlyle view and the Melville view is brilliant. See Melville's Quarrel with God (Princeton, 1952), passim.

66. Pierre, 13.

67. Pierre, 125.

68. Pierre, 126.

69. Pierre, 421.

70. Pierre, 422.

71. Pierre, 425.

72. Pierre, 107.

73. Pierre, 426.

74. Pierre, 427.

75. Pierre, 46.

76. Pierre, 47.

77. Pierre, 46-47.

78. Pierre, 48.

79. Pierre, 48.

80. Pierre, 381.

81. Pierre, 403.

82. Pierre, 425.

83. Pierre, 139-140.

84. Pierre, 418.

85. Pierre, 136: "Once they sat by the fire with a loaf between them..." etc. The transubstantiation, the belief in the appearance-Christ as savior, the refusal to admit the true follower of Time or God, who is seen as sinful. Man commits this latter Christ to the flames of hell.

86. Pierre, 144.

87. Indeed, Isabel's first letter to Pierre asks him to take action which will necessitate his withdrawal from the world. "Art thou an angel, that thou canst overleap all the heartless usages and fashions of a banded world, that will call thee fool, fool, fool! and curse thee, if thou yieldest to that heavenly impulse which alone can lead thee to respond tomthe long tyrannizing, and now at last unquenchable yearnings of my bursting heart?" (74.)

88. Pierre, 178.

89. Pierre, 350.

90. Pierre, 140.

91. Pierre, 114-118.

92. Pierre, 343.

93. Pierre, 345.

94. Pierre, 343.

95. Pierre, 341.

96. Pierre, 345.

97. Pierre, 342-343.

98. Pierre, 343.

99. Pierre, 376-377.

100. Pierre, 7.

101. Pierre, 6-7.

102. Pierre, 5-6.

103. Pierre, 6.

104. Pierre, 7.

105. Pierre, 405-406.

106. Pierre, 405.

107. Pierre, 407.

108. Pierre, 406.

109. It is well to define here, briefly, Melville's idea of Fate, or predestination, which stalks almost as a character throughout his pages. Too often Melville's insistence on Fate has been interpreted in terms of the Calvinism of Melville's personal family background. Yet, whenever there is an allusion to Fate, it is not made in traditional Christian context. Moreover, when God is removed from all conscious purposes, and is resolved into the vacancy of Eternity and Time, how can there be a working of fixed Fate and predestination, an apparently conscious force? The answer lies in the motif of origins. Insofar as any man is allowed freedom by the human history handed down by his fathers, insofar as his heart or heartlessness, mind or mindlessness is operative upon specifics in the present circumscribed by the demands of mortal history, the Melville character has free will. The racial blood, the racial memory, infuses into the character (if he is the quester) desires and goals that are not compatible with the appearance-values of his present history, but which have their roots in the total actions of the total past. This is the quester's predisposition. This is part of his fixed Fate. Indofar as the sins of the fathers are visited upon the child in the circumstances of human history, there is a real cause and effect; once the act is made, the consequences are inseparable from the act. Once Pierre accepts and believes Isabel's letter, then the whole course of his life is predestined by the acts of the fathers and by his own predisposition, which in turn is an inheritance from the human past. The demon Principle, the three Weird Ones do not originally dictate acts. They dictate the consequences of acts which in turn dictate future acts, and so on into receding futures. Once the original act is past, then, the demon Principle pragmatically dictates acts. For the original act, Melville finds his convenient symbol -- in a non-Christian sense --"in Adam. And Adam in turn was predestinated by the facts of his mortality. Adam or the original Titan are equatable. In the fallen Adam who is common man is the unconscious and heartless Typee of mortality. In the fallen Titan is the anti-Typee quester. The original problem is not so much one of "Where did evil come from?" as it is one of seeing that the earliest man history, in not attempting to be its own God (man's relegation control to the hands of the apparent God) dictated that all the future would be a consequent history of uncontrolled chaos -- mistake, crime, error, and hence evil. The center of action and consequence is placed in the hands of man, who must shape his own history, and by controlling chaos, and the history of evil. He is free to accept Typee, Bladus, or Plinlimmon, and in any case, the choice has its own set of consequences. Choice must be directed by earth and not ideal if it is to have proper consequences. The vicious circle of erroneous acts predestinating further incremental acts or error as consequences of past can be broken when man chooses his proper consequences by choosing proper acts and directions. The example of this orientation must at discussion of Billy Budd.

110. Pierre, 404.

111. Pierre, 7-8.

112. Pierre, 7.

113. Pierre, 8.

114. Pierre, 8.

115. Pierre, 76.

116. Pierre, 154-155.

117. Pierre, 155. Italics mine.

118. Pierre, 156.

119. Pierre, 156.

120. Pierre, 156.

121. Pierre, 79.

122. Pierre, 289: the conversation between the "elderly friend" and the very very young Pierre.

123. Pierre, 158.

124. Pierre, 158.

125. For a good discussion of the deceptions of the "blue day", the light leaping from darkness and the darkness from light, see George R. Creeger, Color Symbolism in the Works of Herman Melville: 1846-1852 (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Yale, 1952), passim.

126. For a tracing of the concept of a limited or unlimited God, see A.O. Lovejoy's treatment of God as Goodness and God as the Good, The Great Chain of Being, chapters I, II, III, and passim.

CHAPTER IV

BILLY BUDD

So far, in the developmental voyage of Melville's theme, there has been a set of relationships between characters which becomes the focal point for the literal-level of plot and for the symbolic levels of theme. The set is the counterpointing of (1) quester, (2) lure, (3) God, and (4) world. (either western, primitive, or both.) In Typee, Melville had adumbrated the patterns of imagery which would result in the thematic opposition of characters. Although the theme was not consciously worked out, the tensions between worlds, greenness, and whiteness, land, and sea, world and quester, mind and heart, communication and isolation were apparent in embryo form. In Mardi, Melville drew the symbols together and demonstrated the central concerns which were to be the theme and plot of the following novels, and the focus upon the four basic characters was fixed. In Redburn and Whitejacket the motifs of time and history were continued, but without the great metaphysical explorations as such for the fundamental intentions of those books. In these novels, Melville explored human relationships caught in the flow of the world's history; but the relationship between God and

Man, while certainly not superfluous, and while certainly suggested, is peripheral rather than central. In Moby-Dick Melville summed up all the preceding books in the most artistic single example of the quest situation, and purified his theme in a single unity of steel—or as Melville would have it, of gold largely separated from the dross. Having summed up the central situation, he was free to move to closer explorations of particulars, and in Pierre he defined God as suggested by Mardi. And in Pierre, he moved toward a more particular investigation of the deceit involved in humanity's clinging to appearances and names. The logical next step is the exploration of deceit, and thus The Confidence Man becomes the study of the optimist, of the worldling, who believes what the Indian-hater or the rheumatic knows is but a bitterly delusive dream. The Confidence Man has no questers as such, but rather concentrates on the Reverend Falsgraves and Aunt Charities who surround the isolatoes of various kinds. Such characters offer no possible conclusion to the problems raised in Melville's works, for, operating on a philosophy of God's in his heaven and all's right with the world, they continue to drift along as pawns of Fate, misreading completely man's history and circumstances which are so pathetically out of whack with the Confidence Man's meliorism and optimism. Therefore this book has its narrative center in exposure of types rather than in the unifying situation—it is a symbolic construct which is not completely successful simply because by its own demands it does not require the literal level of plot—something more must come of this, the narrator realizes as he

ishes the book. The something more that is needed is the reso-
ion. After all the books of exposure and negation, there must
the positive answer, and thus, in the capstone of the whole
ructure, Billy Budd moves closer to the affirmation inherent in
agedy than any of the other novels. Billy Budd, finally, after
ll the torment of the earlier books, takes the definition of God
or granted. The question is no longer, to which world shall man
im? And in Billy Budd, we see that the major characters have been
pared down to two: the lure and the complete man, both brought into
contact and conflict by the presence of the Satanic view of woe
which comes of the fact that at this point the definition of God is
taken for granted in relation to the other books. Simply, in Billy
Budd Melville, by means of his other books, has the absolute (nega-
tive as it may be in part) which is necessary—as Theodore Spencer
pointed out—as the commonly accepted background against which
man's desire for order and man's violation of order may be viewed
as tragedy. And classical tragedy demands an imposition of
social order upon individual action. In this, it is the classi-
cist's form. And in this consideration, via Billy Budd, is the ex-
posure of Melville as a classicist and not as a romanticist. Many
critics have seen Melville as a romanticist mostly for two reasons:
First because of the Prometheanism of his novels (except Billy Budd)
and second because of the primitivism in his novels. But it is
emphatically important that we see that the Prometheanism exists in
order to be rejected in terms of individualism and in terms of man's
cosmic status, and that the primitivism exists as a vehicle for

Melville's cultural relativism and pragmatism. What remains before we can examine Billy Budd is an identification of what Melville means by atheist, via a restatement of the quester-confidence man who deludes man and self into chaotic action which destroys order.

The quester is an atheist because he rejects man and thereby rejects man's conventional God, once the rejection allows him to see that God is the Time-Zero. He has no belief left on which to perch his weary soul, and becomes neuter. The quietist rejects communal, earthly felicity for all men in order to preserve his own quietism; unable to believe in the conventional God, he is unable to believe in the importance of man and is unable to believe in man's own immortal history of mortality, wherein man is all important as controlling agent of either felicity or sin in that very history. The optimist is an atheist because he will not believe realities, will not see the true nature of God. He believes in a alse appearance which denies man because it defeats the acceptance f man's proper conduct. The worldling is an atheist for the same asons, although for him the basic acceptance is acceptance of rtless convention rather than acceptance of a transcendentalist's . All these confidence-men-atheists have one denial in common: deny man. They deny man the correct direction for the actions sensibilities which can impose order and felicity upon history. he man who has the sensibilities--the union of heart and head, he man who can and does take action so that he can maintain r for the purpose of putting an end to or at least restraining

the incremental crimes of history, is the story of Captain Vere, who, in opposition to the narrator's hint, is truly the central character of the story of Billy Budd, foretopman. In his rejection of otherworldly ideal, he is Melville's devout believer, the doubter who outbelieves us all.

Billy himself, as the lure, is an old familiar figure. He is the element to which Vere reacts, and as such it is important that he is placed "in the year of the Great Mutiny." He enters the point present of human history at a moment when order is threatened and when felicity is absent because the whole world is at war. In short, the man-of-war world, wrong as it is, it is all that exists; man can either, like Pierre, renounce the world because it is wrong, or can try to preserve order in the world so that felicity can be obtained. Order _per se_ is not the point. It is order for a reconciliation of opposites, a reattainment of the felicity which in the character of Billy Budd is symbolized in the non-predatory Typee savage. Vere, it is stated, does not maintain order for its own sake, but this is yet to be seen. At any rate, Billy is presented in a world where the Articles of War and the Sermon on the Mount are the two opposites and the two choices open to man in the universal manofwar world. Significantly, the preface to the story of Billy brings the two choices into immediate focus: "The year 1797, the year of this narrative, belongs to a period which as every thinker now feels, involved a crisis for Christendom not exceeded in its undetermined momentousness at the time by any other era whereof there is record."[1] It is interesting that the universal

world is summed up in the term "Christendom," for we need not go outside this "inside narrative" to find Melville's nonchristian cultural relativity, or his view of Christendom (the official term) as an appearance; within the narrative itself, the Marquesan of the time of Captain Cook is reintroduced as the non-predatory man who is closer to the Sermon on the Mount than to Christendom's Articles of War. What then, is the suggestion implicit in the use of the term Christendom? The hint lies in the use of history here: the narrative is set in Christendom's most momentous moment. There are a few alternatives in this suggestion, but as we shall see, they all add up to the same thing. The alternatives suggested are either the birth of Christ and the adoration of the Christ Baby, the Crucifixion, or the Fall of Adam. And just as Melville uses Typee or Saddle Meadows or Serenia to demonstrate universal points of development, the story of human history in one of its parts, so too in Billy Budd, Melville tells his history of humanity in a re-working of the Christ story.

The Preface is complete in itself as the setting in which Christ is introduced. It is a world torn between order and anarchy as symbolized in Captain Vere and his seventy-fours on the one hand and the French Revolution on the other. And all the cycles of civilization are suggested in the Preface. Man's inhumanities have continued sins throughout history so that there is a cataclysmic rebellion, which, in turn results in more inhumanity. The narrative introduces the Enlightenement, especially as articulated in the French <u>philosophe's</u> school, which culminates in the natural

rights theories. What the preface tells us is that in the search for the rights of man, uncontrolled and disorderly action will ironically result and has resulted in the denial of those very rights—and we have already seen this in the enthusiasms of Pierre. It is now time to speak of responsibilities and duties as well as rights.

> The opening proposition made by the Spirit of the Age, involved the rectification of the Old World's hereditary wrongs. In France to some extent this was bloodily effected. But what then? Straightway the Revolution itself became a wrongdoer, one more oppressive than the kings. Under Napoleon it enthroned upstart kings, and initiated that prolonged agony of continual war whose final throe was Waterloo. During those years not the wisest could have foreseen that the outcome of all would be what to some thinkers apparently it has since turned out to be, a political advance along nearly the whole line for Europeans.[2]

In short, there is no point to saying that revolutionary violence itself is necessarily good or bad. What is to the point is that there are enough unanticipated consequences from even the controlled and controlling action; the consequences of uncontrolled excess and undirected action is total chaos. So too, the mutinies in the English navy are part of the historical cycle of action directed wrongly against an order which had to be challenged in the first place. "Yet in a way analogous to the operation of the Revolution at large the Great Mutiny, though by Englishmen naturally deemed montrous at the time, doubtless gave the first latent prompting to the most important reforms in the British Navy."[3] And so again in setting up the balances of order and the Articles of War on the one hand, and rebellion and the attempt to realize the felicity of the Sermon on the Mount or the rights of man on the other, we find once

more in the preface the basis of opposition of characters—a basis that at first seems mere ambiguity. Simply, the basis is this: neither the quester nor the Titan nor the Satan nor the Christ nor the lure are wrong in their beliefs and their values, and therefore are often presented sympathetically and are always presented understandingly—the cause of many readers' confusion between Melville and his characters. But in their non-directed or mis-directed actions, they are wrong and they smash the values and beliefs which they champion in the first place. Therefore, and again, Melville's cyclic history is hard-headedly pragmatic; it is only the consequence of an act which can be judged, and the act and consequence become one. The idealistic motivation or the satanic motivation of the woeful view of truth no longer make any difference as far as mankind and history are concerned; in terms of the kind of God (blank Time) against which all is juxtaposed, they no longer make any difference at all. Melville's quarrel with man is a quarrel about tactics, for it is in the tactics that Melville defines the motivation and the goal. This method of judgment may be hard; it may be painful. But it is the only method whereby man in the actualities of the manofwar world may save man and attain the proper directions. And now, with this much with which to judge Vere, we can turn to the narrative and see how the characters develop their symbolic values.

The first view of Billy is the view of the Handsome Sailor. The Handsome Sailor is not necessarily white and Anglo-Saxon like

Billy, but he is the universal leader of apostles, the informing center whose physical and moral being sets the tone of his followers' activity. The universality of our own particularized Billy is introduced as the first quality in the picture of the Negro Hansome Sailor and the ethnic makeup of his following.

> ...A symmetric figure much above the average height...
> It was a hot noon in July; and his face, lustrous with perspiration, beamed with barbaric good humor. In jovial sallies right and left his white teeth flashing into view, he rollicked along, the center of a company of his shipmates. These were made up of such an assortment of tribes and complexions as would have well fitted them to be marched up by Anacharsis Cloots before the bar of the first French Assembly as Representatives of the Human Race. At each spontaneous tribute rendered by the wayfarers to this black pagod of a fellow--the tribute of a pause and a stare, and less frequent an exclamation, --the motley retinue showed that they took that sort of pride in the evoker of it which the Assyrian priests doubtless showed from their grand sculptured Bull when the faithful prostrated themselves.
> ...Invariably a proficient in his perilous calling, he was also more or less of a mighty boxer or wrestler. It was strength and beauty...
> The moral nature was seldom out of keeping with the physical make. Indeed, except as toned by the former, the comeliness and power, always attractive in masculine conjunction hardly could have drawn the sort of honest homage the Handsome Sailor in some examples received from his less gifted associates.[4]

When we are introduced to Billy, we find that he is characterised by barbarous good humor, by a tall, athletic, symmetric figure, by being a good boxer, by being proficient in his calling, by being highly moral. The general type of Handsome Sailor, then is the kind of innocent that the most attractive savage of Typee is, and in fact, the mention later in the story of the non-predatory Marquesan clinches the definition. As the Typeean, he is the primitive and aboriginal man: the noble savage of the primitivists, with the

difference, for Melville, that this ideal is not something for which man at the present state of civilization, should strive. We have not only the testimony of Typee, but closer to home, the testimony of Captain Vere. The fact of the original man is the fact of Adam and the fact of Christ, for Billy Budd is both those facts. One part of the plot-theme emerges immediately from this, although it is worked out in its own terms within the story: the prelapsarian Adam and the Christ were innocents whose morality was not for this world. They are the same man, and—most important—they are man. During the second coming of this type, this narrative says, the type had better not come at all as long as the world is what it is, or it had better come in an armored car, in which farfetched image, the type ceases to be.

Billy is particularized within the type. "Such a cynosure, at least in aspect, and something such too in nature, though with important variations made apparent as the story proceeds, was welkin-eyed Billy Budd, or Baby Budd..."[5] He is a leader, but the variations make him the Christ, and the wrong kind of chronometrical leader for the horological world. The particularization is hinted in the curious bit of description that this sailor is heaven-eyed, that he is the innocent, the Baby Christ reborn for this reworking of his life. He is not even allowed to come to earth, born back to home, to land, in the chronometrical Sermon of the rights of man. As the cycle set up in the Preface foreshadowed, he is immediately grabbed up by the actualities of the manofwar world as he treads his path to the Straight and Narrow Gate: "It was not very long prior to the time

of the narration that follows that he had entered the King's Service, having been impressed on the Narrow Seas from a homeward-bound English merchantman [named the Rights of Man] into a seventy-four outward-bound, H.M.S. Indomitable."[6] His action is the chronometrical action of the man who turns the other cheek and who turns cheerfully to all new experience with the trusting and childlike faith of innocence. The ordinary, hardworking, and non-heroic mortal—the Jarl, the graveling (for Captain Graveling is his name) whose ship of peaceful and ordinary pursuit depends upon Billy for peace and moral stability, is robbed of peace by the actualities of the manofwar world and its needs. "Ay, Lieutenant, you are going to take away the jewel of 'em; you are going to take away my peacemaker!"[7] To which, the lieutenant replies with a statement that tells all we need know of what the manofwar world will do to the Baby of the Sermon, the welkin-eyed innocent: "Well, blessed are the peacemakers, especially the fighting peacemakers!"[8] For they, indeed, will inherit the world, such as they can make it. The transfer of Billy from the world to which he belongs—the world of peace and the rights of man—is accompanied by the act of spoilation. Not only is the very act of impressment symbol enough, but the encroaching manofwar lieutenant bursts unbidden into Graveling's cabin, unbidden takes the Captain's liquor with all the assurance of a predatory right, and will not allow Billy to take his huge box of belongings with him to this other, real world, whose name is not a mere appearance like the name of the merchantman. What Billy can take is what Billy can carry in a manofwar's sea-bag; but as for the

rest, why, "you can't take that big box aboard a warship. The boxes there are mostly shot-boxes."[9]

The real world manifests itself. Even beneath the appearance of the merchantman's name, there was fighting which Billy quelled. There is, before the story opens, therefore, an overlay of experience that covers Billy's true self, but for Billy, as for Isabel this experience might just as well never have been. For Billy is Isabel, is Yillah. He is incapable of worldly subtleties. He is alone and without family. Beneath the cover of experience—beneath the seaman's tan—there is the lily and the rose. He is the bud of Yillah's rose-flower. He is Christ in the bud. He is "all but feminine in purity [and] in natural complexion...where, thanks to his seagoing, the lily was quite suppressed and the rose had some ado visibly to flush through the tan."[10] And in Melville's other books, when Christ has been characterized as Christ, he has been portrayed as all but feminine, as the feminine emblem of heart, whose enthusiasms and woes and exterior symbolization in the feminine lure have prompted the Tajis and the Pierres. And like the primitive pure man, Billy has not had a view of woe: "no merrier man in his mess..."[11] He has never encountered the crucifixion of innocence—or, to continue the feminine metaphor—the rape of innocence which is the heart-hardening and murder-making Satanism of the man of sorrows who has seen the truth of man's position and who finally turns to rejection of man and man's joy and man's possible purity and bliss. For the man of sorrows, by the time we meet him in Claggart, has nothing but hatred in the misdirected insanity which is the result of his woe. The allegory of Billy as Adam and as Christ and

of Claggart as Satan and the anti-Christ is clear enough in the narrative's imagery. Claggart is the Spoiler, and Billy is "as Adam presumably might have been ere the urbane Serpent wriggled himself into his company."[12]

But what are we to make of Billy Budd as both Adam and Christ? And as Isabel and Yillah? Actually, these associations suggested by the characterization do not partake as much of the free-association aesthetics of insanity as might be supposed. The allusiveness does not exist simply for the sake of its own complexity. For, when we remember what it is that is taken for granted in Billy Budd, when we remember that all actions and values are man-made and earthly, it becomes easier to see that either through innocence or choice, Adam, Christ, Isabel, and Yillah are one: are all mortals, in Melville's terms, whose mortal history as man has been mysticized with fable associated with otherworldly origins. And Billy Budd follows the same pattern. His unknown mother was one "eminently favored by Love and the Graces" and—who is his father? Well, "God knows, Sir."[13] And there is his famous stutter—like the other lures, he cannot communicate realities. And when we recall the ideas involved in what Billy Budd takes for granted, we recall the lesson that Babbalanja and Media learned and the lesson that the reader of Pierre learned: that men are children of Time only as living phenomena created and killed by the cycles of death, rot, and rebirth. That in the motifs of origins, democracy, equality, and brotherhood, men are the children of men and that "the whole world is the patrimony

of the whole world." Indeed, we have seen that Christ and Satan, idealist and deceitful murderer, are all parts of man, as symbolized by the quester. What remains for this study is to determine who the man is that is at once father and son of Billy, father and son of Claggart—that is, who is the central character who makes the choice of direction to which all the inherent universal possibilities must be subordinated. Up to Billy Budd this central character has been the quester. But now, when we meet Captain Vere, we find quite another being.

Captain the Honorable Edward Fairfax Vere is a man whose experience has not been lost in innocence, nor yet in cynicism which makes the inactive Dansker another Plinlimmon. The Dansker can see through the metaphysical fog that surrounds the necessities of action—he is called old Board-her-in-the-smoke. He has learned the truth, but his consequent misdirected action is a development of noncommunicative cynicism which will only hint at murder, yet which, in the last analysis, allows the murder to take place nonetheless. But Vere is of another breed. He is totally active. He will not delay in making decisions, even when the decision is totally painful and when he could wait just a few days to dump the entire problem in the lap of a superior officer. But neither is he the enthusiast in his unswerving and instant response to duty. Totally aware that any act has historical consequences, he does not subordinate reflection to bravery—bravery, which Melville said, is the one characteristic that man shares with beasts

of the field. Vere is "thoroughly versed in the science of his profession, and intrepid to the verge of temerity, though never injudiciously so."[14]

Moreover, his experience has resulted in something which is the view of woe. Neither innocently mirthful like Billy, nor cynical like the Dansker, he is promiently and predominantly serious. Having guessed at the reality of man's and God's cosmic status, neither does his seriousness become the monomaniacal hatred and despair that characterizes Claggart; for in his realis m, Vere is honest to the point of rejecting the pretentious Titanism of the quester. Here is one man who sees and who is not the confidence-man. Unlike Ahab who becomes the one man who drives and runs the ship, even to the point of being hoisted up to the masthead for the first view of the whale, Vere is the administrator who can allow his subordinates to take over routine affairs no matter how symbolic the affair may be for him. It is conceivable to picture Ahab as either singlehandedly exonerating Billy or personally hanging him without attempting to uphold the forms of delegated authority and without attempting to educate the delegates. It is inconceivable to picture Vere doing either.

So far, Vere is the man of insight and the physical m an. But he is also the man of heart. He is the man who can stare dreamily out at the cosmos and who can weep over Billy.

> As with some others engaged in various departments of the world's more heroic activities, Captain Vere though practical enough upon occasion would at times betray a certain dreaminess of mood. Standing alone on the weather-side of the quarter-deck, one hand holding by the rigging he would absently gaze off at the blank sea. At the

> presentation to him then of some minor matter interrupting the current of his thoughts he would show more or less irrascibility; but instantly he would control it.[15]

By this time both the reader and Captain Vere know what the blank sea is. Both the reader and Vere know what thoughts absorb Vere as he stares. But this is not Pierre or Taji or Ahab. This man sees himself as the captain of this small bit of manofwar mortality, the only life there is for man, in the eternal and immortal immensity of the sea and Time. And Vere will preserve the mortality he directs. He does not go insane as does poor, weak Pip. Rather he channels his thought and makes earth's needs paramount—and turns to the minor matter of importance. Vere, then, is man of action, heart and mind; his experience includes a knowledge and understanding of history, which he views empirically and pragmatically: "...his bias was toward those books to which every serious mind of superior order occupying any active post of authority in the world, naturally inclines; books treating of actual men and events no matter of what era--history, biography and unconventional writers, who, free from cant and convention, like Montaigne, honestly, and in the spirit of common sense philosophize upon realities."[16] Coupled with a mindful and heartful rejection of the mere appearances of conventional life, is a time-sense which sees all time as the same, all aspects of history equatable in the inevitable passage of time. "In illustrating of any point touching the stirring personages and events of the time he would be as apt to cite some historic character or incident of antiquity as that he would cite from the moderns. He seemed unmindful of the circumstance that to his bluff company such remote allusions however

pertinent they might be were altogether alien to men whose reading was mainly confined to the journals."[17] Set off from the rest of humanity as a man of superior insight and power, Vere never passes from the way of understanding. The direction of his actions is all earth-centered, and his superior qualities do not exist for personal wealth and health as with the early Media. In brief, his entire rationale for being, and his entire use of his superior qualities are based upon the final characteristic necessary for the complete man: his goal is the betterment of the race and the communal attainment of earthly felicity. Goal and tactics, like form and content, are merged at last. He is not an exponent of order and an opponent of the French revolution for the selfish reasons of personal and class status. No, for "while other members of that aristocracy to which by birth he belonged were incensed at the innovators mainly because their theories were inimical to the privileged classes, not alone Captain Vere disinterestedly opposed them because they seemed to him incapable of embodiment in lasting institutions, but at war with the peace of the world and the true welfare of mankind."[18]

As we turn to the centrality of Vere as character, we find that there is one more aspect of the complete man, an aspect as yet not hinted before in the other works. The complete man, dedicated to the work informed by his selfless goal, becomes, paradoxically, limited to self. Vere can never unburden his soul to others. He must drive his ship, like Ahab, with secret motive. Just as he knows when and how to delegate authority, he is also aware of the

limitations of delegation. Like Ahab, he is a dedicated man, but of course dedicated to preservation rather than destruction. It is the dedication which limits and, as it were, sterilizes the complete man just as it does the quester. He must bear within himself all the tortures of choice and yet present to the ship's people a demeanor of calm decision. His focal realization is that as he goes, so goes the world—always, though, within the limits of the world's moment of history which shapes him. For in Billy Budd too, it is the time that informs the man and forces him to control (or continue the anarchy of) the history to which he is born. Again, there is no one beginning, no one end. It is the completeness of Vere that he realizes this and dedicates himself to the control of his world and history within the limits of the only operative course of action open to him—the necessities of the Articles of War in his world and time.[19] Therefore, Vere is limited to himself. The very real job of guiding his world will allow neither idealism nor the romanticist's democracy nor the 18th century natural rights theory of individualism and equalitarian democracy in terms of political control. His surface must be a disguise of the tensions which tear the inner man, and the inner man is sacrificed to the necessities of the appearance. The cost of correct action is a frightful one. But it is a necessary cost if the anarchy of idealism or the anarchy of blindness is to be avoided. For Vere must be all work and no play. Indeed, until such time as the world "gregariously" advances to the state wherein chronometricals are possible, those chronometricals will prove murderous. It is germane to

this point that Vere is a bachelor. The man who is "Starry" and holds within him an almost superhuman guiding principle which tends to destroy the holder, must, if he is the complete man for social leadership, also be Vere--the man who recognizes truth and acts according to his recognitions without ever disclosing the shock of recognition. This complete man, again, until society has advanced to the point where his kind of sacrifice, as opposed to Pierre's kind of sacrifice, is no longer necessary is incomplete in his very completion. He must feed upon himself. He cannot regenerate, he can only reinform. He can not indulge in the warmth of human domesticity if he is to be dedicated to the preservation of earthly felicity and "the true welfare of mankind." In short, unmarried except to his duty, he can leave no heir to carry on his heritage, the one complete heritage so far seen. The result as seen in Billy Budd is what Robert Penn Warren has concluded from a study of Melville's poetry. That nature is time and cycle, that all continues again, that history, as time, is redemption as well as fate, and that the lessons are lost and only dim myths of the physical struggle remain. In short that meliorism is trapped in determinism just as determinism is trapped in meliorism.[20]

In the interview with Billy Budd after the Handsome Sailor has been condemned to death, Vere emerges as the truly central character. Within himself, Vere the inner man is also partly Billy Budd insofar as he too feels the human warmth, simplicity, and innocence which he must deny--there is the primeval beneath the brass buttons. In the fact that Vere must deny this self is the rejection of the

Adam-Christ as wrongly oriented humans, and in this is the reiteration of Typee's rejection of Typee as well as the explanation of why Billy-Adam-Christ is presented in imagery that creates the figure of the primitivist's noble savage. That the primitive type of Adam-Christ is wrongly oriented just because it symbolizes all the highest ideal beauties and virtues of human possibility is the realization that breaks Vere's heart. Those beauties and virtues are in themselves not at all wrong, just as in absolute justice Billy himself is not at all guilty. It is just that the w orld is not yet ready to follow the lead of that type because, ironically, the world has already left that type far behind. The huge paradox is that the only way to approach the felicity the type represents is not by following the type but by following an order which deals with the world as it is. The primeval Vere is both father and son of Budd.

At the same time, Claggart is also part of Vere, for while those two men are opposite polarities both in direction and action, they are the same in their view of woe and in the realization of the all too inhuman necessity for guise. That the two men are opposite in direction needs no clearer emphasis than that given in Claggart's interview with Vere. Claggart well knows the ways of the world, for in his Satanism he perpetuates the anarchy and murder of history which makes the world. He is urbane, total ly disguised, and unctuous. Vere, however, will not settle for appearances exterior to his own, for his own position demands the constant, never-relenting, sterilizing hold of realities. When

Claggart tries to play to appearances, softening, he thinks, Vere's disposition by refusing to refer directly to the practice of the pressgangs, then "at this point Captain Vere with some impatience, interrupted him:

"'Be direct, man; say impressed men'."[21]

In effect, Claggart too cannot tolerate appearances exterior to his own. It is for this reason that he hates Billy Budd. He is the disinherited Lucifer, the man who has seen the cause for woe, and who like Ahab allows it to drive him into insanity, an insanity whose direction is the opposite of Pip's, which also stemmed from the same view. Like Pierre, he finally hates mankind because it lives in appearances, and like Pierre he comes to see the Christ figure as the bad angel who leads all men to the hugest lie. On the one hand, this man of sorrows wistfully wishes that the primitive type could be, that it were an operative reality, and like Ahab in his soft moments with Pip, he stares longingly, yearningly, lovingly at the figure of Billy Budd. But the monomania closes over all. The Lucifer-Titan who would replace God hates the Christ-figure who would lead men to believe in the lie of a God which is not the Time with which the Titan can never be coequal. But unlike Vere, who must also kill the disorientation offered by the Christ-primitive in order to replace it with operative conduct for man, Claggart would kill because his monomania, like Pierre's, at the height of disillusion will destroy the lie with no alternative to replace it. Claggart too, is a neuter, belonging to no world. He is alone, isolated from the men; and he has no God. We have seen Claggart enough

in Taji and in Pierre to realize what he is when we relegate him to the single faceted confidence man who is the quester turned Satan. But as for killing Billy, not only the theme but the words of Vere himself say that intention is beside the point. Vere, like Claggart, must confront Baby Budd with an ultimate rejection. Pragmatically, in terms of action, Claggart too is part of Vere. With the view of Claggart and Billy as externalizations of the primeval elements of man within Vere, who controls those elements for his own successful action, we see the reason for Vere's torment in his interview with Billy.

> He was old enough to have been Billy's father. The austere devotee of military duty letting himself melt back into what remains primeval in our formalized humanity [for Vere, "forms, measured forms" are everything] may in the end have caught Billy to his heart even as Abraham may have caught young Isaac on the brink of resolutely offering him up in obedience to the exacting behest. But there is no telling the sacrament, seldom if in any case revealed to the gadding world wherever under circumstances at all akin to those here attempted to be set forth two of great Nature's nobler order embrace. There is privacy at the time, inviolable to the survivor, and holy oblivion the sequel to each diviner magnanimity, providentially covers all at last.
>
> The first to encounter Captain Vere in act of leaving the compartment was the senior Lieutenant. The face he beheld, for the moment one expressive of the agony of the strong, was to that officer, though a man of fifty, a startling revelation. That the condemned one suffered less than he who mainly had effected the condemnation was apparently indicated...[22]

Vere knows that he is sacrificing Budd to Claggart on the one hand, for in the death sentence the man of sorrows succeeds in his indictment of Christ. On the other hand, he is sacrificing Budd to the measured forms that Vere realizes must take precedence over "what remains primeval." In the total picture wherein all the

emblems of otherwordly allegory are really segments of this world and this world only, when Claggart succeeds in getting Budd killed, the quester-Titan-Satan kills part of the world and part of self. Obversely, when Budd kills Claggart, the Adam-Christ-primitive kills part of world and self. And when Vere, who encompasses both, sacrifices Billy, he sacrifices part of the world and part of self. Thematically, Vere is the one major central character whose choices are reactivated by the two externalized polarities of Claggart and Budd, polarities who become one in the results of their action. And just as this duality becomes a unity, so does the duality of Vere's action. Vere and Claggart and Budd kill for completely different reasons. But the intention makes no difference. The result is the killing. Vere's action, however, differs from Claggart's. Vere takes precautions, Vere forearms himself against the possible mutinous effects of his action. Realizing that intentions make no difference, Vere attempts--and succeeds--to prevent an unanticipated, or at least undesired result of his act. Claggart met the unanticipated consequence of Billy's fist--his monomania prevented the weighing of consequences that characterizes Vere's every move and thought. So Claggart's prudence and guise, adopted for the wrong purposes, would result only in chaos and the dumping of the problem in the lap of the admiral were Vere not present. In this is the note of affirmation that Melville strikes finally, in this last book just before his death. What before was a symbolic implication is now a symbolic construct.

That though intentions make no difference in the consequences of an act, the direction of thought which forms the intentions create a different kind of act which, in its administration, brings different consequences. The whole problem is tactical and administrative, and Vere is noticeably the supreme administrator. If man can ever find a personalized and interested God, it is the administrator, the earthly man. And as God and thus as man, Vere encompasses within him all the characteristics of the symbols he judges. Placed in a relationship to Billy, which is a hint of the relationship of Father to Son, Vere's murder is not a vengeful act of grief-hate, but is the father's sacrifice of the Billy Christ Budd son in order that mankind and society may be perpetuated. Man necessarily kills Christ for man's own good, so that the death may bring a redemptive Paradise on earth. God (not Time), Christ, Satan, Titan--all man. None of these values inheres in the blank white zero which is the true God, Time. To return for a moment to Vere's insight into Chronometricals and Horologicals, the entire paradox is again summed up in unchristian terms: it is not the death of Christ as such which is the symbol of redemption and resurrection to another world; it is rather the removal of Christ from world so that man will not be hindered in the attainment of the only paradise, resurrection and redemption possible for man, the earthly felicity of man on earth in history. For if Billy, in the chronometrical act of killing Claggart were allowed to set the example for the world, the effect would be a tacit permission for mutiny,

for individualistic anarchy which brings chaos again.

Billy Budd within itself offers all the elements of the opposition of order versus rebellion, of Christ versus Satan, and shows man-God choosing action in terms of the opposition. The story stands within itself. But the "why" of the story is unexplained in this narrative, which by itself is truly an "inside narrative." The outside explanation lies in the totality of Melville's theme, part of which is the definition of God. As suggested before, it is this key definition which is taken for granted, for in this inside narrative we simply have the naming of the symbol without the working of it--the blank sea at which Vere gazes is never related to a meaning. Thus, in one sense, the story by itself is incomplete just as is the capital of a column by itself. We are given all we need know about the necessity for Vere's actions, but we are never really told why God (not man) cannot handle the problem of Christ. In Billy Budd the problem is solved by the definition of the manofwar world in which Christ exists. But the largest totality of meaning, the centering of all on earth because there is no valuative or interested God, is only an implication of the definition of the manofwar world. It is an implication which is an infusion of meaning from the entire Melvillean theme.

With the creation of the hero who rejects the false way and who passes not from the way of understanding, Melville came as close as he could come to tragedy. However, neither Billy Budd nor the total structure of Melville's works constitutes tragedy.

The absolute of Time against which the action is placed has in itself no value which is destroyed or strengthened by man's actions. In the facts of his world, the manofwar world, Melville could not find the positive absolute which constitutes the China Wall of tragedy--the final resting place where peace reigns in the resolution of tensions that is effected in the purged and reinformed society. That the lessons are lost and that the cycle continues all over again is evident in three "digressions" tacked on to the end of the "inside" narrative.[23] The first is the section wherein Vere is killed by The Atheiste. The Atheiste itself continues the wrongs of history, for it takes over from a name which is reminiscent of Isabel's mother and her "otherworldly" origins--this French ship had formerly been the St. Louis. The wrongs of the prerevolutionary nation are translated into the wrongs of the postrevolutionary nation--one kind of Atheist becomes another Atheist under new name and management. So those who in their blindness or enthusiasm deny man and the "peace of the world and the true welfare of mankind" are those who kill Vere. The paradox is that the seamen of France kill the man whose goals are identical with those for which the tactically misdirected French revolution had been fought. No final resolution has been effected, for the nature of the world has not been changed. As suggested above, Vere can reinform so that reformation may be possible, but he himself, limited by his history, cannot regenerate. In this, Melville's God-Man is less true to tragedy wherein the Athena can come down

from the otherworld with operative values for man; but he is more true to the total theme and to Melville's view of his own society. When Billy had ascended the mast, calling "God bless Captain Vere!" he was making the final and only clear announcement of his chronometrical soul and the standards by which he lived. He is the Christ who still turns the other cheek to the manofwar world. And Vere, while always recognizing that Billy offered behavior that must be killed that society may be preserved, at the same time always recognized the ideal, absolute superiority of Billy's humanity--we can never forget the aspect of Vere that is Starry and that gazes at the sea. It is this that is Vere's torment, and "At the pronounced words and the spontaneous echo that voluminously rebounded them, Captain Vere, either through stoic self-control or a sort of momentary paralysis induced by emotional shock, stood rigidly erect as a musket in the ship-armorer's rack."[24] Here even the simile works. At the moment of killing what is <u>ideally</u> the best part of man, Vere is given the final and heartbreaking view of that perfection. His reaction is <u>both</u> emotional shock and self control. On the one hand he has his clearest perception of just what it is he kills--Christ's forgiveness and benediction for his murderers--and at the same time realizes that if he had to, he would do it all over again: he becomes the appearance not of the primal thing inside him, but of the gun, the emblem of the world he preserves. The cycle here becomes endless. Had Billy lived, all the other books tell what happens to the man who follows the

Christ-way. At the very least, the door would have been left open to chaos, and the measured forms by which mankind lives would have been smashed. And as we have seen in Mardi, the quest and the lure and the revengers would chase each other endlessly through the eternity of history. When Billy dies, the very ideal to which the measured forms must be made to attain in the some-day, is removed from life so that the cycles of incremental sins of what can only be a manofwar world still continue. When Vere dies, he calls his ideal, his Christ. Removed finally from the pressures of control, from the self-devouring and self-killing sterility of command, he would relax into the something primeval within him and rejoin the perfection and absolute of Christ. He calls, "Billy Budd, Billy Budd." And his call is an exhortation.

> That these were not the accents of remorse, would seem clear from what the attendant said to the Indomitable's senior officer of marines who as the most reluctant to condemn of the members of the drumhead court, too well knew though here he kept the knowledge to himself, who Billy Budd was.[25]

This last quotation is the only real ambiguity in Melville's works. On the one hand we have a picture of the officer of marines as a good and heartful man but without the intellection and insight of Vere. There is the possible irony that this officer does not at all know Billy Budd's identity any more than Millthorpe knew Plinlimmon or Pierre. Or there is the other possibility that in his heartfulness, as the man "most reluctant to condemn" this officer did recognize Christ and is in embryo

the enthusiastic quester. In this case too, the cycle would be repeated, for Vere, who put an end to the delusion and murder by the quester, leaves behind the man who might act like the quester and who would act according to the chronometricals of an uninformed heart. In any case, both are probably intended, for the net result is the final irony that it is a military officer who bears the memory of the chaos-bringing and primal perfection of Christ.

The second "digression" is made up of the conversation of the Purser and the Surgeon, and of the ballad of "Billy in the Darbies."

Neither the Purser nor the Surgeon are the men to explain what happened at Billy's execution. The Purser is a ruddy and rotund little accountant of a man who in a few words is pictured as a man of no mind, insight or imagination. The Surgeon is totally unimaginative, being able to explain phenomena only in the measurable quantities of the test-tube, and avoiding all the very real problems which he can not explain. These two men tell the reader that Billy did not die as hanged men always die. There was no spasmodic movement of the corpse. For neither of these men can Billy be a symbol, be anything but a corpse, and it is in the irony of presenting this aspect of Billy's death through the eyes of two such men, that the suggestion is established that Billy is <u>not</u> just a corpse, that he may not be a corpse at all. The meaning of this suggestion is clinched in the ballad. Members of the <u>Indomitable's</u> crew revere Billy's

memory, and follow the progress of the yard on which Billy was hung, for "to them a chip of it was as a piece of the Cross."[26] Billy's memory is perpetuated in a "Bible," a myth, a hymn, which is narrated from the first person position of Billy. The ballad seems to be taking place in Billy's mind in the darbies, or chains, just before the execution. But the last two sentences bring the shock of realizing that this is the voice of the dead man in the deep--still talking, dormant, waiting.

> ...Sentry, are you there?
> Just ease these darbies at the wrist,
> And roll me over fair.
> I am sleepy, and the oozy weeds about me twist.[27]

Simply, Billy as symbol never died. The lure, the primitive perfection, the Adam-Christ chronometrical being still waits in the deeps of human history and experience, mired by the oozy weeds of the events of the man-of-war world. But he is there in every man, waiting to spring like the tiger, to re-emerge so that the quester follows, so that the Satan springs at his throat, so that the worldling is deceived, and the cycle continues...and continues...and continues.

The third "digression" is the newspaper account which appears in an <u>authorized</u> naval chronicle of the time. The account reports the official version, in which Claggart is the good but wronged man, wherein Billy is the villain, and the appearances are preserved. There is even an inversion of origins in the account. Claggart, the "foreign" man, is pictured as the true Englishman, and Budd, the true Anglo-Saxon, is suspected of being the foreigner. The official account

could never admit that the strong arm of order-enforcement itself can admit of inverted order, that the officer could be the villain and the impressed man the saint. The preservation of official appearances in the newspaper account is a mindless thing which smacks of cast and beaurocracy, and which carries with it none of the true motives for Vere's siding with official law, motives which are shared by not all of his aristocratic class. In short, the uninformed administrator is no God. He is as much a perpetuator of the wrongs of history as the Christ and the Satan. Simply, he removes meaning from events and turns history into beaurocracy. The myth remains, the lesson is lost, and the true hero, the complete man cannot advance to earthly felicity unless and until his entire race advances with him. The isolato cannot succeed, and the mass-man cannot succeed until the mass itself is reinformed.

This last book is not an "acceptance" either of God or expediency for its own sake. It accepts what all the books before it accepted: that the society is the determinant of history, that man is his own creator and his own killer. Melville was not able to deduce a Utopia from the facts of his times, and therefore could not create a Captain Vere who was in charge of not one ship but of all society—for having created the proper leader in that case he would have had to create the picture of "the good society"—a task for which, in his history and his realism, Melville was not yet ready. As an artist he was too honest a liar, too strong a thinker, too much immersed in the destructive element of

reflection on truth to create a shallow happy ending of the reformed and universal society which would be a deception to the facts of his world and time.

In creating an image of his society, Melville acted as the non-demonic Satan to man. He created the uncreated conscience of his race. His creation, his dualities, can be summed up in the finality of Billy Budd. Vere, killed by the Atheiste, is killed by the denier of man's possibilities. It is only in striving for the earthly attainment of man's possibilities that (Vere's tactics in removing Budd take on the widest significance of tragic stature, but the pathos cannot, by definition of the book's theme, become tragedy.) To deny the divinity, the limitless aspirations in man, is to deny man himself, and this denial is atheism. But as Vere shows, and as the painful experience of the other books shows, man must remember that the heaven is within him in this world of his own making, and must allow chronometricals only as they can be operatively manifested on earth. Man must forget the otherworld, for he cannot conquer or explain the killing-creating made by the zero of Eternity. Man must cease calling for ideal actions which are compatible with an otherworld that does not exist and which is but a projection of man's own highest, earthly aspirations. Man must stop measuring his good and bad by the part of his mind for which he has not yet prepared an earthly home and toward which his earthly home must strive by earthly means. Otherwise, man deludes himself with his ideal vision of himself, which he calls God, and either finds it so unattainable that he

becomes the Claggart or the Hautia, or in the disillusion he lets the world go its own shallow and murderous way, like Plinlimmon, or else he follows the ideal and kills the world, like Taji and Ahab and Pierre. Man, then, must have heaven on earth as his visionary goal in order to give integral meaning to his actions which must be tactically operative in the world as it is. And only the complete man can encompass both the aspiring goal and the expedient and order-preserving actions, can encompass both the true view of woe--the view of the bit of manofwar surrounded by an eternal and indifferent and infinite blankness--and the strength not to let the woe drive him to madness. It is only this man who can lead Jarl and Samoa and Lucy and Starbuck and Bulkington through the correct courses of conscious and heartfelt action no matter how official those actions may appear to be. It is this prescription, together with the single unity of the Time zero which puts forth the face of all the infinite sets of appearances in phenomena that account for the dualities and "ambiguities," in all their modifications, in the enormous world created by Herman Melville.

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NOTES

1. Billy Budd, 805. The text used for this study is the Modern Library edition, Selected Writings of Herman Melville, (New York, 1952).

2. Budd, 805.

3. Budd, 805.

4. Budd, 807-809.

5. Budd, 809.

6. Budd, 809.

7. Budd, 812.

8. Budd, 812.

9. Budd, 813.

10. Budd, 815.

11. Budd, 814.

12. Budd, 817.

13. Budd, 816.

14. Budd, 826.

15. Budd, 826.

16. Budd, 828.

17. Budd, 829.

18. Budd, 828.

19. Although it does not quite see Vere as the Complete Man, Wendell Glick's article, "Expediency and Absolute Morality in Billy Budd," PMLA, LXVII (1953), 103-110, gives a fine presentation of the choices open to Vere.

20. "Melville the Poet," Kenyon R., VIII (1946), 208-223.

21. Budd, 860.

22. Budd, 885.

23. The "digressions" are grouped according to thematic relationship rather than according to occurrence in the story. (After the "digressions" of the conversation between the Purser and the Surgeon, and the sea-burial of Billy, the narrator goes on to say that the further "digressions" of the sequel to the story can be told in three additional short chapters.)

24. Budd, 894.

25. Budd, 900.

26. Budd, 902.

27. Budd, 903.

CONCLUSION

When Billy Budd and Master-at-arms Claggart stand staring at each other in the undisguised shock of recognition, staring while Captain Vere himself becomes the instantaneously informed spectator, the narrator presents a tableau that serves as an epiphany for the reader. In this case the epiphany is noticeable because the tableau is obvious. But when the reader thinks back to the image of Billy, gleaming white, in the darbies, thinks back to the pine tree or the Memnon Stone that Pierre apostrophizes, thinks back to Hautia's cave, he begins to perceive a pattern of symbolism. It becomes more and more clear that almost every one of Melville's symbols is an epiphany; that the symbol generally is not limited to a single motif. Because it is the duality of appearance-reality that almost singlehandedly creates the unified duality of Melville's symbolic structure, almost every symbol, in the context of its presentation, is itself a creation that encompasses the totality of theme. Perhaps the cause-and-effect of this last sentence should appear in reverse order, for the symbol-determining theme of Melville's approach can only be apprehended

by the critic from the theme-determining symbol of the reader's approach. And as critic, the reader discovers that the symbolic progression of Melville's theme is paced by a series of epiphanies that double and redouble themselves because of the almost unbelievably rich reflexiveness of Melville's language. In short, when the reader looks back at almost any single one of Melville's necessarily symbolic epiphanies, he realizes that it did not exist as a determinant of this or that motif or as a precursor of a more complex symbol that embraces further levels of meaning. He begins to realize that he cannot discuss that symbol completely without discussing the entire book. For most writers the bread-and-butter symbols are summed up in a few "capping" symbols which are then pointed to as the examples of the author's control and artistry. With Melville, almost every symbol is the "capping" creature of epiphany, and <u>this</u> is the stuff of Melville's artistry--an artistry and a control which should place and is placing this American's name with the first rank of artists of all time and place.

Melville's epiphanies, furthermore, are not confined to any one section, any one symbol. The very circular structure of the books makes each one of them a gigantic epiphany. <u>Moby Dick</u>, for instance, in its entirety, is one huge frozen moment that is an instantaneous and total revelation of all aspects of the quest. Just as the book is filled with the frozen moment of self revelation, noticeable especially in the conversations of the lesser men and in the soliloquies and interior thoughts of the greater

men, the book itself, from the opening presentation of Ishmael's predisposition to the closing chapter on the destruction of the world, is the quest's own self-revelation. What happens is that Melville's basic technique becomes the technique of the comic artist. This is not to say that the tragic artist does not also proceed by the comic technique of self-revelation's frozen moment. But tragedy presents man's flaws in order to introduce a force which nullifies the flaws, informs the community, and which, in the informing and purging resolution, puts an end to the cyclic increments of consequent historical sin. Tragedy is basically optimistic. Melville presents man's flaws to expose the sins of history and the facts of society, but the very force which nullifies flaws--the zero of Time--is the force that is indifferent to the continuing cycles of crime and error. In Melville's books, the community never learns the lesson which tragedy makes into a social and universal affirmation by means of the education, purgation, and destruction of the flaw-holding protagonist. As suggested earlier, Melville's books, regardless of what their author's intent might have been, are creations of form that merges theme with structure rather than with the demands of tragedy. Melville did not write tragedy. Melville was not a tragic artist.

The word "programmatic" is hardly ever associated with tragedy; it is perhaps a word that by its very nature is excluded from tragedy. Yet in order to write tragedy, what Melville needed was a program. For in Melville's world, the hero that the complete man is, is not big enough or strong enough to stem the

whelming tides of history by himself. Melville's anti-individualism, his anti heroes-and-hero-worship become clear enough in his books. In Melville's world there can be no deus ex machina, for the fact of the God which is the very basis for man's communal brotherhood consistently throws the problem of "gregarious" advancement and resolution right back to earth to be solved by mortal means. Pragmatically and realistically looking at the very unprogrammatic and anarchic society of man, Melville makes thematic statements about the nature of man. The nature of man becomes an unprogrammatic and anarchic thing, led by blindness or idealistic enthusiasms, all of which amount to constant, cyclic deception leading to further unprogrammatic anarchy. So that whereas mankind's communal, gregarious advancement comes to depend upon communal, gregarious insight, heart and program, that very advancement becomes impossible. For tragedy, Melville desperately needed a program which could have been the needed savior, the needed positive absolute (rather than the valueless absolute of Time) against which action could have been postulated. Yet a savior-program injected at the end of the works would cut the beautiful unity of the books to pieces; in terms of the books, such an injection would have been a false imposition of order, a sham. And viewing the history and nature of man as he did, Melville intellectually and emotionally was unable to accept a program as the informing theme. For considering Melville's view, a program would have been realistically incompatible with the facts of his world.

Melville's view of the facts of his world demanded then the very theme (looking at this from the artist's point of view) that informed the zero-circle structure that in turn informed the technique of what is fundamentally the comic epiphany. It is hardly necessary to add that Melville's technique of comedy is not comedy, for, simply, his books are not funny--although (and this is a big "although") if one feels as ironic as the irony of the epiphanies, there is an edge of dark laughter in one's sight of poor Pierre so fervently exhorting the Memnon Stone. Melville's books are not comfortable. The reader can feel neither immune to or superior to the plight of the protagonists. We can not find the reason for Melville's view of the facts of his world by saying that his was a comic technique, for that was a symptom and not a cause.

Perhaps the reasons for Melville's technique and form are found in the theme. What Melville saw was that sight which is modern man's view of woe. What he saw is that there is no ideal societal position, for as the specific facts of society change, the ideals change, and the consequences of acts change. There is no China Wall, for ever the frozen but teeming north sends forth new hordes of truth--no sooner are the decks scrubbed clean of the reamins of the first whale, than the cry of "There she blows!" goes up and the weary Anacharsis Cloots expedition rushes forth to confront the new wonder from the deeps of history. In Melville's world, history is changeless in the newness of her wonders, all of them, because of the changeless nature of man, being

necessarily newly discovered and boiled out by every generation. The standard of the judgment and insight that informs action, and which therefore affects history, is to be found only in the facts of the given, point-present society. The standard cannot conform to a traditional ideal, primitivistic or theological, because even though the ideal implies a similar goal (earthly or heavenly felicity, of which the possibility of the latter is removed in Melville's world) and even though the ideal implies a changelessness of man's reaction to his world and his history, the facts of society change. Simply, Typee will not work for the west, the west will not work for Typee. They murder each other and spoil where they do not murder. Melville's "visible past" is today's concept of "usable past."

Perhaps then we can depart from theme and find the reasons for Melville's technique. And perhaps we must depart from theme to find the reasons for theme. The most fruitful approach, it seems to me, is an approach through one of the motif-components of Melville's theme, the relativism and pragmatism of anti-idealism. Critics have often tried to find explanations of Melville's view of the facts of his world by a biographical jump-off into his family background of the Dutch Reformed Church. But trying to find reasons for Melville's theme in the Calvinistic view of original sin is like trying to find a living whale in the sea-bed fossils of Colorado. Like all great artists, Melville created universals out of his relative position as a man living in his time and place. Even the universals themselves, or at

least the communication of them may change, and Melville himself realized this when he said that though the age of authors may be passing, the hour of earnestness shall remain. In order to communicate his hour of earnestness, he pragmatically and realistically judged his age of authors, insisting that intentions and appearances must be shredded even if only to reach a position which can see intentions as ideal and appearances as necessary. So the act of creation is double. Along with the universal, Melville, in examining his world and time, not only looked at his society but created an image of it. The changeless and the relative specific exist side by side. It is my conclusion that so far as Melville was concerned, the former existed because of the latter--all considerations of artistry aside here. It is in seeing what idealism meant to the facts of the America of Melville's history, that the pragmatism, the lack of program, the lack of tragedy, the necessity for Melville's technique become approachable.

The American seventeenth century was dominated by the ideal that governed the Puritan thought which brought the Calvinism of Melville's background to this continent. If we consider the Puritan ideal, we must consider that the Puritan thought it possible to establish the ideal state, indeed thought he was establishing such a state in uniting every aspect of life under the dominion of his church, which was for him the one correct visible body of Christ. Not only was the earthly ideal attainable for the Puritan mind, but it was founded upon Scripture-based

erudition and reason that allowed the Puritan to interpret and manifest the will of God--it was otherworldly oriented. Ultimately, the metaphysic of an otherworldly ideal goes back to classical idealism, to the Plato whom Professor Lovejoy sees as the evil genius of western thought. We need only recall the theme of Melville's total works to see that in considerations of state, heaven, and metaphysics, Melville disagreed with his own religious backgrounds. Moreover, toward the end of the five-hundred year span (roughly, 1500 to 1900) which saw the modernization of the western world, coincident with the rise and supremacy of the middle class of which the Puritans themselves were part, idealism was beginning to show signs of wear. Officially, the otherworldly ideal remained the stimulus and the goal; actually, the facts of the world began to make different demands. Even for that arch-Puritan Cotton Mather, the doctrine of works (which implies a pragmatic approach of earthly judgment of men's acts) was beginning to undercut the doctrine of Grace (which implies that man sees but shadowly the operations of the sovereign ideal outside the earthly cave). In his instructions to the schoolmasters, Mather allowed that although the elect are chosen by God and all the rest of men are sinners who will not be allowed to come close to God, still, it will not hurt the sinner and it might help the saint to know a little Greek and Hebrew and Latin and to be instructed especially in the ways of God. In fact, the entire Puritan rationale for education, as for everything else, left the door open for the doctrine of works. If the

synod of Dort emphasizes prevenient and irresistable grace, if it emphasizes perseverance of the saints, still it does not explain how the saint is to be certain he is a saint. Granted, saints behave in certain ways, and thus we have the terrific and symbolic figure of Cotton Mather brooding and pacing in his study, wondering if perhaps he does act like a saint because he is a saint, or because he is a Satan-claimed hypocrite. The implication of the best studies, particularly those made by Perry Miller, is that the consequent brother-keeping attitudes of the hard-headed and practical Puritan is an indication that the basic internal tension of the Puritan idealistic synthesis was that the doctrine of works always tended to undercut the doctrine of grace in innumerable subtle and unrecognized ways. In the facts of the five hundred year middle-class revolution, the Yankee Puritan as horsetrader, for instance, was as much a product of middle-class social ethics and economics as he was of his theology. He kept his eyes on heaven and on the account books at the same time, and as the possibilities of the account book began to grow, pragmatic and earthly judgments became more and more the actuality, and idealism became more and more an official ideology.

Once the bitter winters were over, the Puritan ministers increasingly complained of the populace's loss of that old time religion. By the time of Jonathan Edwards' last great attempt to synthesize Puritanism, the psychology of religion had to change under the impact of the rationalism of the Age of Reason,

and the old mind and Reason of the Puritan became sublimated into heart and emotion. For if Reason were still to be the norm, Puritanism would have to succumb to the Reason of deism, for which Puritanism itself had left the door wide open in its emphasis upon Nature as the second Book of God and in its emphasis upon Reason as the means whereby the books are read. In short, caught in the dilemma of trying to reach an otherworldly ideal by means of basically anti-idealistic instruments, the old Puritanism died. The Puritans would have been better off had they been mystics. But they were not mystics. And Edwards, sensing the reasons for the breakdown of Puritanism as he created his own epistemology, placed the emphasis on emotion, and in saving Puritanism, completely transmuted it into something else. Of equal importance was his emphasis on the possibility of conversion, and in this the rejected doctrine of works was really given supremacy over the official doctrine of grace. By the time of the eighteenth century, idealism and the doctrine of grace seem to have disappeared into the rational sense of service of the liberal and radical deists for whom Puritanism had prepared the way. The approach now is one of common sense and pragmatism. Epistemology seems to be based upon empiricism rather than upon traditionalism or idealism. Yet even the radical deist, justifying his natural right of revolution by Nature and Nature's God--which in turn justified his trust of man and the social contract of which the fluid institutionalism and natural rights are a consequence--even this deist pointed to an

otherworldly Sovereign whose characteristics were seen in his Newtonian creation of law, order, harmony, benevolence, variety, and energy. The conservative upper-middle-class man did not generally believe in the deist's conclusions, but he went along with his age, using its terminology and its populistic political instruments in order to win what it wanted in the first place--a transfer of control from London to America. Distrusting man, classicist in social thought, it sought to counteract the social revolution it never wanted in the first place, and to gain the fruits of the kind of revolution it did want--a military and political revolution. When we consider the social theories of John Adams and Alexander Hamilton in juxtaposition to the social theories of Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson, we find that in the transfer of powers from localism to centralism as seen in the change of philosophy from the Declaration and the Articles to the Constitution, the social classicist won back a heritage for America that had almost been a heritage predominated by the social views of the liberal and radical deist. Largely, the deist's heritage was one of idealism; the classicist's one of pragmatic judgment of political man.

Now by the time of the nineteenth century, pre-Darwinian evolutionary thought had made great inroads into the ordered cosmic great chain of being of the eighteenth century. By the time Melville wrote his greatest books, the facts of his world and time encompassed a growing social Darwinianism that made acceptance of the deist's democratic and populistic idealism

impossible, and encompassed growing social and economic inequities that made acceptance of the old political classicist's social ideas impossible--impossible at least for Melville, who saw in the common brotherhood of mortality a great need for social equality and democracy, but not political equality. Certainly not political equality, as we have seen in the comments on Vivenza and in the position of Captain Vere.

To sum up in tremendous but necessary oversimplification, Melville rejected the intellectual currents of the American seventeenth and eighteenth century in terms of the American nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He saw that the ideals of individualism and laissez faire that characterized the eighteenth century deist was now made into a usable past as an ideological justification for the nineteenth century social Darwinist. At the same time, the political classicism of the eighteenth century conservative was similarly used by the nineteenth century social Darwinist. What Melville saw was a world and time in which the middle class had become supreme in the transmogrification of capitalism, and saw that ideals and ideologies were being conveniently, practically, and necessarily used by men who played both ends against the middle. None of the ideologies were compatible, in terms of use, with the ideal to which they were connected. Men are jailers all, the world stands unhinged and is a lie, and men are blind.

The true American revolution was fought, in one sense, in the technology and social thought of the nineteenth century.

What was necessary for Melville was (1) a re-examination of the God by whose creation ideological justifications were made by the confidence men, and (2) a re-examination of confidence-man himself. (For Melville did not shrink from the pain his insight caused. Many nineteenth century men turned in delicate distaste from an America in the turmoil of growth--an America they did not understand. It would be interesting, for instance, to see the results of a study of the surprising number of nineteenth century men who abandoned law to become writers in the romantic or genteel traditions. But Melville was troubled by no overdelicacy. His school was the floating factory of the whaleship.) Similarly, three hundred years earlier, the British were forced to the same re-examinations as, under the impact of the new science and the social thought of the rising middle class, England reached the beginnings of her own supremacy and her old world smashed.[1] Matthiessen wrought well indeed when he called the age of Melville the American Renaissance, for on another point of development than the English, but for almost totally parallel reasons, the age was the birth of a new American world and the death of an old one.

And how completely Melville was a part of the actualities of his own age of renaissance and destruction!--the dual character of the age itself is an insight into Melville's theme and technique. The confidence men he scorned, the transcendentalists, still clung to ideality as did their half-brothers, the writers of the genteel tradition. And Melville had no use for their conclusions.[2] But the mainstream of the American literature of the latter half of the nineteenth century was in

Melville's school, and not in the school of the sidestream of transcendentalism. There is Dickinson with her frozen moment of perception, her image that tweaks God's nose and that sees the underlying inner reality that lurks like the Appenines below the film of appearance-mist. And what are her images but epiphanies? There is Twain, with his final abandonment of the liberal deist's ideal of Huckleberry Finn, and his final abandonment of the true but rigorous God of the Mississippi River. His final statement was the discrepancy of appearance and reality in "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg," "The Mysterious Stranger," and the awful statement of God as the great white glare. Stones and blank white glares are not Melville's alone in this age. Even Whitman realized, in the latter works of Democratic Vistas, a growing loss of idealistic optimism. And we need only lump together for this purpose the entire rise of naturalism, the Chicago school, the New York bohemian colonies emerging at the end of the century, to recognize that again the central pattern of all the literature of this age is an examination of the discrepancies between the ideal appearances inherent in current ideologies and between the social realities. And with almost all, the result is not the optimism of the social Darwinist or the transcendentalist--the result is the disillusion which is the view of woe, of which Melville's works are the finest hammered steel. And truly, Melville created universals because he was of his time. And again, it must be noted that his college was not the academy wherein idealism is taught. His college was not a school for

metaphysics. His college could not have provided the man of insight with the idealism and optimism of the transcendentalists. His Yale and his Harvard was the whale-ship, at once the universal of the search, the immersion in the destructive element of insightful reflection upon facts, and it was also the relative and timely specific of the changing industrial tenor of his age.

And so none of the writers of the American Renaissance created tragedy with all the inherent affirmation and absolute value the genre demands. Many of them drifted to the nihilism of Twain's last works or the stern, impressionistic determinism of Crane's work. There was no absolute against which to posit the actions showing the violations of absolute order. The two preceding centuries, with their internal contradictions, could not provide absolutes, and even if they could, the facts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were incompatible with a return to such absolute ideals. The relative social specifics had changed irrevocably and almost totally. And man's motivations remained the same. And Melville found his theme.

The nineteenth century removed tragedy because it removed God. It removed the interested Puritan God, whose eye was on the sparrow and whose hand was immediately on every minutest event. It removed the deist's God who had removed himself from the world only because he had stamped it with irrevocable qualities of law, order, and benevolence that characterized the Great Geometer's unchanging and perfect Clock. But while most contemporary American writers (of the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries) allowed the removal to throw them into nihilism and anarchical determinism, it did not completely so affect Melville, the greatest of them all. For Melville found one point of hope and affirmation to balance the Terror Stone's weight of chaos and inhumanity. Significantly, the hope he found was the closest he came to a program, and that is the story of Captain Vere. Politically, his theme makes him a classicist. It is the complete man who must impose order upon society. By his very definition, the complete man can be no single individual, as witness Media and Vere. That group, that elite that Melville calls Nature's noble order, must lead society to gregarious and collective advancement, for the individual man is blindly or madly driven by his own motivations in a society already plunged too deeply into a history of selfishness, blindness, and madness--the world of the confidence man. God can not help, for he is the blank and terrible sea, the indifferent river upon which man's world whirls in the cosmos. And certainly authority cannot be delegated to all men or any man. Long before Captain Vere was created, Melville adumbrated his view of the limitations of complete political democracy when he attached the pamphlet of world history and of God to the tree in Mardi's Vivenza. For Melville's world was indeed the day of Mars, the Mar-di (Melville's use of French and France--as well as his use of the numeral three--are subjects in themselves adequate for lengthy study) which saw not only the external wars with Mexico and wars between the states, but which saw the internal wars of a changing

industrial society.

For the Greek tragedian, the chorus could advance and explain the epiphanies in terms of absolutes, ideals that were of communal acceptance. The tragedian of the English renaissance could present the breakdown of order against the background of an order which had existed in the history of that world and time. The American writer had no history but that of his own nation, and in reading of a history's destruction, the insightful artist like Melville could at once see that the destruction meant a creation albeit a creation of new destructions, and in reading the English renaissance writers, could extract a history which was changeless in its similarity to the chaos of his own age. In short, when a great writer is read it is inevitable that the structure of the concrete universal is exposed. But it is also true that such a writer exposes in addition the structure of the relative-specific. He presents a theme of and for all men, but he presents it in the image of his own society. Summarily, I believe, the history of Melville's world and time is the most fruitful approach to the overview of the "why" of Melville's theme and technique.

And the "why" is the hooking of leviathan. Melville saw and understood the problems of the Renaissance at the time of the breakdown of the titanic medieval absolutes and unities. He lived in an age and a nation which, beneath its pietism and appearances could not base its actions and its actualities upon the ideal of the great Christian tradition. Rather than turning

to new hand-fashioned absolutes, as did the transcendentalists--who also soon became inoperative in the American actuality--Melville returned to the great Elizabethan examination of human behavior, with the non-absolute weapons of relativism, empiricism, and pragmatism. In finding the hour of earnestness of Shakespeare the same as his own, he discovered that deep, deep gropings will find answers similar in view of earthly universals though vastly different in view of specifics. Melville searched to pierce the mask of appearances, to find an otherworldly, ideal Last Answer on which human beings could base their behavior. All he found was the nothingness of the ultimate answer of Time. It is the emptiness of zero, the perfection of the circle, that finally defeats even the hope held out by his political classicism. To try to conquer this emptiness was to ask for the emptiness of death. To live by this emptiness was to immerse in chaos by projecting human ideals into a concept that included all, was isolated from all, cared not at all. Melville had to abandon absolutes, ideals, and chronometricals, Ahab, Pierre, and Christ. The wrench of abandonment is the story of the world weaning itself from a life based on otherworld, it is the story of Pierre's soul-toddler. With a great cry of woe, Melville turned from God to man, and in each of his books created the history of the world, and embodied that history in each of his major characters. And in man without otherworld, Melville found a way to build a new God--not Timeless, not absolute, but in its eclectic structure of classicism, empiricism, materialism,

pragmatism, cultural relativity, social democracy, consciousness and love, a God which would do, which would last as long as humanity, and which would point--even if it never realized--a way out of chaos into brotherhood and peace.

His one story was the shock of discovery that every individual is irrevocably lost from birth in the whelming tides of time. But in creating his fine hammered steel of this leviathan woe, he attained the only immortality he himself recognized--the lingering power and memory of his name and discovery in the collective racial conscience of worldwide mankind. In his final choice of earth over God, Melville the Promethean classicist reached out from the deeps and touched all the future world and time.

NOTE

1. Melville's marginal reading notes make this judgment inescapable.

A MELVILLE CHECKLIST

This is not a complete checklist of Melville studies. But it is comprehensive enough to incorporate the important work to date and to afford the student a beginning point for his own studies. Many of the items included do not bear on Melville directly, but are included as background-works which other researchers have found helpful. A bibliography of Melville's own works has not been included. Bibliographies of Melville may be found in T. H. Johnson's compilation, volume three of A Literary History of the United States (New York, 1949), Meade Minnigerode, Some Personal Letters of Herman Melville and a Bibliography (New York, 1922), and Michael Sadleir, Excursions in Victorian Bibliography (London, 1922).

Collections of primary material are to be found in the Lemuel Shaw Collection of The Massachusetts Historical Society, the Duyckinck, Lansing and Berg Collections of the New York Public Library, and the Melville Collection of the Harvard College Library (Houghton Library). In addition to these large holdings, materials on whaling, shipping, and Melville and his family are to be found in the Princeton University Library; the Old Dartmouth Historical Society (New Bedford, Mass.); the Peabody Museum (Salem, Mass.); the National Archives, Washington, D.C.; the Records of Thomas W. Melvill and of Peter Gansevoort, the Office of Naval Records and Library, Washington, D.C.; the Records of the Albany Young Men's Association, Harmanus Bleecker Library, Albany, N.Y.; the New York

State Library, Albany; and the Melville Collection of the Berkshire Athenaeum (Pittsfield, Mass.). John Howard Birss has long had a complete Melville bibliography in preparation, and William Gilman and Merrell Davis are currently concluding work on a complete collection of Melville letters.

As one of the countless Melville students unknown to him, I wish to thank Mr. Jay Leyda for the benefit derived from his labors, not only expended on monumental works like the Melville Log, but also on lesser known and more thankless tasks such as his convenient arrangement of materials in the New York Public Library collections.

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