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NARCISSISM IN NINETEENTH CENTURY LITERATURE

by

MARIAN BLASI

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in English in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,
The City University of New York

2001

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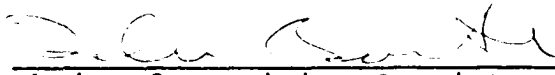
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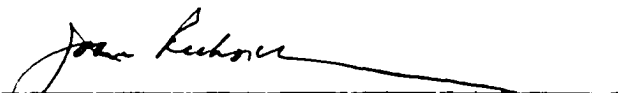
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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in English in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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11.13/2000
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Executive Officer

Felicia Boneparte

Fred Kaplan

Anne Humpherys
Supervisory Committee

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Abstract

NARCISSISM IN NINETEENTH CENTURY LITERATURE

by

Marian Blasi

Adviser: Professor Felicia Bonaparte

This dissertation investigates a quality of narcissism which begins to manifest itself in early nineteenth century English literature and traces its pervasive spread through the century and into the next. It explores the work of some major romantic poets and looks chronologically into such novels as Emma, Great Expectations, Wuthering Heights, The Egoist, The Picture of Dorian Gray, Lady Chatterley's Lover, and Sons and Lovers. The approach to narcissism follows loosely Freud's interpretation of the Narcissus myth, includes some leading current views, and explores the relationship of this dispositioning to nineteenth century materialism. An analogy is made between the narcissistic parent/child relationship and the century to its constituent masses.

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INTRODUCTION

And still deeper the meaning of that story of Narcissus who, because he could not grasp the tormenting mild image he saw in the fountain, plunged into it and was drowned. But this same image, we ourselves see in all rivers and oceans. It is the image of the ungraspable phantoms of life; and this is the key to it all.

(Melville, Moby Dick, "Loomings," 95)

It is my purpose in this study to explore an important element that seems to me to characterize English fiction from Romantic poetry on through the nineteenth-century novel and into the early twentieth century. It grows, I believe, from a tendency coming out of the Renaissance and strengthened by the consequences of the empiricist philosophy, to focus on the individual and the inner life of the self, a tendency that has already received a great deal of critical attention and one on which I will not dwell on in its now well-established features. My interest is with this tendency when it reaches the extreme. When it does so, it becomes, as I shall argue in this study, not individualism only, not subjectivity alone, but an identifiable representation of narcissism.

I use this term because it has certain clear associations which I will want to invoke, but it is important here to establish what I shall offer as a new definition of narcissism. For, important as he is in the history of this term, I am not by any means wedded to Freud in my understanding of this concept. Indeed, like Freud I wish, on

the contrary, to go first of all to the myth itself. The details of the myth are simple. Narcissus, a beautiful young man, inspired love in the heart of Echo. But when she revealed her passion for him, Narcissus rejected her and recoiled. His punishment was swift and deadly. The goddess Aphrodite or Nemesis, for versions differ here, interpreting his turning away as an inability to feel love, read his act as arrogance and doomed him to fall in love with his own reflection in a pool of water. Day after day he stared at his likeness, falling deeper and deeper in love with himself, until, as he yearned to embrace his own image, he fell into the water and drowned.

With the poets bringing it down to us, most especially Ovid in the Metamorphoses (lll, 90-96), the myth has varied little in interpretation over the years save for the positive or negative value placed on its counterpart--mirror gazing. The philosopher Socrates Diogenes Laertius offered a positive evaluation, suggesting the gazer is enabled, with the advantage of seeing his beauty or ugliness, to adjust accordingly his social interaction. Its negative connotation, however, has been far more popular, and it is in this negative sense that Freud uses it.

As the term has been generally used, narcissism has been considered the trait of an individual not a period and there is obviously a huge difference between a single mind and the character of an age. A period cannot have a consciousness as

an individual has. A period does not have a psyche in the strict sense of that word. And, yet, it is made up of individuals who have consciousnesses and psyches and it may, in this way, reflect the character of its constituent members. In the fourteenth century, for instance, in which belief in the hereafter was a fundamental conviction, individual achievement was a small consideration. Architectural undertakings were planned that could take hundreds of years. Begun by one, it was understood it would be continued and finished through a dozen generations. The artifacts of the Middle Ages are the monuments to this view. Our age often reflects the dissonance and uncertainty of our time--harsh, abrupt, discordant sounds in music, one liners being thrown out in rapid fire rate in modern drama, literary plots seeming to break off abruptly. In this sense, an age can share the characteristics that distinguish the preponderance of its members, and it is in such a context that I wish to discuss what I see as the narcissistic element in the periods I have selected.

By focusing on this single aspect of the literature of these periods I do not mean to suggest that I think this is its most important trait. It is one among many others, one that I think can help to explain much that is to be found in the literature but one that must be understood in conjunction with the rest. I do not, therefore, wish to displace any discussions of these periods that focus on other, even,

contrary elements. I wish only to add one more facet to the picture of the whole.

Perhaps the best place to begin a discussion of narcissism is to consider Freud in his important contribution to the subject "On Narcissism: An Introduction," in which he explores among many things, what was to become the rudimentary beginnings of his theory of the tripartite structure of the psyche: ego, superego, and id, or simply put respectively the integrated, conscious self, the austere subconscious voice of scruple, and the base, unmasked face of pure desire--aspects of what he saw as the human psyche. Through this hypothetical division Freud was attempting to grasp and order for closer scrutiny the complex workings of the psyche. He may also be seen in this essay struggling with the various aspects of what he called object libido and ego libido, i.e., with the sexual and instinctual drives--with an attachment to an object outside of the self or with a complete immersion into the self.

In "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," Freud was to establish particularly the existence of a drive in addition to the sexual or erotic one which he named the "instinctual drive." One's consciousness of self and the preservation of that self, Freud maintained in this essay, was a stronger drive than the erotic desire to attach to an object outside of self. In "On Narcissism," he touches on this very same area discussing a primary narcissism which is characterized by

megalomania or a grandiose sense of self whereby interest is diverted from people and things in the external world without replacement of them by others in fantasy. By this he meant that there is no creation of an imaginary construct for emulation/idealization which has in some part or other been taken from the external world; in short, there is no link or anchor to hang on to the outside world. By comparison, Freud also speaks of a secondary narcissism where there seems to be some attempt at a recovering of the self and a leading back of the libido or drive to objects other than the self. These objects are, however, the self-created objects or the "ideal" creations--the "ideal imago," or the "grandiosity"--terms some modern theorists use to refer to these creations. They are distorted, aggrandized self-perceptions or psychic dispositions a troubled ego will adopt in an attempt to recover self-esteem.

One particular passage in Freud's essay on narcissism is of special importance here:

... This megalomania has no doubt come into being at the expense of object-libido. The libido that has been withdrawn from the external world has been directed to the ego and thus gives rise to an attitude which may be called narcissism. But the megalomania itself is no new creation; on the contrary, it is, as we know, a magnification and plainer manifestation of a condition which had already existed previously. This leads us to look upon the narcissism which arises through the drawing in of object-cathexes as a secondary one, superimposed on a primary narcissism that is obscured by a number of different influences.

(Freud, "On Narcissism," Strachey, V. 14,
74-5)

By a "condition which had already existed," Freud is generally taken to mean the inchoate development of the ego, that prenatal and/or early infantile state in which there has yet been no separation between ego and outside world, that state in which the young child still perceives that he/she and the world, i.e. his mother, are still one entity. It is, perhaps, that very state which the myth pictures Narcissus falling back into. This is a psychological regression, and it is to such regression that I primarily refer to when I speak of narcissism.

Freud seemed to have as his purpose, as indeed the Greeks seemed to have, the concern to reflect a common element existing in all people. To the rational Greek mind a full life had to mean an assertive seeking after what life had to offer, not a withdrawal from life. To the more introspective modern mind the myth offers the same strong message that if one does not let go of self, i.e., if one does not go forward into the world, one inevitably goes backward toward an infantile, prenatal state or psychic death. In the Greek myth Narcissus falls into the water and drowns. Freud merely gathered into a discipline concerns that preoccupied the human mind from time immemorial. The myth, as one of the earliest manifestations of this concern, has become a paradigm for certain disorders of the self because it so poignantly exemplifies the development of the psyche that

becomes distorted and warped when initial self-love fails to turn outward toward the love of another.

Most modern theories on the self are currently derived from this reading. Leading among these is the view of Heinz Kohut who suggests that if a child is not loved for himself, he will often suppress anything that is uniquely his own and adopt what, as pointed out above, Kohut calls the "grandiose-self"--a creation of a self-image designed to win approval. Or, if a formerly loved object has disappointed him, the child may proceed to set up an ideal to look up to and will gradually begin moving toward becoming that ideal--Kohut's the "ideal parent imago." Another current thinker, Swiss psychologist Alice Miller, adds concrete and classic insight here when she says that

... if a mother's primary occupation with her child during the period of early childhood is unpredictable, unsure, anxiety ridden, or hostile, or if her confidence in herself as a mother is shaken, then the child has to go through the period of individuation without having a reliable framework for emotional checking back to his symbiotic partner. The result is a disturbance in his primitive self-feeling.

(35)

Miller sees "grandiosity" as a defense against depression, an expression of the pain attending the real loss of the self. She believes the narcissistic sufferer harbors deep feelings of humiliation, outrage, and anger:

When such a person confronts death it is even more harrowing, for he knows he has never really been alive. He knows he never came to discover himself, to develop the self-love

which comes from knowing oneself, one's feelings. Depression and grandiosity have their same roots in narcissistic disturbance, both being indications of an inner prison because both are expected to fulfill an introjected mother's expectations. Whereas the grandiose person is her successful child, the depressive sees himself as a failure.

(45)

Neither Kohut nor Miller regard narcissism as a pathology which is generally consistent with my position on the texts to be discussed. Particularly, Kohut defines it as an arrest in the developmental processes through which a healthy, mature ego is formed, the megalomania of the narcissist being an attempt to increase the self-regard of the ego. For him, love might prove a cure, as it would for Miller. But this is not true for Otto Kernberg, another leading theorist in the field. For him, there is a narcissism, distinct from the normal narcissism that is part of the developmental stage in the formation of all psyches which is definable as a disease, a pathological process in which the ego creates another self. Instead of arrested growth and/or regression of the ego, Kernberg believes a split or fragmentation takes place and a sort of "other self" develops; the overwhelmed and frustrated ego becomes disoriented, fragments, and gives rise to another self which has a greatly altered perception of reality, the hallucinogenic and paranoid one, and one which all the love in the world cannot reach.

It was Christopher Lasch's The Culture of Narcissism in 1978, which seriously opened up the dimension of narcissism

through its mirroring in literature, and a great deal of twentieth century literature is now being looked at as expressions of such.

The situation is similar with the nineteenth century. The very essence of Romanticism and many of the characteristics which bear the name Romantic and which are reflective of the period's constituent masses suggest a narcissistic quality. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, whose influence was so profound on the ages that followed, might be taken as an example of this kind of Romantic narcissism both in his thought and in himself. In contrast to the Greek ideal of balance, control, and moderation which had dominated the thought of a good deal of the Enlightenment, Rousseau and the Romantic stress on feeling, fancy, even whim, the individual and the internal, the private and subjective self, not only turns the mind away from contact with the outside world but often actually blurs the line between the fantasized and the real. Rousseau (to cite but one instance of his fantastic behavior illustrating the coincidence of his psyche and his philosophy) fancied himself a composer at one point and gave a concert at Lausanne. As critic Babbitt also believes, this is narcissistic behavior, even megalomaniacal (Babbitt, 74).

Would this mean a megalomaniacal populace? Did Rousseau reflect the masses? Were they all narcissistic? Of course not. But perhaps Rousseau's behavior reflected some budding tendency in the popular consciousness, the beginning of the

celebration of the individual which ultimately also went too far.

Because of its focus on internal landscapes, nineteenth century literature often deals with a certain "singularity" of focus, with a certain amount of subjective material. But, while great interpretive leeway can be accorded subjectivity, the line between it and out and out distortion can't be disputed: When a figure so disregards reality as to impose a private, fictive view onto the world, that figure has crossed the line of "subjective." When a character, for example, such as George Eliot's Tito Melema or Wilde's Dorian Gray completely disregards reality and responds to the world imposing on it an order of his own making, this is more than selfish manipulation of the world to the character's own ends. Rather, it is distortion irrespective of degree, and it is not a moralization but an objective, literal observation to describe such a character as hallucinogenic or, to the least, outside the norm. These characters contrast to Shakespeare's Macbeth, if I may be permitted the gross simplification, in that the latter is selfish; "he finds no way to prick the sides of his intent." But he, unlike the former and others to be discussed, not for one minute, ever loses sight of the moral turpitude, of who and what he has become. Were the experts to differ, the difference would focus only on the question of "degree," i.e., from a "tendency toward" or "characteristic," to the more serious term, "personality

disorder." Whether the disorder is narcissism or something else yet remains to be proven. Certainly it is a contender and that's what my thesis is about. It is not within its scope nor my psychoanalytical skills to evaluate all the possibilities for such behavior, but to suggest through the discussions that follow that a consistent and persistent pattern of behavior characteristic of the narcissist also exists in the literature under investigation.

Such characteristic as we have been discussing in particular works is especially evident when contrasted against the powerfully adventuresome works from the period such as those of Scott, for example, who launched the romantic novel while holding onto the bend for daring heroes and while advancing the interest begun by such predecessors as Maria Edgeworth and especially Jane Porter (The Scottish Chiefs) for nationalistic literature. They are further particularly in contrast to such works as those of Anthony Trollope who concerned himself with social commentary (The Way We Live Now), and church and national politics (Barchester Towers and Phineas Finn respectively).

Such social patterns of behavior which fall into the dimension of narcissistic don't just evolve out of nowhere but are a continuum from what went before. Accordingly, one reason narcissistic dispositioning may have begun to develop in England during the nineteenth century was the growth at the time of a strong materialistic society.

England got an early start in the industrial development which characterized the century, and, with the help of her huge naval fleet, was able to establish markets all over the world. This resulted in her becoming quite rich and, needless to say, wanting to stay that way. Her trading policies, the repeal of the corn laws which, among many things, opened up the market to the middle class, were as much a concern with keeping the working class happy and working, as they were with individual rights. Literary criticism of the times offers scathing pictures of Victorian interest in industry and money making--"Mammon"--over the well being of one's fellows. Even organized religion, the Evangelical movement, for example, while so much concerned with helping the poor and downtrodden, inadvertently contributed to the ends of big business by encouraging the poor with the played out view that their condition could be used to save their soul: "Tis easier for a camel to get through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter heaven." And, though not for all, unfortunately for too many, "survival of the fittest" was the vogue, with a great number looking the other way when Blake's "chimney sweeps" came into view. That "Cult of Respectability," the double standard--private and public code of behavior--also helped discipline the middle class so that their energy would be conserved for the mercantile economy (Buckley, 114-16), and a sort of moral "priggishness" evolved of right conduct and right appearance for the sake of social and material success,

while privately conduct was on occasion anything but "right."

The result of such individual denial was the steady loss of the building blocks to character and the development of a stronger self--actually a Kirkegaardian emptying of the self began to take place.

This philosopher believed essentially that the development of one's own self-awareness and self-discipline were the tools for shaping a stronger sense of who and what one was; when these are lacking, a self-hatred eventually develops. In a society where materialism is the prime concern, Kirkegaard suggests, this type of development does not take place. Rather, empty, shallow people moved only by avarice and incapable of loving another begin to take the place where once strong, self-assured individuals stood. The pattern continues from one generation to the next until the general populace is characterized by apathy and indifference toward the needs of others. As the tendency persists, social trends, attitudes and institutions begin to lag. There becomes no protecting, nurturing "parent" for the child, for the emotional needs of the children of the succeeding generations and the fertile bed for the development of narcissism becomes well established.

Nineteenth Century English literature has many examples of this pattern of behavior. True, a principal characteristic of Romanticism is self-realization, but, as suggested earlier, the line is often a very thin one between "romantic" and

"narcissistic," between self-seeking and self-absorption going unchecked, the ego gradually withdrawing from the outside world. Among the many literary motifs reflecting this cultural trend is the glut of themes dealing with struggling orphans. Another is the motif which deals with parental substitutes such as communes for larger "family" living exemplified in the work of Elizabeth Gaskell. A favorite Gaskellian theme concerned itself with the welfare and comfort of "unattached" females. Statistically verified, the more than 50 million unmarried females living in the country during the early decades of the century emphasized a need for protection and "nurture." At that time, if we will recall, a woman who did not have a father or close male relative was little likely able to sustain herself. Money issues and "proper" parenting such as those which pervade the work of Dickens, among them Great Expectations, Our Mutual Friend, and David Copperfield, are reflective of the time as well. And, finally, the widespread secularization of religious motifs as in the adopting of parental models from traditional, old and valued ones would seem to suggest the era is groping for supporting structures. George Eliot, one of the leaders here, seems to be hinting that the nurture and comfort derived from these heretofore "saints" be attained by emulating what they stood for; one way of viewing her Dorothea Brooke from Middlemarch, for example, is to see her as a Saint Theresa. Romola from the book with the same name is a blonde Virgin

Mary type. Overall, this strong sense of absence and the seeking to fill it is overwhelming and not too easily dismissed to other causes such as the toll of wars or the effects of progress. There is too much stress not on a picture of resulting conditions, but on the "inside story of the insides," on the need for and the effects of the lack of emotional support on the inner growth of the individual.

Accordingly, the period found itself in a situation analogous to the mind that Freud thought likely to become narcissistic. For, just as the narcissistic child is often one without loving parents, so the age was a fatherless child. The God who had for centuries played the traditional father figure was at this point dead or dying. This loss meant the loss of an authoritative figure, yes, but also one who was loving, nurturing, and protecting. In addition, the rich and rapid growth of industry during the period compounded the problem by creating a materialistic, profit-seeking society in which the needs of the individual often took second place, leading, for many, to feelings of rejection, abandonment and, subsequently, self-doubt. The prevalence of the orphan theme at this time suggests perhaps that the age itself was aware of its own losses. Similarly, the many motifs dealing with a search for a self and for self-realization also surely attest to this. More and more, the age began looking inward toward the self as its only possible certainty, so much so that as the century advanced there emerged, I am suggesting, a

stealthy but pervasive narcissism which took on momentum, spread in scope, and encompassed in its sweep the next century as well.

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

A closer look at the earliest rumbles of romanticism will lend further understanding as to how a century could take on the characteristics of a singularly troubled ego. Particularly in order is a closer look at the work of William Wordsworth and Samuel T. Coleridge who so celebrated the individual. From the onset these two great innovators within the romantic movement may be seen in their collective Lyrical Ballads (1798) moving from the formulation of a new diction and a new subject area, drawn from their own conception of individualism, to works like The Prelude and "Frost at Midnight" which are concerned not with individual rights but with projecting a private, quite interior vision of the self onto the world. This psychic perception, for example, may perhaps be seen in Wordsworth's often quoted lines:

... With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of material things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in my own immaterial nature.

(Wordsworth, (Poetical Works, '52)
Vol.IV, 463)

One of the most common readings of this passage is a pantheistic one, Pantheism, neo-Platonism, and, especially for Coleridge who was an avid disciple of David Hartley, pantisocraticism were philosophical views very much in vogue at the time. Freud and those views which he inculcated into his theories were not yet on the scene and available for

literary scrutiny. However, they are at present and in line with the very same practice of examining literature through concurrent philosophical views may I not now add to the past, traditional views a somewhat Freudian one? In addition to viewing Wordsworth and Coleridge's work as representation of the ideal, a mystical presence of the divine in, with, and through nature, may I not now also view it as a projection onto the world of a narcissistic perception of reality? Similarly, while in the imagery that follows, nature, as in much of Wordsworth's poetry, seems to be a comforting, nurturing force, a quasi religious motif, why can it not also be seen as an "ideal" motherly perspective, what Heinz Kohut would call a "parental imago"? This is not a new idea. Look at the literature of primitive groups, the American Indian, for example, whose oral poetry often viewed the earth in terms of a "wrapping around," protective force--"Earth, my mother...." In our more sophisticated world can I not take the further step and see perhaps the creation of a mother/womb type image through nature to replace what was heretofore lacking in the parent/child relationship and which image might subsequently become for the narcissist the mirror to model oneself after:

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And, even with something of a Mother's mind.

(Wordsworth, "Intimations," (Poetical Works, '58) 281, ll.78-80)

These lines seem to convey the experience of a powerful and loving maternal figure huddling to herself "her own natural kind," her children, her children that are like her-- "pleasures of her own." These lines may, even moreso, argue for a narcissistic reading rather than a pantheistic one, for the omnipotent prototype here ("Earth") is a female/mother image rather than the male/father one. While earth is traditionally associated as female, it is not associated with a religious god-head. That figure is traditionally male. As mentioned above, Kohut sees narcissism developing not as a pathological self structure, but as a fixation or developmental arrest due primarily to faulty parenting; to compensate for the lack of parental support the developing ego will attempt to recreate the image of parental omnipotence which was withdrawn or destroyed in external reality (Berman 26). This particular imagery could certainly suggest the Kohutian coined terms, "grandiose self" and the "self-object," which are the idealized parent imago and the grand, omnipotent self. For those who see narcissism as a pathological disease, this imagery may even suggest the rudiments of paranoid, hallucinogenic self imagery. While a look at Wordsworth's work in this light is, again, certainly a stretch from traditional readings where a somewhat mystical, comforting communion with nature is seen, it does not mean additional, compounded views should be excluded. Again, it is by no means my intent to displace but to add to current scholarship here.

Human psychic complexity neither permits absolute conformity nor does it except any consideration. Blatant and glaring, subtle or hinting, it is only a matter of degree.

While both these images do seem to move toward an enveloping, protecting, view of nature--what a psychologist might call a uterine view of nature, elsewhere, in works like "The Other," "Ruth," and "The Mad Mother," the poet may also be seen involved in the narcissistic tendency toward transference. He may be seen in these works concerned with actually getting into the female characters' minds and projecting that consciousness onto the world. There is an attempt to take onto himself the identity of the character, to become the character, to effect, as the narcissist would, some sort of a transference of self into "the other." This may be seen in the poet's attempt at imitating the diction of the characters, to ventriloquize them:

My father was a good and pious man,
 An honest man by parents bred,
 And I believe that, soon as I began
 To lisp, he made me kneel beside my bed,

(Wordsworth, "The Female Vagrant" in
Lyrical Ballads, 44, ll. 10-13)

Here again while these lines have traditionally been looked at as "the new style," the poet "speaking to men as common men," may there not also be room to view them in the light of twentieth century psychological thought, as an attempt to diffuse a self totally onto the world, the poet/persona taking onto himself the identity of the character and then projecting

that self onto the world? This work was originally entitled "Guilt and Sorrow," and recalls the poet's own abandonment of Annette Vallon when a young man. It suggests the subtle intimations in the identity relationship of poet to character. It has also been observed that Wordsworth's "Ruth" captures memories from the poet's own childhood such as images from "the Bank of Tone" (LB, 187, l. 190), "her" dwelling in the wood, and, "... from her prison fled" (LB, 186, l. 183)--the latter echoing the "Intimations" ode where the poet speaks of his fleeing from the "prison house" and back to the woods as Ruth now does from her suffering.

From the same poem there is an imitation of Coleridge's The Ancient Mariner where the latter was also attempting to take on the identity of another:

Husband and children! one by one, by sword
 And ravenous plague, all perished; every tear
 Dried up, despairing, desolate, on board
 A British ship I waked, as from a trance
 restored.

(Wordsworth, "The Female Vagrant," Lyrical Ballads, 49, ll. 32-35)

The difference at stake in both these excerpts is in the angle of focus; there is a looking at or into, as opposed to an outward projection from the character's position. There is almost an incantatory, vortical pulling in toward the speaker as opposed to the language being thrust out toward a receptor. Through these lines we are almost made to think of Pound and the vorticist movement and the early modernists where this latter poet was attempting to be the mystical voice of ages,

spewing a singular voice onto the listener. Only where Pound relied heavily on the juxtaposing of images to pull the mind's eye around, Wordsworth's lines create the effect through alliteration, "by one, by sword," and "Dried up, despairing, desolate," and "British ship ... restored."

Later, in "Tintern Abbey" and The Prelude, particular places in nature are periodically revisited, and reflect on each occasion the poet's self at various stages of his growth. Called by many Wordsworth's "double exposure technique," this technique allows a simultaneous view of the poet's mind at different stages of its development. The visions/recollections of natural science were noted not for themselves but for what they could reveal about the poet's mind at the various times he responded to them--"I cannot paint what then I was...." In Kohutian terms, again, may this not appear also an "idealizing transference:"

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished
thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again

(Wordsworth, "Lines... Tintern
Abbey," ll. 58-60, De Selincourt, Vol.
11, 259)

And,

... I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love...

("Lines...", 259, l. 75-81)

While such lines may be read as the experience of a serene spiritual stimulation on the order of what the American Emerson was doing, and certainly they are that in part, there is another angle here as well, that of a narcissistic transference completed whereby Wordsworth sees now only aspects of himself as he looks out at the external world. Such examples of singular vision invade the poet's work elsewhere as well. If we will recall, for example, in the preface to the second edition of the Lyrical Ballads, a work initially planned by the two men, Wordsworth is quite heavy with the "I" word and only mentions Coleridge as, "I was induced to request the assistance of a Friend" (LB, 242). True, Coleridge's contribution is minimal in quantity but certainly not in quality, including Ancient Mariner, "Foster Mother's Tale," "the Nightingale," the "Dungeon," and "Love" (242). Similarly, while compassion toward the plight of women may have been a motive in such works as mentioned above, so might there be a selfish end. The poet, for example, uses Annette Vallone's letters (where the latter is begging the poet to come back to her) as material in his poetry. While his motive may also have been "common man material" for his work, we have to wonder here as well at his sensitivity toward another. The isolated, autobiographical nature of The Prelude would further argue for this self focusing. The style goes back to Augustine in its similarity to the confessional genre (Abrams, Natural Supernaturalism, 71-95), and strongly

suggests a work where one's interior space is the predominant reality. Similarly, the many fractures in the surface of The Prelude (those areas in the text which seem to fade into it and leave the reader on the outside), also hint at a tendency on the part of the poet to lose touch with reality, falling deeper into himself. The pattern seems to suggest not so much a case of "selfishness" where there is some choice, where reality is being ordered to one's end, but, rather, with behavior that is moving further and further away from reality and empathy for another toward loss of that reality.

By comparison to another work dealing with interior landscape, the American Holmes's "The Chambered Nautilus," for example, the subject, though locked in a shell, continually sheds its form, each time a newer and larger one than the one it casts off, with the end in view of ultimately casting off the shell and transcending, growing in dynamic dimension to the world, not withdrawing from it to go backward to recollected moments in the past as Wordsworth seems to be doing. To draw back into an earlier perceived, perhaps, as pristine a time is the pattern of the narcissist:

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's
unresting sea!

(Holms, 149, ll. 29-36)

The speaker here is growing and abounding in his world and not being either subsumed into it or by it.

The many works which touch on children or have child related motifs (such as "The Idiot Boy," or "We are Seven") and which are in juxtaposition with mirror motifs (of an omnipotent natural parent as referred to above), growth and nurture motifs, may also be seen as singular and self-focusing. A solipsistic reading, which stops at seeing only the self as existing, is less likely here than a narcissistic one. The narcissist, one must remember, is emotionally a child still looking for a model to emulate.

To see Wordsworth's backward reflection and contemplation as an interest in personal growth, i.e., learning from the past, is a popular interpretation of his work which may have come in on the cusp of later Victorian philosophical interest in self-betterment. But, it may also be seen in the light or prism of current interest in the exclusive self. Of particular importance here are the observations of M.H. Abrams who sees The Prelude as an "involute" poem very much about its own genesis-- "a prelude to itself." He suggests that it was the poet's intention to write of the creation of his self in the never to be completed work, The Recluse, and The Prelude is a sort of "portico," circuitous in design, whereby the reader is lead back, via memory, from the formative years to the cusp of the poet's mature life (Abrams, "Design," 591). The poet says as much himself:

I rose

As if on wings, and saw beneath me stretch'd
 Vast prospect of the world which I had been
 And was; and hence this Song, which like a
 lark
 I have protracted...

(Wordsworth, The Prelude, 1805, Xlll. 370 -
 81)

If we will recall, however, memory is very selective and filled with distortion, and the very act of choice on the part of the poet to either give or hold back as he chooses is only a presentation to the world of the self one wishes to reveal. It is no less than the modern abstract expressionist who selects a portion of the canvas only as his final creation. We would have to ask what happens to the rest of the "stuff." Interesting. What reading of the psyche would we get if all were put forth for scrutiny? This visual arts' technique derives from the psychic automotive movement of this century's fourth and fifth decades where works were especially viewed as creations of self as they were expressions of same. It is interesting to note also that, as a movement, abstract expressionism evolved from the expressionism prevalent and influential in the arts at the time Wordsworth was writing, i.e., the early decades of the nineteenth century.

Echoes in the Prelude's Odyssean quest for self-identity are apparent and lend further encouragement to the idea of a mythical creation via a journey:

What avail'd
 When Spells forbade the Voyager to land,
 The fragrance which did ever and anon
 Give notice to the Shore?...

My business was upon the barren sea,
My errand was to sail to other coasts.

(Prelude, 1805, Bk. XI, ll.48-56)

and,

A Traveller I am,
And all my Tale is of myself; even so,
To follow me, and Thou, O honor'd Friend!
Who in my thoughts art ever at my side,
Uphold, as heretofore, my fainting steps.

Prelude, 1805) Bk. lll, 196-201)

Throughout the poem there are references to the traveller who must go back in order to go forward to find himself, as for example,

"...as a traveller who has gained the brow/Of
some aerial Down..."

"...is tempted to review/The region left
behind him..."

(Prelude, 1850, Bk. lX, l.10-12).

Going back "from whence he came" as the mythical Narcissus does is a rejection of this world's accoutrements and a predispositioning toward a childlike world, a prelapsarian, paradisiacal time as, again, Narcissus sought. By comparison to the prevailing Christian ideology of the early Renaissance, a journeyer goes forward to become a better Christian, standing up to evil as it is encountered. Analogously, this nineteenth century traveller goes backwards, retreating from the world to emerge in The Recluse, if we accept Abrams's reading, as a mature adult. He is not being shaped by the trials and errors of experience but by very selective memory.

He is drawing from a place where there is no judgement and where only a prefigured, perhaps rather ideal being can exist.

It is a fact, though not well known, that Wordsworth made great use of prefabricated material whenever he could get what he wanted; he went regularly to books of travel and very regularly to his sister's journal for material. She traveled with him frequently and made extensive notes of the natural landscape as well as their experiences. Below is an excerpt from one of Dorothy Wordsworth's journals from which the poet gleaned imagery for his "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" (Pottle, 275-7):

It was a threatening, misty morning, but mild. We set off after dinner from Eusemere. Mrs. Clarkson went a short way with us, but turned back. The wind was furious, and we thought we must have returned. We first rested in the large boat-house, then under a furze bush opposite Mr. Clarkson's. Saw the plough going in the field. The wind seized our breath. The Lake was rough. There was a boat by itself floating in the middle of the bay below Water Millock. We rested again in the Water Millock Lane. The hawthorns are black and green, the birches here and there greenish, but there is yet more of purple to be seen on the twigs. We got over into a field to avoid some cows--people working. A few primroses by the roadside--woodsorrel flower, the anemone, scentless violets, strawberries, and that yellow flower which Mrs. C. calls pile wort. When we were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park we saw a few daffodils close to the water-side. We fancied that the lake had floated the seeds ashore, and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more; and at last, under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breath of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones about and about them; some rested

their heads upon these stones as on a pillow for weariness; and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind, that blew upon them over the lake; they looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing. This wind blew directly over them to the lake. There was here and there a little knot, and a few stragglers a few yards higher up; but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity, unity, and life of that one busy highway. We rested again and again. The bays were stormy, and we heard the waves at different distances, and in the middle of the water, like the sea. Rain came on—we were wet when we reached Luff's but we called in. Luckily all was cheerless and gloomy, so we faced the storm--we must have been wet if we had waited put on dry clothes at Dobson's. I was very kindly treated by a young woman, the landlady looked sour, but it is her way. She gave us a goodish supper, excellent ham and potatoes. We paid 7/- when we came away. William was sitting by a fire when I came downstairs. He soon made his way to the library, piled up in a corner of the window. He brought out a volume of Enfield's Speaker, another miscellany, and an odd volume of Congreve's plays. We had a glass of warm rum and water. We enjoyed ourselves, and wished for Mary. It rained and blew, when we went to bed. N.B. Deer in Gowbarrow Park like skeletons."

(Journals of Dorothy Wordsworth, Grasmere 1, 1800-03, 131-2)

This is the raw material from which the poet extracted "A host of golden daffodils/Beside the lake, beneath the trees/Fluttering and dancing in the breeze;" "Ten thousand saw I at a Glance,/Tossing their heads in sprightly dance." ("I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" (Wordsworth, De Selincourt, Vol. 11, 216, l. 4-6 and 11-12). Elsewhere in this poem he makes himself solitary when he was not; the poet gave it out that he treasured his solitude, but it is also a fact that he loved well the love of men in societies (Pottle, 278). It's okay with me. It's great art, great imagination, but it's also

contrived. It's an interior vision projected outward and not the way the exterior world really is. Shakespeare tells us that poetry is the giving to experience a local habitation and a name. I take this to mean the capturing as keenly as possible the essence of what's there. I don't see Wordsworth doing this as much as he is ordering the way things are. Professor Pottle gives us yet a sharper example of this:

A young Poet in the midst of the happiness of Nature as described as overwhelmed by the thought of the miserable reverses which have befallen the happiest of all men, viz Poets--I think of this till I am so deeply impressed by it, that I consider the manner in which I was rescued from my dejection and despair almost as an interposition of Providence... 'A lonely place, a Pond' 'By which an old man was, far from all house or home'--not stood, not sat, but 'was'--the figure presented in the most naked simplicity possible....I cannot conceive a figure more impressive than that of an old Man like this, the survivor of a Wife and ten children, travelling alone among the mountains and all lonely places, carrying with him his own fortitude, and the necessities which an unjust state of society has entailed upon him....Good God! Such a figure, in such a place, a pious self-respecting, miserable infirm ... Old Man telling such a tale!"

(Letter of June 14, 1802. The Early Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: ed. E. de Selincourt, Oxford, V. 111, 1967, 366-7)

The actual truth here is that the poet met an old man not on the lonely moor, but in the highway; that the old man in real life was not demonstrating resolution and independence by gathering leeches under great difficulties, but was begging (Pottle, 275). While some might see Professor Pottle's reading as a naive view of how art works, his reading does

suggest the growing awareness to the issues being addressed in this study.

It can be justly argued that it is the poet's privilege to use and reorder reality as, for example, Shakespeare did in the history plays. But this reordering is done to the end of reaching the higher truth with regard to some aspect of life, the poetic license. This may be said of Wordsworth as well, i.e., he is also seeking the higher truth. But, perhaps, inadvertently, more is going on as well.

A further quite interesting comparison has been made to Wordsworth's journey in The Prelude to that of Odysseus's. Both go into hell, the latter literally and the former in his excursion into the city in Book VII. One needs to recall here that cities have traditionally been looked at in literature as "fallen," or places of decadence and decay. Analogously, as Odysseus's journey to the underworld gains him some self insight from the blind prophet Tiresias, so Wordsworth is seen to gain some self vision from the prophetic blind city beggar of this book, that of a nothing. For, when he gazes into the beggar's eyes, the unreturned gaze or blank stare cuts him off completely. A Jacques Lacan reading of this suggests the poet's "phallic" gaze or "desire to penetrate the object initiates a symbolic castration that renders the poet's glance or stylus impotent," drained of all content and certainty (Sharpe, 22-3). Critic William Sharpe sees this as a sort of attempt to escape the incomprehensibility of city evil. By

seeing less, the shock of the sight is avoided, but at the cost of "turning potentially vital experience into ephemeral information (21). In conjunction with these views is yet, again, the narcissistic reading: The strange beggar helps define the poet/persona's self by virtue of the image he reflects back, i.e., the one the preceptor imagines he sees, with any other view unavailable. He vacates the realm of character and personality shaping experience in being unwilling or unable to see the real self. Remember this is autobiographical material the poet is working with! Be it a "Freudian slip" of some sort, or otherwise, like Odysseus, Wordsworth is getting a vision of himself.

The metaphoric structure of the poem also reinforces the notion of a circuitous path to the self in that it captures the earliest beginnings of consciousness with the world, a period likened to the rapport of the unborn child with its mother. Only, as pointed out earlier, nature is now the mother and what is being generated is a uterine cocoon. Those Wordsworthian "patches" or highlighted glimpses back in time, the intimate and solitary moments with nature, may be seen as nature speaking to the poet as in the preconscious and lost state where the mother speaks to her unborn child. The analogy is as follows. If one looks at the first fifty to sixty lines of The Prelude (1805), there are innumerable images suggesting freedom from bondage, the "gentle breeze which beats against his face" at the onset to "being set free

from the city's bondage" to "being able to breathe again" to the coming again of "Trances of thought and mountings of the mind/Come fast upon me," "Which, breaking up a long-continued frost/Brings with it vernal promises...." These lines may be read in the traditional manner, i.e., wind or breath suggesting poetic inspiration, but they can also reflect an escape from the world or from one state to another, from a sort of "trapped" involvement to a "freeing" reclusion: Instead of using Christian allegory's "a house of bondage," traditionally representative of an oppressive state, frequently the state of sin, the poet is using the state of experience which he then replaces for an earlier, ideal state. Similarly, he replaces traditional dark and light metaphoric language representative of good and evil with "illumined" and "unillumined language," i.e., illumined by "patches of inspiration" (Language is naturally dark except when light is gleaned from certain glimpses of nature) (Onorato, 624-5). If, indeed, as has been argued, the poet is offering for scrutiny a "prelude" to his own becoming, these intimately illumined passages out of the dark easily allow viewing as a mother/child prenatal intimacy. In any event, these effects in the poet's work are all exclusions to the world.

While, however, this poet is able to get back to beginnings through the metaphoric language of poetry, he cannot follow nature as say Milton or Spenser were able to do, that is as a springboard to the world. He can use nature in

The Prelude only as a pivot to his emotions. She, to continue in that motherly sense, weans him; for it is only in the emotion of the experience that his imagination is stimulated. It is not the outside world which, hence, governs the psychic growth of the poet but the substance of his own essence. It is a matter of subtle syntax which reveals this reversal and allows the move farther and farther from the external world:

I paced on...down I sate...slackening my
thoughts by choice...

to,

Be it so; Why think of anything but...What
need of many words?...I pursued My way...A
pleasant loitering journey...brought me to my
hermitage.

(Prelude, 1850, Bk.1, ll. 60ff 106-7)

Steadily Wordsworth shrinks from visionary subjects. True, he is creating poetry, but, the interdependent nature of the task, he is also in the process of creating his own mind. Years later in the act of creating poetry where sensual memory has failed, the poet even moreso draws on his own store of imaginings (Hartman 601 - 606).

Such imaginings are readily apparent, if we may continue to allow this unconventionalism, in the way the poet uses natural objects for his own psychological states. As noted above the poet's initial calling to the "gentle breeze" is a traditional invocation to the muse or inspiration, yet note how in the following lines there is a shift from "feeling" a breeze to being the breeze:

Oh there is blessing in this gentle breeze
That blows from the green fields and from the
clouds...

(Wordsworth, Prelude 1805/50, Bk.1, ll.1-2)

I breathe again;
Trances of thought and mountings of the mind
Come fast upon me,

(Prelude, 1805, Bk. 1, ll. 19-21)

The moon was up, the Lake was shining clear
Among the hoary mountains.

...Not without the voice
Of mountain-echoes did my Boat move on,
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,
Until they melted all into one track
Of sparkling light.

(Prelude, 1805, Bk.1, ll. 383-84;389-94)

As you follow the play of moonlight upon the water, you can feel yourself gradually being led into a deeper reality, something which, at the end of the passage, will culminate in the vision of the "huge and mighty Forms that do not live/Like living men..." (Prelude, 1805, Bk. ll. 425-26) until you come to passages where the "breathing in" becomes "breathing out":

To breathe
Grandeur upon the very humblest face
Of human life.

(Prelude, 1805, Bk. Xll, ll. 284-86)

Where the momentum is frequently a backward pull into self, this book (the twelfth of the fourteen books of The Prelude) reveals a passage of outward projection onto the world of a self which has been contrived in the immediacy of forming the poetry. The difference between this and the transcendentalism

such as we saw in Holmes is in the lack of unity with the world and the concomitant toward personal growth. Rather there is a suffocation of the world with the self.

As Herbert Lindenberger is suggesting (42-9), you can see the frequent use of the word "spread" with its plastic qualities often acts as a conducting agent in the interaction process as for example,

Man ... daily spreads abroad
His being with a strength that cannot fail.

(Prelude, 1805 Bk.IV, 159-61)

... I felt the sentiment of Being spread
O'er all that moves, and all that seemeth
still,
(11, 418-28)

Among the many possible reasons, deliberate or otherwise, for the sole projecting of his consciousness onto the environment, the fact that it is so cannot be ignored. What will make this view of Wordsworth's work easier to accept is to be reminded that the big thrust in the expressionist movements of the period subsequent to Wordsworth's time was to equate material objects, shapes, colors, textures and so forth into emotional states. Recall Van Gogh's famous Starry Night, for example. The primary difference, however, is that these artists were trying to draw out the spectator's own sensations rather than impose upon him. You have to go with the entire picture and the bulk of Wordsworth's major oeuvre tends toward the personal.

Much of The Prelude's imagery suggests an isolated,

interior world. The many "island" motifs with its companion trope the lone boat underscore the narcissist's isolation from the world as does the not so numerous but still present cavern and mountain images (Lindenberger 653-54).

For consideration here also is the lingering effects of the discourse on the relationship of mind to body, the result of Cartesian and empirical beliefs. It was thought that the mind could not exist outside the body, and what was perceived as mind was not thought to be true. What was real was outside the mind, known, Empiricists argued, only through the senses. The self came into being through the senses, through focusing on natural objects. The mind could never be caught in an existence except through its perception of something. Hence we have a work like Coleridge's "Frost at Midnight" where the reader can actually perceive a self removed and "hovering above."

Kant's, Critique of Pure Reason held to the notion that the self within was a form of consciousness though not of bodily existence. The mind governing the perception of the outside world created this consciousness, the self within, which was continually being enriched by experience. This "self," furthermore, could only exist through recognition from others, the idea of the "self as other." Because of the dream like state which characterized the mind outside the body, if this validation from others was not forthwith, it was believed the self would vanish. The result of this thinking was the

attempt to create a self which one believed would gain outside approval. (You will note here the similarity to psychologist Alice Miller's views on the origins of narcissism as outlined in the introduction.)

It is not too far removed to see these views evolving in Wordsworth's need for validation through identity with his characters, in his elusive, fading away quality, in his spreading out of himself over the environs of his world, his "egotistical sublime." The gradual evolutionary process of this style may be seen in earlier period poetry. The first five or six lines of Gray's famous elegy, for example, shows a persona whose almost solipsistic experience makes the world his dream. He sort of fades out with the light and eventually comes back into an existence in an identity with the characters--the view of "the self as other":

The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o' ver the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

(Gray, Complete Poems, 61-2, ll. 1-4)

The flickering and fading light creates the impression that the plowman leaves the world for the poet (Rzepka 5). For Wordsworth, one sees the self-diffusion and mental appropriation of the world in his spreading and subsuming into himself the world he creates.

A shift in perception would have further worked to open up the potential for narcissism, and around 1800, the time Wordsworth and Coleridge were publishing Lyrical Ballads, such

a shift occurred. Charles Rzepka suggests (11) that the empiricist's view of the mind as "camera obscura" began to change from the world as object of knowledge with its universally accepted constant laws and "primary qualities" to the thinking subject's point of view on the world and the way the mind "associates ideas in a state of excitement" (Wordsworth, Prose Works, l. 124).

By comparison, the poetry of William Blake readily shows this influence in an attempt to reunite a disembodied "Spirit" with the "Body" on a level, critic Rzepka suggests further, "that subsumes individual self-consciousness in the collective, social embodiment of human desire that is the ideal city of art: the New Jerusalem" (15), or the soul. For Wordsworth, however, these influences seem to take the shape as outlined above, including perhaps his looking to gain back through nature the self-validating and protective mother he actually lost in reality. His sister Dorothy's well documented role of surrogate mother in her constant support, encouragement, and "validation" of his work also strongly hints toward a propensity on his part for such reaching.

Finally, from an historical point of view three points need to be made regarding Wordsworth, The Prelude, and "truths of consciousness," the latter meaning the accuracy of autobiography. The first point deals with the odd incongruence of the poet's thoughts and feelings at particular incidents in The Prelude. For example, there is his post-hoc

celebration of imagination against his despondency at the Simplon Pass (Bk VI) when finding out he had already crossed the Alps. Elsewhere, as in the reflections that follow his description of the two spots of time on Penrith Beacon and above Hawkshead (Bk XI), there is an odd consortment between what is represented and the feelings central to both episodes. "His references to "The spirit of pleasure and youth's golden gleam": (Prelude (1805) XI.322), or the moralizing reference to God "who thus corrected my desires" (XI.374), seem to have little to do with the power of the episodes to which they are appended (Abrams "Structure and Style...", 208). Among the possible interpretations for these discrepancies is that of deliberate contrivance around the self he presents.

Further distortion arises in the representation of history since it is reported through "spots of time," through the eyes of a little boy, the little boy being present at the same time as the adult, the little boy and young adult Wordsworth as the grown man--all in conflict with the French Revolution at the same time (Miall, 10). Because of the juxtapositioning of feelings, the actual self experiencing the times is displaced and distorted. And the breaking up of the continuous flow of consciousness to delve back into those "spots of time" cannot avoid further altering the natural unfolding of the self.

The third problem brings us back to the problem under discussion earlier, that of the fragmentation of the ego. In

the attempt at ordering/shaping, contriving, if I may be permitted, the self, as critic Miall argues for Coleridge, is lost and we become that which we behold (Miall, 12).

Central to the narcissist is this fear of fragmentation.

The common behavioral pattern subsequent to this is the narcissist's self-protective attempt to smother the other into himself as we have seen in Wordsworth's work where the poet tries to take on the identity of the character. Even moreso, however, may Samuel Coleridge's work be looked at from this angle. This poet has even argued in the Biographia Literaria that the image can never be anything but an extension of the person:

...The stroke thus drawn is indeed not the line itself, but only the image or picture of the line. It is not from it, that we bring this stroke to the original line generated by the act of the imagination...

Biographia Literaria: Ch.12, 289,
ll. 26-9)

His "Constancy to a Ideal Object," "Frost at Midnight," and many other works have been viewed regularly by critics in empirical as well as neo-Platonist/Kantian terms because of this preoccupation with self-projection. But, again, this reading need not be exclusive to other readings, including a narcissistic one. The deconstructionist critic Tilattama Rajan aptly suggests that,

...an image can never deliver the object except in absentia; as an intentional structure it is never simply an image, but an image of something which it is not ... the imaginary sign becomes the object it seeks to

evoke and points to the radical nothingness of aesthetic images as products of consciousness rather than nature.

(Rajan, 204-5).

In other words, the image as a representation of something deconstructs and dematerializes the thing as it itself takes shape. Any perceptual grasp of the world is not an external grasp, but only a self-projection; language is the narcissistic structure in that it is the vehicle of this projection, "attempting to make thought nature and nature thought" (Rajan, Ch. 5, 204-5):

Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
 Gives its dim sympathies with me who live,
 Making it a companionable form,
 Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit
 By its own moods interprets, every where
 Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
 And makes a toy of Thought.

("Frost at Midnight," Colridge
Poetical Works, 240, ll. 17-23)

The projection here is the seeing of one's self while looking into the natural world, an exposure of the presence of an isolated imaginary consciousness, as isolated and imaginary, perhaps, as that of Narcissus viewing his own reflection.

This style of lyric poetry, also referred to as "the return upon itself" or the "tail eating snake" ("ouroborous"), Abrams/Natural Supernaturalism, 271) style had its origins during the Renaissance, and M.H. Abrams in his study of its evolution into Romantic poetry argues that it was, in deed, Coleridge and not Wordsworth who inaugurated this "greater Romantic lyric" as it eventually came to be

called, firmly established its pattern, and wrote the largest number of instances of it" (Abrams "Structure," 204). A very schematic exemplification of this style may be seen in "Frost at Midnight," where the initial focus on the frost gradually extends outward toward the sleeping babe and the life that babe will have compared to the poet/persona, and then back again to the poet's more personal reflections.

Abrams quotes ("Structure," 208) from Dr. Johnson who labeled this style, "local poetry" and aptly defined it as,

a species of composition ... of which the fundamental subject is some particular landscape, to be poetically described, with the addition of such embellishments as may be supplied by historical retrospection or incidental mediation.

(Johnson, Lives, V.1, 49-50)

Later it was to become moral statements coupled with sensuous phenomena, then to scenes revisited, to Wordsworth's "deja vu," and ultimately to Finnegan's Wake and Eliot's "East Coker." Coleridge was initially fascinated with the work of his contemporary William Lisle Bowles in this regard for the latter was able to avoid the mere linking of impersonal sentiments to details of a setting by analogy, demonstrate the rendering of a scene meditatively by "temperament and circumstances of the perceiving mind, and...to compose a single curve of feelingful meditation" (Abrams, "Structure," 213). Coleridge, however, soon became disillusioned with Bowles for two reasons. One, the latter's work was too filled with self-pity and, second, it reflected the dualism of

Descarte. For Coleridge, and for the narcissist who must diffuse himself onto and incorporate the universe into himself, separating the mind from the material world was to render it to a "life in death." He was eventually able to transcend the problem in among several other works, "The Eolian Harp, "Frost At Midnight" seen above, and perhaps the greatest in the style, "Dejection: An Ode" where it is seen "nature is made thought and thought nature, both by their sustained interaction and by their seamless metaphoric continuity" (Abrams, "Structure," 223-4):

To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
Their life the eddy of her living soul!

(Coleridge, "Dejection" Oxford Authors,
117, l.135 - 36)

Quite apparent in these lines is the important difference between Wordsworth and Coleridge in their mutual quest for self-projection. For the former, nature serves to trigger a memory with a circuitous progression from that past emotional experience. But for Coleridge progression or the growth and unity of the soul is the outgrowth of a marriage of opposites--"from pole to pole." He, though a philosophical monist, believed the only way to prevent fragmentation was in a "generative conflict--in attraction of polar forces," a "multeity in unity"; that is, in a state where both components survive but in a higher unity, coming together in one's own intellect and perception (Abrams, Supernaturalism, 268-9).

As with Wordsworth initially in The Prelude, Coleridge's

"Dejection" ode is a crisis-autobiography. Only, unlike the former, it ends without any sense of recovery from the poet's feelings of isolation, creative sterility, and, ultimately fragmentation:

And still I gaze--and with how blank an eye!
 ...
 I see them all so excellently fair,
 I see, not feel, how beautiful they are!

Coleridge, Oxford Authors "Dejection,"
 11, 11.37-8

He sees but does not feel a unity with the world. As the Ancient Mariner, the poet has, because of personal problems in his life, been forced to cut himself off from nature and is unable to complete the circle back to himself and the generative imagination:

...we receive but what we give,
 And in our life alone does nature live

(Coleridge, Oxford, "Dejection" 1V, 47-8)

Unlike the Mariner, as well as this work's addressee, the poet is dejected because he feels he cannot make the necessary, Narcissus-like, pull back to himself. By comparison and with the wonderful metaphor of an "eddy" (quoted above) "whose end merges into its beginning, in the flow of a shared life between the elemental polarity of mind and nature," the person being addressed does realize that unity (Abrams, Supernaturalism, 277).

The poet asserted from childhood that he had been accustomed to "unrealize...and then by a sort of transfusion

and transmission of my consciousness to identify myself with the Object; also that,

From my earliest childhood I have been accustomed to "abstract" and as it were unrealize whatever of more than common interest my eyes dwelt on; and then by a sort of transfusion and transmission of my consciousness to identify myself with the Object--.

(Coleridge, Collected Letters, 1V (Oxford '59, 974-5)

But here again, Abrams suggests ("Romanticism and Consciousness," 224), is Wordsworth's claiming that he could not think of external things as having external existence, or Byron's Childe Harold claiming that, "I live not in myself," but that mountains, waves, and skies become "a part/Of me, and of my soul, as I of them" (Canto lll, lxxii-lxxv); and Shelley who witnessed to "the state called reverie," when men "feel as if their nature were dissolved into the surrounding universe, or as if the surrounding universe were absorbed into their being" (Shelley's Prose, 174). They are all conscious of no distinction. While the experience was different for Keats and he did not assimilate the other into himself, he also manifested no self boundaries in his diffusion of himself out onto the other: "The type of poet of which I am a Member...has no self" but "is continually (informing) and filling some other Body: --a moving billiard ball, a breaking wave, a human form in arrested motion, a sparrow, an urn, or a nightingale" (Collected Letters, 386-7).

As Charles Rzepka points out (106), "Coleridge's sense of

self fed voraciously on others' impressions of him," and that one gets the sense from reading his notes and letters that it's not just his self-esteem the poet wishes to reinforce but, his very sense of manifest existence." A notebook passage written when he was far away from home and friends reveals "the characteristic emptiness Coleridge felt constantly threatening him from within" (Rzepka 101):

W-D-MW-SH- HDSC = STC
= Ego contemplations.

Notebooks of Coleridge, 11, #2389

The narcissist does not have a sense of self primarily because he never received the necessary validation earlier in life. As with Wordsworth, Coleridge lost his mother at an early age, (she abandoned the family shortly after their father's death) and seemed to lack the interior space, as pointed out earlier, that we all gain from internalizing the special presence of our parents, particularly mothers, in our lives. At ~~the age~~ of thirty-seven and all during the years his mother was alive, Coleridge considered himself a "deserted orphan," and searched most of his life for anchors (Rzepka, 103). Often this took the form of "reaction against the limitations of the body and took the shape of a dream, enabling the poet to go beyond the physical boundaries. As with Wordsworth, the outside world becomes internalized as dream and then a sudden burst or expansion of the self beyond physical boundaries takes place" (Rzepka, 103). The pattern is very familiar in his poetry-- the "half-clos'd or "glittering eye," the sense of peace or

solitude, "the reduction of the sensorium to mental states, to thoughts and "phantasies" that haunt and render--the experience the poet was to describe in a letter (Rzepka 106): "I seem to exist, as it were, almost wholly within myself, in thoughts rather than in things" (Letter to Sara Coleridge, November 13, 1802, in Letters to Coleridge, 11, 881).

This is not a new idea but a well established aspect of the poet's work. It has always been referred to, however, not as narcissism but as "visionary solipsism," the two often difficult to discern. Coleridge also differs little here from Wordsworth's "egotistical sublime" except that the latter tends to dissolve in confrontations with others while the former resists such reciprocity with others, drawing them in with mesmerism as, we will recall, Geraldine does to Christabel ("Christabel"), the Mariner to the wedding guest (The Rime of the Ancient Mariner), or the poet to the audience in ("Kubla Kahn").

It is also well established that the poet used the technique of "empathy" with a "companionable form" again exemplified with his sleeping infant in "Frost at Midnight." Some have referred to the technique as Coleridge's role as "usher." A movement is seen here from a finite self to an articulate universe through the action of a "benevolent and understanding usher" (Rzepka, 121); The words of the poet seem to enter into the mind of his sleeping babe:

It was not he who could receive the "blessing" ...the release, the happiness or confidence, the opportunity for insight, are either given or presumed to be possible only to another. What is involved here--at least we can say this when we think of his life as a whole--is an act of "blessing," and in the older meaning of that term: a surrender, a giving, which assumes sacrifice...Through surrender, Coleridge himself...can acquire his own vicarious release of heart, his own security and confidence in what he thinks and hopes.

(Bate, Coleridge, 50)

In this work the poet is also seen in the role of a "shaping and speaking," "molding" prophetic creator of himself through the concrete being of his own son. Some would argue here that it is well within the range of "normal" for human beings to live again through their children, to enjoy seeing aspects of themselves in their children. While this may be the case here as well, we wonder why more recognition is not given to the subject as a separate entity. There seems always to be a bounce back to Coleridge, to seeing the other only with Coleridgean qualities. It is again a question of degree.

Not only through the concrete being of his son is the poet creating himself but also through the "absent being," i.e., through his often observed technique of "creating" while in the act of remembering another person who is absent. Characteristic of this style is the emergence of a rather "idealized" figure, one the poet would actually like to see. It may be safe to say, an "idealized" extension of himself takes shape--his "other self." Often his dear love, Sara Hutchinson, or "Asra," as he concealingly called her, was this

absent other. In his attempt to affix on paper the remembered image of the absentee, the image becomes the "other" self and, ultimately, the "self," the ideal self, or, if I may be permitted, Kohut's "ideal imago". The use of Sara's eye as the mirror would further support a narcissistic reading here in the poet's seeing his own reflection in his creation of the absent Sara. In addition, the emergence of a powerful Phoenix figure may be seen here as the dying self becomes created anew out of the ashes of the other. The term "hollow" self is equally applicable in that a new creation is seen enfolding; and, furthermore, there is evidence of a "Bildung" style "roman," i.e., a work about the building of a person. Taken all together these qualities in the poet's work argue strongly for his preoccupation with fabricating a self. Often, as seen in "Dejection" and "The Pains of Sleep," the frontiers between Self and Not-Self become blurred and the poet's attempt to prevent fragmentation and establish a firm ego are ultimately aborted.

The German influence upon English writers of the early nineteenth century is especially noted in this propensity to continually return onto the self, and it is observable as well in the poetry of William Blake. Of particular influence is the work of Schelling who spoke of the self as intuiting itself, that is, not an intuiting which is restricted by what it intuits but rather is the realization of the spontaneity of the intellect, of reason, reason as absolute and unimpeded

knowing (Marx, 36). He spoke also of the truly creative individual who must create his mythology for himself. Some of these German writers used a generic figure to represent mankind, "The Universal Man," who recounted the actions and experiences of the past, present, and speculative future. This figure falls into self-division and must be redeemed by self-reintegration. Abrams is drawing on the work of Northrope Frye (Supernaturalism, 259) when he suggests that Blake's mythology, though it varies somewhat in different works, is basically structured as such: In it "all things have proceeded from a divine Man...and will be reabsorbed into him...the total vision of life must have a circular form" (Frye, 386). Blake felt also that man had to fall back in order to progress, that he had to get rid of the attitudes rooted in systems of belief which stultify and enclose the human psyche. Hence the bulk of his poetry is written in sustained reversal. In the loosely Freudian coinage of the term as I have defined it, this is a narcissistic pattern; this is a denigration of the value of anything not personally preferenced and subsumed.

Where Wordsworth and Coleridge used nature, memory for the former, reflective meditation for the latter, to envelop the world back into his self, this poet uses satire to tear down all that mankind has acquired. He uses satire to expose the nature of the structures men build to avoid thought; men, he felt so strongly, must be meant to see (Price, 260-1):

The Walls of Babylon are Souls of Men, her Gates
 the Groans
 Of Nations, her Towers are the Miseries of once
 happy Families,
 Her Streets are paved with Destruction, her Houses
 built with Death,
 Her Palaces with Hell & the Grave, her Synagogues
 with Torments
 Of ever-hardening Despair, squar'd & polished'd
 with cruel skill

(Jerusalem 1, 24:31-35, in
Blake/Complete)

Man, he felt further, inhabits a world of his own making
 and the demon is born of man's terror to use his own
 imagination:

Producing many Heads, three or seven or ten, &
 hands and Feet
 Innumerable at will of the unfortunate
 contemplator
 Who becomes his food: such is the way of the
 Devouring Power

(Jerusalem 11, (Plate 29) 33:22-24 in
Blake/Complete)

It is acts of the imagination which recreate the human
 psyche after it is stripped down. Blake creates through the
 constant vying of true polarities, i.e., man's emanation or
 his dream or desire is played out against its counter dream or
 desire and not just its "sterile" opposite or "negation," as
 the poet called it. The interpenetrated form is then realized
 in the mode of art as a living stasis (recall again the intent
 of the abstract expressionist's psycho-automotive creation).
 As did Coleridge, this poet abhorred intellectual and
 spiritual laziness and believed that only with continual self-
 conflict could one return to that ideal state which he had

lost. And as Coleridge hated the juxtapositioning of sterile opposites, Blake's marriage of opposites, his "multiety in one," similarly, is the coming together of "emanation" and "contrary."

And, as Coleridge, Blake also felt threatened by the fear of fragmentation: The greatest threat to the absoluteness of the imagination for him was the threat of self-division and self-doubt (Price, 267):

Did Jesus teach doubt? or did he
Give any lessons of Philosophy,
Charge Visionaries with deceiving,
Or call Men wise for not Believing?

("Spoke by My Spectre to Voltaire,
Bacon &c." from the fragment The
Everlasting Gospel (c. 1818)

(Blake/Complete, 525)

Blake's work seems to suggest repeatedly that one of the greatest causes of self-division is man's separation from the female, the nurturing aspect, the developing ego's continual need for approval. This brings to mind Alice Miller's comments (above) where she too deals with the developing ego's need for approval and reassurance from the female, the mother figure, in his life. This particular fear of alienation becomes clearer through the study of Jungian archetypes present in Blake's work, i.e., the various interacting female forces (in both man and women)--Jung's "anima"; or through social structures. For the latter Blake takes issue with the society which reduces love to laws, to the "dos and don'ts,"

thereby killing it. By this I mean that he takes objection to virtuous females, pure and modest, who are programmed for frigidity and thereby sentence the healthy male to the whore house (Ostriker 92-3):

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
 How the youthful Harlots curse
 Blasts the newborn Infants tear
 And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse

(Blake, "London" (Song 46) in Blake Complete, 26, ll. 1-5)

or

"Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires"

(Blake, "Marriage of Heaven and Hell," 1.68 BC)
 (Ostriker, 92-3)

His attack at the forces of repression are particularly directed toward organized religion which he felt attempts to subdue desire in the name of religion. Such works as The Marriage of Heaven and Hell and The Visions of the Daughters of Albion also specifically treat themes of repressed sexuality and attack male sexual aggression (Ostriker 93).

The poet's mythology in The Book of Urizen particularly echoes Carl Jung where male pride, male competitiveness, or any male refusal to surrender the socially cultivated self leads to division. It is only when this type of selfhood is relinquished that the male and female stresses are reunified in the new self:

And the Bow is a Male & Female & the Quiver of
 the Arrows of Love
 Are the Children of this Bow: a Bow of Mercy &

Loving Kindness: laying
 Open the hidden Heart in Wars of mutual
 Benevolence Wars of Love
 And the Hand of Man grasps firm between the Male
 & Female Loves.

(J, 97. 12-15)

Here Blake's work shifts from a socio-political to a mythical base where he sees man as ultimately androgynous and depicts fallen states, states of sexual division between male and female, as prototypes of every division within the self, between the self and other, and between humanity and God (95).

"To Tirzah" (seen by some as a contrary poem to "A Cradle Song" from Innocence) is a depiction of female entrapment of the male, a "vagina dentata;" females in Blake's mind were seen as dependent, one with man, supporters of him (104).

If he looks then to undo the social exterior and unite his own inner stresses, Blake's vision for man and of man has to also be a self-created "creature" who like the Wordsworth and Coleridge model is made drawing solely from his own substance. While there are many, many other ways to view Blake's very complicated work, his suggested process for the formation of the self is a "controlled" or "ordered" one and that brings it into the realm of an artistic creation rather than reality. That brings it into the realm, among the possibilities, of a narcissist's imposed view. The suggested problem here is in the "making of that ideal mold"; it is the suggestion that romantic, self-celebratory modes and ideals of behavior can and do often lead to a sort of narcissistic

"haze."

Blake's work also echoes narcissistic propensity in various other ways, such as its hostility toward parental/authoritative forces, not in an Oedipal sense where the child is drawn toward the parent of the opposite sex, expressing hostility toward the other, but toward parent "in toto" sense as nurturer: If the parent disappoints the child, the child often creates a more acceptable parent from his imagination. By extension this can refer to the larger parental figure, that of the socio/political/moral institution of the land which also acts as authority in our lives towards which, as everyone knows, Blake took much objection to and towards which he attempted to tear down and create anew. A major part of the poet's work was an attempt to reverse the effects social institutions had in stifling the individual's unique self-creation. "Did not He who made the lamb make thee?" (Blake, Songs of Experience). In Kohut/Kernbergian terms acceptance or rejection of the person was based not on what one was but on who one was, i.e., in terms of one's standing with the valued institutions of the times and, accordingly, stifling the processes whereby a mature and healthy self-love can develop:

A mans worst enemies are those
Of his own house & family;
And he who makes his law a curse,
By his own law shall surely die.

(Jerusalem, 27, 181-84)

Here Blake may be seen tearing down attitudes that stultify and enclose when he argues for consideration of all people within the society. The century, as the individuals who made her up, is being challenged against indifference toward the poor and less fortunate, is being asked to put aside class bias and open its heart to the rejected sick, the hungry, the orphaned, "the chimney sweeps." And anger is readily apparent in Blake's work toward the father/authority because those so in want are being neglected in the service of growth and industry, in the service of national pride:

Is this thy soft Family-Love
Thy cruel Patriarchal pride

Planting thy Family alone
Destroying all the World beside.

(Jerusalem 27, l. 77-81)

"To Tirzah" from Innocence and Experience reveals a similar attitude:

Thou, Mother of my Mortal part,
With cruelty didst mould my Heart,
And with false self-deceiving tears
Didst bind my Nostrils, Eyes, and Ears.

(l. 9-12)

Many of the poet's motifs deal with children or childlike representatives being neglected--"The Chimney Sweeper," "Nurse's Song," "The Little Black Boy," "The Lamb," "The Clod & the Pebble"--just to name a few, suggest feelings of rancor toward those who would suppress individual growth and development; in

major works like his Milton or in shorter works such as Innocence and Experience, directly or indirectly, Blake advocates the throwing over of the existing order so that a new one may be built drawing from one's imagination, from "the city of art or the soul." Blake's work has many qualities that parallel narcissistic tendencies. For example, his central focus is not merely a social, political one, for it always bends toward the creation of a new self. He attacks the institutions only as they are seen as the "mamas and the papas," squelching individual growth. Even the oracular tone of Blake's work, that challenge for renewal, as well as his deliberate use of obscurity, symbol, allegory, myth, and iconoclasm, i.e., the symbolic denigration of so much existing order, all imitate and echo biblical revelation which concerns itself with the growth and nurture of a made-over person, not the society. Blake saw man as dead the moment he was born because he is born into the worldly heritage, and prohibited thus from his own imagination which is the human existence itself. The poet's aim was to free man from such intellectual domination. His character Milton from the poem by the same name is reflective of such a corrupted figure, as is his mythical emanation, Jerusalem, which is the image of every man's infinite desire. The poet's use of ironic reversal throughout, i.e., the tearing down instead of building up, (as in Milton, for example) has as its end the restoration of man's unique soul. It creates as well a sense of confusion

and the need for a new orientation with the self. In short, Blake's overt eschatological soundings and self-rebuildings, perhaps more than any from the period, is narcissistically characterized through its intense effort to wipe out immediate reality.

We must not fall into the notion, it is important to note, that the material of this study more aptly suits the topic of "parental absence." To do so is to naively overlook the widely accepted view that narcissism is the result of faulty parenting. Heinz Kohut, in his studies on narcissistic behavior, wrote extensively on rebellious sons usurping parental authority, particularly tracing aggression (of the type Blake advocates) to failure of parental empathy (Berman 29). The parental absence which keeps bleeding through is, indeed, the syndrome; narcissism is an illness which has its roots in parental "absence," be that parent the immediate one in the home scene or the representative larger institutions which are supposed to be protectors. The narcissistic parent produces narcissistic children, the pattern continuing down the line from generation to generation simply because said parent cannot give the developing child's ego the love it needs.

Very much like Blake, Byron was an image breaker. Well known as an idealist, he had similar difficulty accepting the real world with its senseless wars, female inequities, and, what he believed were, hypocritical social mores. But unlike

Blake, Byron's greatest battles were with his own divided self. Where Blake is tearing down to build anew, Byron's work is being structured by the binary opposition of the ideal against the real, of what is and what is wished to be. The poet's work reflects knowledge and utilization of the very best in traditional poetic means known in his day, and, since this poetic style doesn't really come into its own until Pound and vorticism in the next century, we have to ask where his technical source is coming from. One answer would have to simply be that it is coming from inner propensities. If the continuation of the analogy will permit, recall that the narcissist does not fall in love with himself but with an ideal image of himself that he believes himself to have achieved, that image always in danger of disappearing in the face of reality. Accordingly, the source could safely be deduced. A subject continually vying with itself, mythologically as well as in the view of many clinicians, (see again comments by Alice Miller above), never has a stable ego and eventually dies pining away over the desired self and his awareness of the actual self (Engleberg 29). Outside of any argument that Byron himself is a narcissist, the pattern in a large part of his work does seem to demonstrate such narcissistic propensity. In Childe Harold, for example, the protagonist is disgusted with his own naughtiness:

But soon he knew himself the most unfit
Of men to herd with Man; with whom he held
Little in common...

(Childe H.P. Canto 111, l. 101-3)

Such disdain and contempt for others is typical for the narcissist:

Still he beheld, nor mingled with
the throng;
But view'd them not with misanthropic
hate:

(C.H.P. Canto 1, l. 828-9)

Ergo, the persona turns toward human genius and accomplishment. At times there is a commitment, at others a distancing and aloofness; there is a belief in a deity then doubt; an assertion of himself as parent, and a negation--the work remains throughout a collected representation of antithetical stresses.

It was not until Don Juan that Byron managed to consolidate these stresses into a work of artistic unity. A line like,

What men call gallantry, and gods adultery,

Don Juan Canto 1, l. 503)

gives a little hint of this accomplishment. This line, like the entire poem, is a vibrant, living stasis of opposing psychic forces; though they exist simultaneously they never blend but keep intact their own uniqueness. One reason Byron is able to be successful here is his mobility across gender lines, his ability to transform, to slide back and forth easily, from one position to another (Wolfson 267-84). As a

male disguised as a female in a harem, for example, the character, Don Juan, gives the reader both a glimpse of a male coquette and at the same time a very sensitive look at what it's like to be a female in a male controlled environment. The work is a masterful study in the art of changing over, of shifting to another self. Like the earlier *Manfred*, Don Juan wears many desired faces, all carefully designed to conceal his one real self. However, his and the general tendency of the period toward certain self-promulgation and preoccupation in the imagination becomes more and more widespread and with it the hidden malevolence, the irrevocable loss of the real self.

While excessive self-consciousness is a well known and an accepted characteristic both of romantic poetry and of the novel as it follows and comes into its great age, its hidden agenda has not been so well known. Such excessive self-consciousness shares a very thin demarcation line with narcissistic predispositioning if there is one to share at all. When looking back for models one can see Spenser pressing for monarchy, Pope for social reform, and Yeats for out and out revolution. But Wordsworth, Coleridge, Blake, and Byron, though ostensibly for a better world, were, nevertheless, all tinkering at the edge of the pool when they were unable to see the potential for excessive self-preoccupation. Keats and Shelley are no exception. Shelley was especially obsessed with preventing the fragmentation of his ego, and his poetry

reflects a constant struggle for self-unity which he hopes to achieve through the imagination. When looking there to remedy the imperfections he saw in reality, he too, however, often alienated himself from himself as well as from others. Shelley's *Alastor* is in the same category as Keat's *Endymion* and Wordsworth's *Solitary* (The Excursion), figures who similarly destroy natural existence because nature cannot sustain the energy demanded by their imaginary vision. As Harold Bloom suggests ("Unpastured," 379-80), this latter figure, like the others,

sees
 Too clearly; feels too vividly; and longs
 To realize the vision, with intense
 And over-constant yearning;--there--there lies
 The excess, by which the balance is destroyed.

(Wordsworth, The Excursion, 486)

Alastor is a quest for self-realization and the poet-hero of this tale struggles against the destructive face of reality, ultimately experiencing death with the "enforced self-realization" of his limitations,

... this nature is a mirror-world, like that in Blake's "The Crystal Cabinet," or in much of Keats's Endymion. Its pyramids and domes are sepulchers of the imagination, and all its appearances are illusive, phantasmagoric, and serve only to thwart the poet's vision and drive him on more fearfully upon his doomed and self-destructive quest.

(Bloom, "The Unpastured Sea," 379)

It's Blake's *Thel*, and later Tenneyson's *Lady of Shallot*--the characters are caught in an imaginary world they create according to their perception of themselves. Afraid of life,

of not being able to withstand the onslaught of reality, they are doomed figures.

Shelley's The Revolt of Islam particularly shows his fascination with the isolated imagination and hints toward the consequences (Bloom, "Unpastured," 380). Even where and when unity seems to be achieved, that is, even where a stable ego appears to be present and no narcissistic fantasy apparent, the very great energy discharged to this ego would belie the end achieved.

In Shelley's dramatic poem Prometheus Unbound the sufferer also concerns himself with restoring a lost self-unity: The protagonist has fallen into self-division because of impassioned hatred toward tyranny and injustice, personified through the figure of Jupiter, himself a parental figure whose descent into self-love has disaffiliated himself from mankind. The great power of the universe seen in the guise of Demogorgon, a shapeless, mighty darkness, Shelley insisted, lies outside the bounds of human experience (Abrams, Supernaturalism, 302), and, accordingly, outside the care and concern for mankind. Prometheus's struggle is all his own as he tries to become reunited with Asia, his female principle and force of unity and love. As with Blake's Universal Man, Prometheus is only reintegrated when he annihilates his selfhood which he believes converts divisive hate into affiliative love (Abrams, 302):

Man, oh, not men! A chain of linked thought,
 Of love and might to be divided not....
 Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul,
 Whose nature is its own divine control,
 Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the
 sea.

(PU, IV, 394-402)

Shelley's sense of reality is revealed in his "Mont Blanc" as elsewhere where we sense feelings of "abandonment," of the lack of a hovering, protecting father figure. Rather, we pick up feelings of skepticism toward the world and a sense of malevolence, at best, an indifferent force prevailing against the well being of men. The great power of the universe is seen synecdochally through the vast, dark, and foreboding force looming behind the mountain. It is a terrifying vision for anyone, but for the fragile and limitedly developed ego it must be unendurable. Mixed with feelings of guilt/blame for the rejection, the weak ego, the often potential narcissist, will try to win approval by creating a self he believes will win recognition, the real self, as pointed out above, dying.

With regard to "Mont Blanc," critic Charles Vivian argues against the popular view that this poem is a divided one, reflecting the self-division of the poet. He sees the poem as, indeed, reflective of a struggle against ego fragmentation; however, the unity achieved is not "self-integration and unity in the presence of a multifarious world" (Vivian, 571) but a propensity to absorb the other into self: Shelley attempts to resolve the conflict of knowing the world

through our senses and through what we perceive intuitively. Vivian suggests that the poem reveals Shelley's belief that the mind takes in and accepts what's there but also projects out from itself to make consciousness:

From secret springs
The source of human thought its tribute brings

Of waters, --with a sound but half its own.

(Shelley, "Mont Blanc" in P&P, 89, 11, 4-6,

Symbolically the river Arve (Section 1) flows through the "Ravine. Later the Ravine with its pines and crags and caverns becomes even more a symbol for the mind, and through the senses, sight and smell the environment gives something to the mind. The division between the mind and the senses is resolved by the flashes of lightening, i.e., intuition which is as abrupt and quickly fleeing. Though there is a unity achieved, it is very much a relationship with the world that is self-projected (Vivian, 571):

Dizzy Ravine!...when I gaze on thee,
I seem as in a trance sublime and strange
To muse on my own separate fantasy,
My own, my human mind.

("MB," 11, 34-37)

.... my human find, which passively
Now renders and receives fast influencings,
Holding and unremitting interchange
With the clear universe of things around.

(37-40)

Seeking among the shadows that pass by--
Ghosts of all things that are--some shade of
thee
 (thou Ravine, thou human mind),
Some phantom, some faint image.

(45-47)

It is apparent here that Shelley has been doing his Wordsworthian homework. There seems to be the suggestion here as well that the young ego has no way to make its entry into the world other than to create that world.

Narcissistic Patterns in the Novel

(Stress on Materialism)

Jane Austen has long been favored for keen wit and a sharp turning of the phrase when reporting her quite perceptive insights into social behavior. Her work follows traditional and classical models in this as well as romantic literary expression. In her subtle, charming, and often very humorous way she too champions the individual cause. But in this championing there may also be room to observe some occasional overstepping toward narcissistic dispositioning. The eighteenth century, so much inflected in her work, is certainly a model for the ideal "imago" if ever there was one in terms of its stress on the right image, right conduct, right dress, propriety, philosophy. And it's all there. The very snobbery for which Austen is criticized, i.e., for her insistence on conformity to certain manners, behaviors, dress, a certain prescribed design and order may all be found in her work. But perhaps her attention to these things might just be more than "snobbery." Rather, what may be very subtly hinted at is that in order to be loved, to be accepted, one must fit into the established perception of what is right and proper, what is "ideal," in contrast to love and acceptance without bounds, conditions, or restrictions, love which is just feeling. In this way Austen may be seen as that "mother" generation proselytizing to the next.

she certainly is every bit the child of her age "mothering" the next as to the acceptable codes of behavior, figuratively speaking, the narcissistic parent begetting the narcissistic child, the narcissist setting up the figure for modelling: Mr. Elton is ridiculed while Mr. Knightly is the model exemplar (Emma). Elton is rude, presumptuous, out of the bounds of his rank and class. Knightly, never. He treats all people with deference. Yet, there is condescension here: Those who get the golden apple are the ones who fit the prescription for the established mold. Knightly reprimands Emma for belittling the character, Robert Martin; but, actually, he is also doing some belittling. "Those kind of people," is the subtle insinuation to Emma, "... must also be treated with consideration ..."; "His rank in society," the insinuation continued, "I would alter if I could" (Emma, 326). Of Miss Bates he says, "Were she your equal in situation--but, Emma consider how far this is from the case" (257). And of Harriet Smith as a candidate for marriage he says, "Men of family...a girl of such obscurity...the mystery of her parentage... (43). Emma too says of her, "How Harriet could ever have the presumption to raise her sights to Mr. Knightly!--" (285). And of Robert Martin Emma's feelings are also made clear:

The contrast between the countenance and air of Mr. Knightly and Robert Martin was, at this moment, so strong to Emma's feelings,...

(327)

Knightly is Mr. "Ideal," his voice that of tolerance, and while I have no doubt deference and kindness were Austen's intent, a tone of superiority, of Knightly seeing himself above the Robert Martins, the country gentlemen to the country farmers is also coming through. And if this is so, we have to ask here where is the equality, the "egalite," "fraternity," where is the uniqueness of the individual being celebrated. To be tolerant is not to be equal; it is not "designated roles" within an equal society. I'm speaking of something very subtle in Austen's work, a thread running just below the surface of what is the traditional interpretation of her work and which is very much in direct conflict with the spirit of the Romantics. As long as there is class, "one's place in the society," how can there be true equality?

Contrary to this view is the view of Nancy Armstrong who argues that Austen is following in the literary tradition of Richardson. He may be seen through his Pamela, Armstrong suggests, striving to establish some equality for women by giving them a more viable place in the text. Austen is picking up from there. Only, Armstrong suggests, where Richardson represented "wife" as a "category of desire yet to be opened," our author presents her as "a category that wanted to be filled" (Armstrong, 135). In so doing Austen empowers a particular class of people and their skill at interpreting human behavior with the ability "to regulate the quality of

daily life and reproduce their form of individuality..." (136). This community then sets forth the standard, reflecting it through levels of speech, behavior, and, particularly, writing. For example, through Emma's language Harriet is presented to Mr. Elton as the "ideal wife" (though, of course, this situation humorously backfires since what Emma "represents" as an "Harriet" emerges as an "Emma" and the object of Elton's idolatry). The foiling technique has the purpose of reflecting Harriet's simplicity and virtue as against Emma's superciliousness. But what Austen is doing in her honing of Emma is establishing "an ideal imago." Similarly, Harriet's suitor, Robert Martin's "plain" or low level writing style, while also prized for its sincerity of feeling, is differentiated from Mr. Knightly's "high style," the "sublime," or style which manifests reasonableness. The unique individuality of each is extolled as they representatively extol the virtues of their particular level. Armstrong sees this as Austen's establishing a new, unique, and seemingly ideal method for evaluating the individual, that "status," for the latter, "seems to matter as the essential qualities of the person" (141). But hidden here, however, is the preset "judgements"--predesignated and assigned qualities--entitlements, regardless of merit--which gives us cause to argue. While Austen is attempting to elevate the dignity of all people in their respective classes, her affirmation of class contradicts this effort. Again, how can there truly be

equality when a "class" society still exists.

In speaking of the Brontes, Armstrong would seem to agree here, arguing that their writing was essentially an aggressive and vitriolic attack at such "casting" of people (203-13), Emily, particularly, did not possess attributes designated "female." But, was she less the "ideal" woman because certain supposedly "manly" qualities--stoicism, tough fiber--were assigned to her?

England's social infrastructure at the time did allow some mobility between classes, but Austen's work seems to steadily override this consideration in its strong adherence to birth and class: The Robert Martins are praised for "knowing their place," the Mr. Eltons, like the Malvolios, are ridiculed for not. Austen's work abounds with such "place," propriety, and class consciousness: Recall, Emma did not feel Robert Martin was "up" to Harriet as suitable husband, and even in the course of the text after Emma has seemingly been humbled, we hear her again, "even a Harriet Smith couldn't be in love with more than three men in one year." The subtle implication here is that contingency of affection is a hierarchal virtue of a particular social class. Someone like Harriet, it had similarly been hinted at throughout the text, could not converse with the Eltons, the Knightlys, though she could and did fall into easy conversation with the Robert Martins and family. Emma is supposedly set up for the fall both through her constant patronizing of Harriet--the latter

just can't think without Emma, and her verbal cruelty to Miss Bates at the Box Hill incident. And Knightly who is supposed to be the foil for Emma to reflect and grow through in such incidents very much echoes the same values. Recall, "Harriet, is a girl of obscurity, with no family history or fortune...." And again of Miss Bates whom he is supposed to be defending against Emma's insensitivity, his remarks continue,

... were she prosperous, I could allow much for the occasional prevalence of the ridiculous over the good. Were she a woman of fortune, I would leave every harmless absurdity to take its chance, I would not quarrel with you for any liberties of manner. ... She is poor; she has sunk from the comforts she was born to; and if she live to old age, must probably sink more.

(257)

While Austen's "kindness" is apparent here as she argues for generosity in spirit toward another, a condescension is a part of this as well. Words like "equal in situation," "born to," and "sink" seem to create this tone. Similarly, Elinor Dashwood (Sense and Sensibility) is the epitome of the eighteenth century prescription for rational behavior contrasted against her sister Marianne who takes flight with a dastardly painted Willoughby, suffers and learns from the error of her way. She ultimately accepts the designated social "appropriateness," and settles for a Colonel Brandon, a patient but passionless suitor. Marianne is initially the epitome of the romantic temperament; her language is filled with passion, her actions spontaneous and from the heart

without thought of propriety, without discretion. We are told that upon hearing her love, Edward Ferrars, was engaged to another, "Elinor's security sank; but her self-command did not sink with it" (S&S, 151), while Marianne, responding to the same news, "'Four months!--Have you known of this four months?'"..."Four months!"--cried Marianne again.--"So Calm!--so cheerful!--how have you been supported?'" (S&S, 274). Her reactions to Willoughby were equally bursting with emotion:

No, no ... misery such as mine has no pride.
I care not who knows that I am wretched... It
is too much! Oh! Willuoghby, can this be yours
Cruel, cruel--nothing can acquit you.

(S&S, 205)

Then there is Lady Catherine de Bourgh (Pride and Prejudice):

...They will agree with me in apprehending
that this false step in one daughter will be
injurious to the fortunes of all the others,
for who, as Lady Catherine herself
condescendingly says, will connect themselves
with such a family.

(P&P, 220, (Bantam))

The character, Elizabeth Bennet, from the same work, is also snubbed by Lady Catherine's nephew, Fitzwilliam Darcy; and Elizabeth's mother, Mrs. Bennet, is shown to be "common" in her behavior (shallowly concerned with wedding clothes, for example, in the face of daughter Lydia also taking flight and disgrace with the character Wickham). In Mansfield Park where of the character Fanny, who is away, it is observed,

Such was the home that was to put Mansfield
out of her head, and teach her to think of her
cousin Edmund with moderate feelings. On the

contrary, she could think of nothing but Mansfield.... Everything where she now was in full contrast to it. The elegance, propriety, regularity, harmony ... were brought to her remembrance every hour of the day, by the prevalence of everything opposite to them here.

(MP, 305 (Dell))
(Underlining is mine)

Even in her Gothic burlesque, Northanger Abbey, the character, Catherine Morland, as Austen's anti-heroine, though poking fun at this mode's exaggerations, in the end takes her place beside Emma, Elizabeth, Fanny, and et al., always doing the "correct" thing. While the examples are endless, the changing over from one social order to another at the time of Austen's writing seems to be taking second place to her primary preoccupation and impetus--the projection onto the surface of an ideal class and conduct. The effect, intended or otherwise, is to nurture, to keep such vibrantly alive; Austen is projecting onto the page for succeeding generations to emulate an image chiseled alabaster clean and denigrating anything removed from it. Mark Schorer quotes Sir Walter Scott who, while admiring her work in general, deplored her "sensibility":

.... Her business is not half so much with the human heart as with the human eyes, mouth, hands, and feet. What sees keenly, speaks aptly, moves flexibly, it suits her to study; but what throbs fast and full, though hidden, what the blood rushes through, what is the unseen seat of life and the sentient target of death -- this Miss Austen ignores.

(Schorer, Introduction to S&S, 7)

A Dickensian character like Pip (Great Expectations), by contrast, can readily be seen seeking upward mobility; but while this issue also concerns Dickens, the greater emphasis in his work is not so much concern for the outward appearance of things as it is concern for becoming that image. The reader sees Pip's growth, yes, in relation to active interaction with the world around him but especially between Pip and Pip, his self-realization is given the greater weight as compared to Emma's learning etiquette. I'm not suggesting that Austen is ignoring a character like Emma's personal growth; she definitely is not as this character is humbled time and time again. The question here is one of degree.

This subtle but steadily refracted, atmospheric shading is a large part of the problem which, it is being suggested, has led to our current narcissistic dispositioning and which has been picked up on in so much of our literature, both sides of the Atlantic. Just think of Brontë's Heathcliff (Wuthering Heights) a few years later, for example, and the how and the what he became because he was outside an acceptable social order. Had he the paternal recognition social mores would not allow, perhaps his outcome would have been different. And a hundred and some odd years yet later in Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom we hear the very same cry and for the same reason, "Just let him acknowledge me."

Austen's method of reporting is one way her "ideal imago" is kept alive. Traditional views of her work begin to give

sway as one delves deeper to see the seeming celebration of the individual yield in the face of design for a particular "class society." Knightly's "tolerance" is just one of the "ideal" virtues being suggested for qualification in this society, while the so called "individual" has to conform to those certain social values Austen, perhaps as echoer of the times, deems appropriate or "inappropriate." To effect this modelling, the author uses an innovation on the epistolary novel, a technique she was the first English novelist to use extensively. Free, indirect speech is employed to report the thoughts of a character in language closely resembling their natural idiom. This avoids the use of the "he thought," "she wondered" tags thereby creating a sense of immediacy and "seeming" reality (Lodge, Companion, 175). It is an artistic craft which serves the artist well for many purposes and while I am in no way suggesting it is of itself narcissistic, I am suggesting that it also brings to mind the way the narcissist sees the world, i.e., no past nor future, no "real" or logical explanation of how the characters got where they did:

The hair was curled, and the maid sent away,
and Emma sat down to think and be miserable.--
It was wretched business, indeed!--Such an
overthrow of every thing she had been wishing
for!--Such a development of every thing most
unwelcome!--Such a blow for Harriet! That was
the worst of all.

(Emma, 134)

No position is necessarily being taken here on the merit or lack of merit in the values the author is trying to purport

but only in the plastic, molded quality that exists about their presentation, their "ideal for emulation" sketching. The presentation is distinct from a mere rendering of the ordinary human community, a picture of civilization, or socialization processes in its "in media res" quality; you seem always to be dropped into the middle of things. There is little sense of history, where you are coming from or where you are going. Dickens, by contrast again, takes you from the sight of those "five little stone lozenges" which mark the burial places of each of

little Pip's brothers, to the adjacent burial stones of his parents, and, ultimately, to the burial of the mature Pip's arrogance (Great Expectations) (Dickens gives his orphans genealogies through imbedded narrative tales (see Section 11, 108, for details)); similarly, Eliot's Middlemarch, The Mill on the Floss, Thackeray's Becky Sharp (Vanity Fair)--in each case there is some historical or background sense to the text that is missing in Austen's work. Her delineation is more a "tromp l'oil", "snap-shot" quality like that school of art which was concerned with rendering the "perfect picture" of reality. I know, of course, this quality doesn't automatically relegate a literary work as narcissistic, but it is among the pieces of the picture to be added up.

Another piece is the two-fold purpose Austen's novels of manners seem to have. First, they set the ideal codes for emulation but, moreso, to the extent they tie in with the

moral code, these manners reflect a "system of behavior which restrains force and turns aggression into wit or some other gamelike form of combat" (Price, JA, 167-8). Though invaluable in social interaction, such codes can become a set of socially acceptable immoralities because they can be used to skirt the moral order. Through the author's conscious and deliberate choosing of this method, her characters become delineated through conformity to moral action or moral realism, as it has been called, "... the perception of the dangers of the moral life itself" (Price in "...Jane Austen," 177). The danger in this style, as Martin Price points out, is in its limiting qualities. Once "right behavior/judgement is determined it eliminates the extremely necessary sharp edge of constantly determining observation," of constantly working at, honing, and perfecting character. While this technique works as a force to suggest a more spiritual or moral order or value as does her work in general, a certain smug "complacency" subtly emerges.

True, Austen's method is a humorous portrayal of those "outside" the established ideal, Mr. Collins (Pride and Prejudice) for example, or Mr. Elton, as mentioned, the Malvolios of her landscapes; but her message is clear: There are the Wickhams, those characters who run off following their inner calling to the sacrifice of social rules, their names casting value on them; and the regals, the Elizabeth Bennets, those who do suffer and grow, but according to the book.

Then there are those who are destined to live out the remainder of their days unfulfilled and unhappy and those who learn the rules, grow as they should, and catch the worm so to speak, live happily ever after. Blake's temper would be soaring here--society gnawing away at individuality be what it may, society adorning with its mantle of values, determining who are the "good guys" and who the "bad." A strange definition for "individualism" we would have to say.

Because the characters appear to learn and distinguish between choice and chance, there is a seeming reality to Austen's worlds which works to disguise somewhat this moral casting. However, their choice is from within a "restricted range." Lionel Trilling was to have called Highbury (Emma) a pastoral location because of this limited, ideal setting. While the characters seem to have some freedom in the formation of character, actually, Austen is the puppeteer.

Thackeray, whom she admired greatly, was the master puppeteer. He called all men puppets, and his characters, accordingly, also lack interior space. But for some reason he's not "Highbury." The length of Vanity Fair compared to any one of Austen's works might suggest a reason for this. Because there is so much detail and episode to the plot, his characters seem to have more options; there are more lines of demarcation, more levels, degrees, ameliorating circumstances which lessen the rigid determination "good" and "bad": Thackeray's Becky, for example, is out and out "naughty" in

her doings, though judgement is somewhat modified due to background texture, her lack of social opportunity. The more opportuned character, Amelia, from the same work, on the other hand, is also delineated selfish but in a more passively depicted way--constantly accepting the kindness of a man who truly loves her without any sense of obligation to him, her background fill suggesting the blindness a cloistered life might produce. Again, by comparison, Austen's Willoughby had abandoned his love and run off to marry another for financial reasons--his aunt disinheriting him when an earlier misconduct came to light. He had impregnated and abandoned a young girl. While this is not an offense to look askance at, and while the age was more austere than ours in such matters, Willoughby's fate is very rigid and harsh, certainly judgmental as the closing lines of the text suggest:

Willoughby could not hear of her marriage
without a pang; and his punishment was soon
afterwards complete in ...

(S&S, 384)

There is also no intent to suggest that Thackery is not making any moral judgements. Ultimately, he too certainly is. Only he succeeds in rendering a bit more realistic a picture of life and values because his codes are not so rigidly determined, cut and dry, "boxed in."

Though Austen does make some attempt in her later novels to thicken the texture, little attention is given, for example, to servants. We see Mr. Woodhouse's coachman's

daughter, Hannah, go to the Randalls as housemaid on his recommendation thereby joining the two households (Emma); and Mrs. Norris is always engaged in a power struggle with her encroaching servants (Mansfield Park), but for the most part Austen's characters are portrait studies against an enigmatic background, all too "pat" to be real. Her little scenarios are carefully modelled "step-intos" which lack the "very breathing" of the human situation. This is not to suggest that art is without contrivance or that all artistic contrivance is attributable to narcissism, but pictures of life so perfectly depicted without the "gritty" are contenders; they are didactic playlands be they ever so witty and delightful.

To say that a verisimilitude as that of a James or Joyce was before Austen's time only enhances the argument. She was not in a world preoccupied with reality but in one, the one she drew from, which was still very much concerned with what was ideal. Her life had been one quite sheltered and removed from the rest of the world. With the exception of one trip to London, she never travelled very far from the environs of her home. Her father, though an educated man of the cloth and very much concerned with his sons' education, did not believe too strongly in formal education for his daughters. Consequently, the author's knowledge of life and what was projected onto the pages of her novels was gleaned primarily from her immediate family circle and the books in her father's

study. This might very well give rise to seeing the world in terms of "closed sets," of limited, "ordered plots and plans." This extent of exposure and worldly focus may very well have been the occasion for her rendering meticulous and tightly controlled environs which create a contrived, immediate, and "self-referencing" sense on the part of the author.

This type of rendering is further effected through the complete absence of flashback or flashforward (Lodge, Companion 168-78). Austen's "picturesque," kaleidoscopic type scenes are reflective of highly subjective reality as seen in Tristram Shandy or the modern stream-of-consciousness novel (Lodge, 173). Even though her books are so different from these thematically and overall stylistically, she does share this same quality. Since experience is falsified in that the characters don't work, don't experience physical love, don't have an historical perspective, and in general, don't have any practical detail of real life surrounding them, it is only in the reverting back to the sort of epistolary technique which her reporting of action is imitating, that Austen achieves some little sense of reality. This is not to say that all art has to convey reality, but it is picking up on the fact that Austen's does not. Hence, it renders a more fantastic, illusionary landscape whatever her intention might have been. In addition, because these landscapes often seem to defy logic and practicality, and, because their chronological duration is so short (barely a year at most ((see David Lodge in

Companion, 173 for further detail here)), one is further led to think of her novels as falling into the pattern of narcissistic, short-lived vignettes.

A particular trait which Freud maintained characterized the narcissist was the repetition compulsion. Dryden suggests Lacan termed it the repetition automatism (Dryden, 21), "the return, the coming-back, the insistence of the signs by which we see ourselves governed by the pleasure principle" (Lacan, Four, 53-54). This compulsion goes even beyond the pleasure principle to the death wish in its continual regression and implied fear of moving on and out toward life. Beyond history or biography is the correspondence between an author's psychic process and literary aesthetic structure and form (Dryden, 23); where all else may be speculation, it is not speculation that an author's literary structure is, particularly when that structure is always basically the same, the structure of his or her mind. And there can be no getting away from the fact that Austen's plots repeat themselves--the names, the particulars change, but the pattern is always the same. Her penchant for "pattern" and "formula" may be seen steadily throughout her work. Her close symmetrical structures reiterate a concern for unrealistic perfection. In particular, she follows rigidly Samuel Richardson's paradigm (Pamela) for the sentimental novel: A stressed heroine's fulfillment is delayed and, so, sentiment is elicited from the reader. This classical formula for dramatic irony also

underscores a certain bonding with that tradition and of itself subtly suggests "the right way" to do things. The author often reverts to preestablished methods--Mr. Bentley (Pride and Prejudice) with his irresponsible detachment is the Jaques of her novel, for example, functioning as the character does for Shakespeare to enrich the comic elements of the drama. Pattern and formula is seen in the characters always seen moving in pairs, in groups for social interaction--from one house scene to another and so on. Much study has been done to show that the close detail in some of these depicted houses can be traced back to particular and long standing estates that the author was familiar with. The house, the metaphor for the body and/or spirit, must be only the best that's around. Even moreso for the narcissist, for it is a womb substitution. As the narcissistic parent begets the narcissistic child, that child begets...and so on, the ideal model in and with its various manifestations continues to propagate.

Similar interpretation may be given to the attention of dress in her novels; fastidious regard is given to aggrandizing detail; stress is assigned to color, bonnets, bows, ribbons and so on. Accordingly, the "perfect" woman is perpetuated through heroines who are all dressed as "accomplished women." Even where their living income is very limited as is the case with most (Fanny Price (Mansfield Park) or Elizabeth Bennet (P&P), for example), Austen's heroines are

educated, instrumental and vocally skilled, capable dancers, doers of the right thing. On the rare occasion when they don't do the right thing, they are appropriately humbled. As we saw with Emma, for example, we see with Elizabeth also when the latter fails to give Darcy, the respect due his social class and rank.

Such careful attention and design are also given to the food motifs running throughout Austen's work. There is the strawberry picking at Mr. Knightly's whom, you will notice, is, yet, again depicted as excelling, in this case as the producer of fresh staples and readily available game. Perfectly ordered and executed dinners regularly make their appearance at Mrs. Bentley's table (P&P) even in spite of the fact that she is living on limited, fixed income. Marriages, Cinderella fashion, too, fall into the "ideal imago," i.e., "the only for love" pattern: If Charlotte Lucas doesn't marry Mr. Collins (P&P) she will most likely be left to spinsterhood and the charity of relatives. Foil for and unlike our heroine Elizabeth, Charlotte settles for this loveless marriage. And the Fitzwilliam Darcys, no less, modelled after the thwarted, early romance in Austen's life, Tom LeFroy, all take the podium as the "ideal" male/mate specimen offered for emulation. Reality rendering gives way as classical symmetry, contrivance, and imaginary landscapes become apparent everywhere in Austen's plots. If the reader will look yet further at Emma for example, he will see that

Highbury is completely tied-up and interconnected into one little, neat package with no loose ends whatsoever. There are no less than six marriages confirmed and many more hinted at in the culminating plot. The characters are diminutively and kaleidoscopically graduated from each other so that Mrs. Elton and Emma are shown to be similar, each concerned with status, each adopting another woman as protegee; both are self-centered and therefore blind. Jane Fairfax and Emma are also compared and contrasted; Miss Bates is to Jane what Mr. Woodhouse is to Emma. Mr. Taylor is to Emma what Emma plans to be to Harriet and so on (Julia Prewit Brown, 90).

There are, furthermore, many game motifs and game structures which underscore the idea of "playing" a part rather than being the "being." There is also almost a sense of return to the child's world in the game playing very much in the way the narcissist continually pulls back to that safe harbor of childhood where there is little threat of ego fragmentation. Conundrums, cards, "consequences" (S&S), billiards, evening games, but particular again is the "mind plays" which Austen is so famous for, that "playfulness" which is uniquely her own style. As the critic Kay Burlin points out,

...She made numerically precise use of specific games to organize her characters into single or doubled card tables, thereby conferring a different significance on the "outsiders"... "Separate tables: structure both the dialogue at individual tables and the frequently highly charged dialogue between tables. Players not only eavesdrop on each

other but, when one game breaks up, become observers of the other. Games may superficially unify society, but they also prevent intimacy and privacy. To indicate the displacement of games in Mansfield Park, Austen limits its card-table scenes but develops them fully for maximum moral resonance.

(Burlin, 180 in Companion)

...She chose her games shrewdly for their thematic, ethical, and structural values. Her expertise in the vocabulary, ideal number and placement of players, procedures and strategies, the proportion of skill to chance, and the aesthetics and ends of individual card games enabled her, through the game motif, to type her characters, discriminate between the interests and habits of different sexes and generations, dramatize group dynamics and explore the sources of class movement.

and,

...Indeed, Emma is itself a word game, anagrammatic in theme (the matching of verbal characters to signify the matchmaking of human character) and plot structure (the rearrangements of a set number of characters and Characters to effect meanings). Games and art begin to touch as Austen explores her medium, language. To answer the conundrum "What two letters of the alphabet express perfection?" with "M plus A," the syllabic construction of the name "Emma," is to point not only to the character Emma, but metonymically to the larger verbal construct, Emma, the novel itself.

(Burlin in Companion 181-2)

It's playfulness and playing, a surface world with characters revealing only little inner conflict and complexity. Rather, they are sketched in low relief, almost as types before being placed in their respective positions. We are told what they

are supposed to be feeling but don't experience it with them as in the sense of high drama. There is no touching or intimacy of any kind. None of this is in keeping with strategies used to delineate characters who "tread the turf." To argue that the conventions of Austen's age did not permit more specific intimacies is to argue my point further-- Austen's art as her world reflects a "protocol" society and not one unafraid to perspire.

Such example of game playing may be seen through the character interaction of Frank Churchill and Emma (Emma). Each vies against the other to reflect their respective vanities: Frank uses Emma in a childish game to make Jane Fairfax a little jealous. He capitalizing on the knowledge that Emma thinks he is in love with her. Emma does not care for Frank romantically but also plays the game to indulge her particular conceit. Her greater degree of shame when they are exposed works to define her character. Similarly, Elizabeth's character (P&P) is refracted against her father's cynicism and her mother's vulgarity. In both cases, while this is a traditional "foiling" technique, part of the writer's craft, the idea of role playing and games in near child-like dramatization may be seen, as it often is, tinting the Austen environment and creating an illusionary sense.

Popular audience patronage in her day was, particularly, very much on the rise, and, from this angle we may view the lack of every day reality in Austen's work not as prudish or

inhibited as is often said of her work but as falling very much in line with a tendency to persuade or shape to a certain visage. As was the case with Narcissus and as I have been alluding to in Austen's work, perhaps it is her "desired" refracted gaze that is being offered over and over again for scrutiny. There is so much of Jane Austen in all her heroines: she was in a fortnight of her twenty-seventh birthday when she ran into some marriage difficulties, and long thinking of twenty-seven as a critical age in this area, the reader hears from her Marianne Dashwood (S&S) to the effect, "A woman of seven and twenty can never hope to feel or inspire affection again." Charlotte Lucas (P&P) was twenty-seven when she accepted Mr. Collins, explaining her decision to Elizabeth in these terms (Nokes, 252): "I am not romantic you know. I never was. I ask only for a comfortable home" (P&P, 95); as her Fanny, Austen's sense of the house, houser of the person, viz a viz perfect to perfect, was observed of her personally by biographer Nokes:

Whenever she could, she stole away to grander houses, where the apartments at least had some pretensions of elegance, even if the conversation left something to be desired

(MP, 219)

And, as her Elizabeth Bennet, she had been socially snubbed by the Lefroy family while some romantic inclinations for Tom had a hold on her, to name just one occasion, and she felt the rebuke bitterly. It has been observed by many through the biographical material that the words Elizabeth utters to Darcy

are those Jane herself longed to utter on this occasion (Nokes, 403):

I am no longer surprised at your knowing only six accomplished women. I wonder now at your knowing any.

(P&P, 29)

While this type material has traditionally occasioned the romantic view that Austen is feistally attacking such social condescension, there is as much to argue that she, as the narcissist, is begetting, treating others as she has been treated. It may be a case of what Freud maintained of the narcissistic wound, i.e., the repetition obsession is the reenactment of the wound working in that the subject returns and tries to recapture what was lost originally. Drawing from several examples in his own experience, he relates the incident where on a walk he found himself on three occasions returning to the same red light district of town and on each occasion being embarrassed and quickly leaving that scene. He accounts for such repetitions "as an accumulation of meaning that has unnatural connotations," almost to the uncanny in the continual drawing toward and repeating of behavior. He, similarly, relates the actions of his grandson while visiting his daughter. Unhappy over his mother's going away temporarily, the little boy invents this game of "fort-da," departing and arriving, where he repeatedly manipulates a wooden spool. Freud interprets this as the child's "imitative rite" in order to gain control over his mother's behavior.

Through this story, he offers an explanation between repression and the repetition compulsion; the latter involves an alternative method of dealing with experiences which are unpleasant (Siebers, 116-7). Whether or not Austen's repetitive pattern is the enactment over and over again of a narcissistic wound is speculation, but the repetitive pattern in her work is not speculative and could be suggestive, as it often is for many artists, of something drawn from her own experience. While all writing in one way or another reflects the personal extension of its creator, there is nothing but in Austen. There was a revolution going on when she was writing, a world being overturned. Where is any of this dealt with in her work. There is only her world in extension, only her family and immediate environs though very much whittled down and left devoid of anything less than perfect; and all her heroines ultimately regain their lost "face."

The situation with her oldest brother, George Austen, especially comes into mind here. When it was discovered that he was in some way seriously retarded, he was whisked off to a caretaker. He was never more to be acknowledged as were the author's more socially successful brothers, evidenced also in her writing and biographical material. The "William" for the composite "Fitzwilliam" and prototype "ideal male" as we have seen, is, for example, also gleaned from her family and environs--her favorites were so named (her brother Charles, by further example, received an award and his bold captain,

Thomas Williams, was knighted when his ship the Unicorn valiantly pursued the enemy, La Tribune). On the other hand, brother George Austen, by tremendous comparison, was forgotten, never mentioned in her surviving letters or her will, never visited or shown any signs of love or regard by her or any member of the Austen family. Caretaker George Callum relates that brother George was even buried in an unmarked grave. Callum's parents years before had similarly taken care of the as quickly whisked out of sight retarded brother of Mrs. Austen (Nokes, 525-6).

Similarly, it is reported of Cassandra upon her sister's death,

... (she, i.e., Cassandra) contrived to turn the house into a kind of shrine to her sister. She carefully preserved every scrap of manuscript which might do honor to dear Jane's memory, burning anything that might tend to suggest a less perfect picture. She copied out Jane's prayers but destroyed her more malicious letters.

(Nokes, 526)

It was put into the record, furthermore, by her nephew James Edward that, "'She was a humble, believing Christian...Her life had been passed in the performance of home duties, and the cultivation of domestic affections, without any self-seeking or craving after applause.' It was mentioned that her needle work was excellent and 'might have put a sewing machine to shame.' But, pointedly, nothing was ever said of the fact that she also wrote novels" (Nokes,

526).

Image and appearance were very important in the world Austen inhabited, obviously absorbed, and reflected in her work. Her parents were very conscious of class. Mrs. Austen, nee Leigh, held steadfast that the Leigh aristocrats were part of the core family of the Austens (Sir Thomas Leigh was Lord Mayor of London some time between 1504 or 71) (Honan, 409). Mr. Austen was always trying desperately to maintain a bank account level so as not to fall below that of the Overton or Basingstoke lawyers, apothecaries, or merchants of the middling classes. He was a socially borderline person, but his wife, in touch always with what opportuned good marriages, did her best to keep her daughters, as did Jane her female characters, public images adorned in fastidious attire and decorum as the family income would allow (Honan, 28-30). The Austens set about establishing their own "code of arms" during the author's life time and especially afterwards. Mr. Austen was hinted to have been an opium smuggler in his desperate financial straits, but the subject was quickly dropped then as it is today by admiring descendant Austians; Aunt Leigh-Perrot, on trail for grand larceny, accordingly hushed; aunts, cousin adulterers family feuding--hushed up and purged in Jane's novels as well as in the hearts of her continually loving admirers, perhaps inheritors of the narcissistic tendency to the ideal. While, to deduce from such that the Austens were narcissistic may not

be the soundest logic, certainly, it is safe to say that the recoiling away from anything less than perfect is one of the characteristics of narcissism that prevailed in their environment and obviously affected their youngest daughter, Jane.

And such vanity, that pointedly strong characteristic of the narcissist, does make its appearance in Austen's work as well. Though she was attempting to depict the world she knew, and marriage being an important business then (as critic Eileen Battersby refutes) (Castle, 41), her rendering of many potential women candidates reflects surface glimpses of exquisitely drawn physical descriptions, funny, complex, poignant, and extremely tender and intimate relationships which are quite in contrast to her fatuous rendering of the males (Castle, 40-1). Many passages strikingly remind us of the great amount of time women spent looking at one another, dressing one another, and engaging in mutually pleasurable "grooming behavior" (Castle 41). Much in the surviving correspondence between Jane and Cassandra was, as with Jane's characters, preoccupied with fashion and attire, with what each was wearing when they were separated--the yeah and nay to the wearing of feathers, the purchase of particular types of fabric, and so on. Some inquiry into this quite outstanding contrast leads, among other places, to the concept of narcissistic transference. I am not referring to the stricter, clinical pattern of transference as seen between an analyst

and patient during therapy but to something more superficial as that of Austen transferring onto her female characters some aspects of the relationship she experienced with her sister Cassandra. There has even been some speculation that the sisters, through such behavior, were unconsciously acting out narcissistic or homoerotic imperatives (Castle 41). Not so far fetched an idea as it first sounds as it is well established in literature as well as in life that the sibling, brother or sister, is often discovered a double for the self. The well-known work of Freudian disciple Otto Rank in his isolation of the double in literature as a self-reflection is also reminiscent here.

However, with or without the Austen white-washing and destruction of so much personal memorabilia, it is a very subjective and difficult path to tread even for the particular experts. However, what is up for literary speculation is the observed and documented behavior between the sisters which gives particular "tinting" to their relationship. Critic Terry Castle claims, for example, that narcissistic/homophilic fascination is exhibited in Jane's letters to her sister. During one of their separations this critic suggests Jane wrote to sister Cassandra as follows:

How do you do today? ... I have been awake ever since 5 & sooner, I fancy I had too much clothes over my stomach; I thought I should by the feel of them before I went to bed, but I had not courage to alter them.

(Castle, 41)

Castle explains further that the sisters even shared the same bed, hence, the above letter hinting toward the feeling of Cassandra's absence. It is undisputed that the sisters lived together and closely scrutinized not only the other's dress and "grooming behavior," but also bodily movement/mannerisms, and need for the other's physical nearness. One reason for their developing closeness was the repeated singling out of their brothers for deferential treatment, pushing, thus, the two girls together. The scarce notice given to her mother who outlived the author would also give weight to the deep emotional attachment the two sisters seemed to experience.

Augmenting these thoughts is the further knowledge that Jane had at least two proposals of marriage which she turned down, and that Cassandra also demonstrated little inclination for marriage. While both seemed to go the way of romance and marriage as they initially stepped into the world, both their endeavors met with disappointment initially, and biographical material seems to suggest that the interest faded for both as they steadily drew closer to each other in maturity. Such initial behavior is not out of the norm for homosexuals who often first try to go the way of convention. This would especially be true in the atmosphere of Austen's day. It would most readily also apply to latent homosexuals in the process of discovering themselves.

One noteworthy incident here comes from Jane's niece,

Fanny Lefroy, who recounts that the author reported to her "a revulsion of feeling" after accepting Harris Bigg-Wither's (the inheritor of Manydown, one of the houses drawn from in her writing) proposal of marriage (Nokes, 253), and had to finally turn him down, creating a rather "touchy" situation in that social area. True, he was six years younger than her, and perhaps that, and the fact that she was getting on in age may have accounted for the initial acceptance. But her response does seem rather extreme. The biographical material also reiterates other somewhat extreme behavior when Jane was being separated from her sister. On one occasion, particularly, she was so devastated at the idea of separation that her father, who, as we have seen, was averse to spending money on his daughters' education, was forced to agree to send her to the Abbey school where Cassandra was in attendance as well. Mrs. Austen was credited with saying, "If Cassandra were going to have her head cut off, Jane would insist on sharing her fate" (Honan, 36).

It has also been suggested that the limitedly drawn male characters by comparison to the females may also have been the result of an underlying eros: "Cassandra, no one else is good enough for you but me" (Castle, 41).

The narcissist is always out to create the perfect image of himself to mask, as pointed out earlier, deep feelings of inferiority. There is also much that can be seen in Austen's life which hints that she might have harbored such feelings:

She was, for example, a very bright woman stifled in the way of the nineteenth century. She was relegated to the inferior, to the back seat of life as her brothers were given every opportunity their father's means would allow, forced to live in near poverty and the charity of others, amid stifling conversations and hard seats at stale country balls; even to having her father's books--all she had--taken from her and sold; even perhaps feeling badly about herself because she was the "authoress," and not one able to be content in her life's situation. All of her brothers, we are told, were of real use pursuing careers. Cassandra was her mother's trusted shopper; but she was likely not to be useful, to earn little, "her wish to write for money setting her on a risky course in 1793" (Honon, 93). We are told that she, "acquired a vivid, hell-fearing awareness of sin before her legs were long enough to let her small wooden clogs, or iron-ringed patterns, click on the floor," that, "She absorbed a strict Christian and Stoic morality," and that happiness comes from, "... being useful and doing one's duty" (Honon, 27). Consequently, we are told further, she turned inward, became addicted to her work and would train herself "...to make whole fictional worlds which, as she grew older, would compensate for her edgy, uncomfortable feelings about real people" (Honon, 94).

It is not out of keeping with such austere religious upbringing to harbor ill feelings toward oneself. The biting invectives which often characterize the author's conversations

and writings can be reflective of such self-loathing. There is a sharp change of tone in one of her letters partly because of deep sorrow and partly in defiance, it is suggested, when on the occasion of Tom Fowle's death (the young Cassandra's intended husband) she writes bitterly of the "gracious Father" above (Honan, 124).

Her letters also reveal her comic violence and black humor (Honan, 125-6) which can also be manifestations of self-recrimination.

Since, and maybe even then, because so much intimate material was lost through the familial "editing," including sister Cassandra's destruction of Jane's letters (also designed to protect the image) we can never have certainty. But where we do have certainty is in the knowledge that the narcissist is not an abstract paradigm on the pages of a psychology textbook but a human being who lives, walks, and works among us, possessing the psychic distortion in various and not always quickly discernible degrees. While traditional criticism puts Austen's work into the category of moralizing toward the end of building the better, more perfect world, this was the philosophy of her age; our psychoanalytic explorations pivot from the philosophical foundations of our world and from constantly deepening literary query. The wit, the humor, the keenly rendered turn of a phrase, all that we love of Austen are still there, but there is more that is only now coming to light.

Section 11

Dickens: Self Discovery or Self Creation?

The distinctive thread that ties Charles Dickens in with Narcissus is that of the reflected image. The author's preoccupation with the image may be seen in his love of playing with the revealed or mirrored image on paper and in his interest in creating his own particular image, public or otherwise. In both cases these images are aspects and not, in toto, representations. As displaced parts from a puzzle, often "picked and chosen," often emerging unbidden, these fragmented bits and pieces, personality "visages," seem to "float" around and about him. While the author's ultimate intent may be idealistic for his own self-image and/or perhaps for a reader's lesson in morality, they are as illusionary as those in Jane Austen's world. In their repeated return upon self, they may be seen even more progressively emergent narcissistic. For in Dickens's work, each of his heroes or their standins, comic or serious, reflects an image of himself, or what he wants that image of himself to be. Often their names are a play on his own initials--CDs, DCs, but, ultimately, these various aspects of himself coalesce in what is considered the summa of his work, Great Expectations through the character, Philip Pirrip. The circular pattern of the narcissist becomes readily apparent as, in each case, Dickens may be seen drawing from his own experience to present

a protagonist who is isolated, orphaned, unwanted, and alone. In each case this envisioned Dickensian hero attempts to rise up against such misfortunes of birth to become the ideal, a gentleman--a man emotionally, spiritually, and financially successful. And, however, in each case, particularly as seen in Great Expectations, this "would be" hero fails.

The impetus behind this particularly favored image was the England of Dickens's day; in her great industrial period and the period of his writing, she was ripe for such a hero. The new middle class wanted someone to take the place of the gods science had killed off, but yet one still not too removed from them. They wanted that caliber man devoted to duty, hard work, and restraint; a man who, like them, was also against old world aristocratic traditions--a man who was independent, achieving through his own efforts, patriarchal and Christianly moral, a man whose virtues had brought about the great social changes in England in the first place. Ironically, however, the newly risen class was less "middle class" and more residual of the newly vanquished class. They were reaching for the very same monopoly of material acquisitions and values they had fought so hard against. While the revolution had broken down the idea of inherited wealth, a son could still, and readily did step into the place his father had begun; and his goal was, again, to be the "country gentleman" while, at the same time, an active, aggressive money maker. Surrounding Dickens was a type of bourgeois class, one might say, "almost

offensive" in their quest for material goods. But they did, however, still want, and maybe needed a human hero, an echo of what they once were, and Dickens was their man, perhaps, even moreso than they realized (Solomon, 85-125).

He truly was so, rising up to success without the bootstraps of a strong father and genuinely possessing those forthright virtues the new Englishman had come to love, though, at heart, he was less the country "gentilisse" and more the cosmopolitan progressive; he moved with the fast moving, sophisticated city crowd. An anomaly, ambivalent as the newly risen class, he was an embracer of bourgeois values himself and at the same time a professed detester of those so seemingly rapacious. It was this latter image he wished to project, however, and he did truly fear for the individual he saw as becoming a "thing" for the sake of money (Solomon, 85-125). While often being criticized by succeeding generations for his characters' lack of interior space as compared, for example, to the work of George Eliot who closely followed him, it was this "emptiness" that he was reiterating. And while often seeming childlike in his approach by those who, perhaps, have forgotten the simple clarity of the child's vision, the fight against this materialism forms the heart and the morality of his entire oeuvre. For the Dickensian image, the man ultimately successful was the man, in combination well rounded, i.e., as accomplished culturally, emotionally, and spiritually, as he was financially.

The angle of view to this vision is especially important to note here. For the Englishman, to be a successful writer was to cut as heroic a figure as the industrialist who made the social jump in one generation. The Englishman in general had contempt for the nomenclature, "self-made man," though certainly applicable to Dickens. Deeming this term strictly American, they revered such an "all-around" successful man who differed from the American prototype. The latter had looked on writers with circumspect. For the American at that time, writing was something you could do only after "making it" in more "meat and potato" ventures, but the Englishman saw this as crude in the least. Dickens, in accord, hated the term "self-made," arguing that we were "made" by our parents; we set out from there to "create" "who" we are in the eyes of the world (Solomon, 108-118). His novels are all, in their various ways, such "Bildungsroman"--novels of formation or education, his various "DC" combinations or their standins all conform in varying degrees with this idea of creating who we are. His efforts in the creation of David Copperfield fall in line exactly with this thinking for the labor of writing is a way to construct oneself, and David as standin for Dickens is the writer struggling to create, to become the ideal. The character Agnes Wickfield from the same work, as the play on the name suggests, is David's "field of light," the angelic object of his idolatry, and I might add, an idealized mother "imago" through which there is a an attempt at fixity in the

current of time:

Clasped in my embrace, I held the source of every worthy aspiration I had ever had; the centre of myself, the circle of my life, my own, my wife; my love of whom was founded a rock!

(David Copperfield, 864)

While criticism for this "fictionalized autobiography" argues for a unified, central perspective which holds the author's first novel together, critics are divided in their view of the hero. Their criticism suggests a lack of firmness, an inability of the hero to serve as an able master of his own body, the problematic relationship between the central focus and the novel, the progress of David's life, and the peripheral elements that circulate around the main character--that David is merely the looking glass in which we see the other characters, the voice through which they speak. (Dryden, 82-3). Further comments in this regard echo--lack of ego, little drive, vitality, or exuberance; excess passivity. And most important for the point here--David's ambivalence. Critic Dryden echoes Bloom here when he says of David (82-3) that he, "genuflects before the feminized self and writer only" to conceal "the materialist, elitist, masculinized nature of his profession" as a writer (Bloom, Major Literary Characters, 222). Unwittingly, it may be suggested, Dickens seems to be revealing his own ambivalence, the distinction between the desired image of the successful man and the one actually being reflected. Dryden offers innumerable examples of circular imagery, anal retentive traits, repetitive

patterns in this character as well as in other earlier and later Dickensian figures. From the Pickwickians to Great Expectation revealed is the unstable, constantly flickering "to and fro" reflection of the narcissist (See Dryden's "Ixion's Wheel"), his desire to be a particular "something," the constant breaking down of that image in the face of reality, and the return again upon self. For example, from David Copperfield, David's "strange fascination" with "following" Martha to "low-lying" ground near the river may arise from his own anxieties about being "thrown away" as a child, and, further, the figures of Emily Peggotty, Rosa Dartle, and Martha Endell's are likened to narrator David's own narcissistic wounds in his painful awareness that he resembles refuse (Dryden, 89). Yet again, as the novel opens it poses the question as to whether or not the writer is the "hero" of his own life. This skill should be in the ability of the author/creator. However, a large part of the text suggests that David is not master of himself, but subject to the disposal of others (as suggested, argument pivots around the idea of "disposal") (96). An additional connection can be made here through the very fact that each of Dickens's heroes starts out alone in the world, hinting at a narcissistic, masculine omnipotent characteristic. The very fact that the characters speak through David lends further suggestion that they are his reflections and not separate entities. It suggests the narcissist's circular pattern--all visions back

to self, ultimately incriminating the author into the pattern as well.

Such phantoms of contradiction do loom high about Dickens's psyche. He was, and as is evidenced in his writing, the man concerned with traditional values, personal growth, inner strength and character. But this hero of the common man's interest in the dollar, and in the "who" he was was as bourgeois as any for whom he avowed contempt. It has even been suggested that his chasing after Mammon brought about his fatal stroke, the financially enticing American trip proving to be too much for him. Again, not only had Dickens strived with his huge house to be the prosperous "country gentleman," but it has been reported that he even went so far, as had the Austens in their respective manner, to "create" a family genealogy. In fact, biographical sketches further report that Dickens gave up an earlier attempt at writing his autobiography because it would reveal too many things about himself he did not want known, things which were contrary to the picture he wished to project. The writing of his idealized David Copperfield was the outcome of that earlier aborted effort. He liked the idea of being the people's "hero," and he discovered through fiction, and continued to discover, that he could add, delete, and "alter" as he so desired in order to create the "hero" his audience wished to see.

It was very characteristic of Dickens from his earliest career days to have an interest in shaping, controlling, manipulating and dominating the space in and around him. In his home and social environs as in the worlds he created, he "always ran the show." During his trips to Italy, for example, when he was involved with mesmerism and the de la Rue couple, it was never a matter of discussing anything with his wife Catherine. He just told her to pack. When he initially needed a patient to practice his mesmerizing skills on, Catherine was it. Period. During this mesmerizing phase, Dickens was the self-appointed and singularly controlling "doctor" in the "cure" of Madame de la Rue who was suffering from severe emotional problems. He set himself about the task of helping this woman "define" herself. Obviously in touch with the fear that a self image could easily slip away in the barrage of reality, he can be seen here early in his career about the business of trying to stabilize an image. One has to be reminded again of Dickens's apparent self-division, together with the fact that self-mastery is the narcissist's principle problem in preventing fragmentation of his image, and that it is the principal problem for a great many of the author's protagonists. Coupled with this, furthermore, is the knowledge that a primary concern in his work is that of the power of the will and its effects in shaping character and/or modifying the effects of earlier, childhood experience.

It is not surprising then that Dickens found himself drawn to mesmerism. Though under fire from many non-believers, mesmerism (named after its founder) or "animal magnetism" had been very much in the "pulse" of the cosmopolitan man at the time, and when Dickens was invited to a demonstration at the home of his friend John Elliotson, he accepted, soon getting very immersed in his own skills to mesmerize, control, and cure, and to become filled with a sense of empowerment over his "patients." In the case of Madame de la Rue, he seemed to be able to put her in some sort of a mesmerized state and exorcise the emotional demons believed to be possessing her. In fact, Madame and he believed that an actual phantom took physical emergence in their presence. Its existence had even kept them both terrorized for a considerable period of time. This situation augments the argument surrounding mesmerism; that is, it is not a mysterious force in the atmosphere but our own discharged essences, an "Another" within us (Kaplan, Dickens and Mesmerism, 114). At this time also, it may further be noted that there was still yet "Another" Madame de la Rue believed to have emerged as well as the phantom that threatened her, perhaps her new, totally recovered, and integrated self.

In addition to gaining absolute assurance in his abilities to control "another" and to control the personal images others had of themselves, this period found the author

exploring those relationships between early childhood experiences and the power of the will in shaping that experience. A bit of residual Calvinism, perhaps, still sticking to his ribs as well, i.e., that thrift, industry, and business success might counter destiny's seeming projections and mitigate original sin. Dickens particularly got involved with the nature of the power of self and the mind and began to play with a mirror, creating two selves. One of the selves could be looked on as a stranger--detached, and the repositor of any negative aspects the subject may possess whereby removing any "guilt" from the original self. The phantom figure from the de la Rue experience which became the crystallized embodiments of those undesired aspects of self became in Dickens's fiction the bad guys, the fictional doubles. Charles Darnay does not like this guy who looks like him (Sidney Carter, Tale of Two Cities), but there must somewhere be displaced the Evremode guilt and responsibility--Darnay's aristocratic father and his double in the tale, his twin (Darnay's uncle), pass on to Darnay. Note, it is not Darnay's father, but his uncle and once removed, who is the most decadent one, the one who, among other alluded to heinous atrocities, rapes and ruins a peasant girl. A parallel example may be seen through the author himself: It is well known Dickens deplored the worldly materialism around him, but he also deplored himself for continually becoming emotionally involved with it. The split: Better to be the Good Samaritan

in a detached way as demonstrated through the contrasting characters of Joe Gargery and Jaggers in Great Expectations: The reader here is given two types of saviors, Joe the Jesus figure who descends into the mud to do the saving--he finds a boy in need, takes the sister in as well, and suffers bitterly for his goodness; and the character, Jaggers, who rescues as well but in a detached, antiseptic way, without getting his hands dirty--he pawns the child off to another's care (that child, Estella, is put into the hands of Miss Havisham). Soon the reader is given to discern the Pip who wants to be "gentle," and the bourgeois Pip who snubs his nose at Joe. The mesmerization period had involved Dickens in the notion that characters, as human beings, could be so separated into particular self-aspects. Madam de la Rue's demon could be separated from her and occupy its own space as Charles Darnay could be split into his idyllic and less idyllic parts through his double, Carter. The slew of such characters with their correspondent doubles in Dickens's work clearly suggests his involvement with reflected images, with Narcissus's art, the repetitive pattern a compulsion toward exorcised self-demons and an idealized self image.

Soon the work of the writer often characterized as the most "guilty" in the English heritage becomes recognized as a workshop in exorcisms. Aside from the ultimately emergent Pip, generally accepted by literary critics to be a composite and mature integration of all the various "CD" combinations in

the author's work, Professor Kaplan particularly points out (Kaplan, Mesmerism, 115) that there are innumerable encounters with "another self" in the author's work which take place around a mirror reflection. The Lammles (Our Mutual Friend), for example, are reflected images of themselves, both false, penniless, and unscrupulous. Esther Summerson (BH) encounters the traces of her original features with those of her now distorted and pockmarked face, the one carrying the residues of inherited parental guilt, the other a fragile, indefinite, in-the-process-of-emerging self. Lady Dedlock reiterates for us that she, "was rendered motionless...by something in her face...the fascination there that overpowered me." Was it that dark shadow of her guilt laden past that is pursuing and threatening her? Her grandmother had warned Esther to "pray that the sins of the "other" are not visited upon you."

The idea of creating another self in a "subject-operator" relationship is played out over and over again with Dickens clearly experimenting with the separating of a character into "component" parts of a self. There are at least four sets of identical twins: the Cheeryble twins (Nicholas Nickleby) who are indistinguishable from each other--both just blobs of protoplasm, a single individual divided in two--manufactured and unreal, psychological nonentities; the Flintwhich twins similarly exist as cogs in the plot (Little Dorrit), complementing each other--what one lacks, the other has. Jeremiah is sober, industrious, scheming, prudent, brutal,

immoral, while Ephraim is intemperate, alcoholic, dissolute, unstable, brutal, and immoral. Professor Kaplan adds here (Kaplan, 121) that a mirror image may be seen in use to heighten the focus on split selves, and the problem of distinguishing between illusion and reality, between false selves and real ones:

Mr. Flintwinch awake, was watching Mr. Flintwinch asleep. He sat on one side of a small table, looking keenly at himself on the other side with his chin sunk on his chest, snoring. The waking Flintwinch had his full front face presented to his wife; the sleeping Flintwinch was in profile. The waking Flintwinch was the old original; the sleeping Flintwinch was the double. Just as she might have distinguished between a tangible object and its reflection in a glass, Affery made out this difference with her head going round and round

(LD, I:iv, 42)

The twins most dedicated to the completion of one another are Helena and Neville Landless in (TM of ED). They are not simple replicas of the original bits of protoplasm but a self divided, each incomplete without the other (Kaplan, 120-2). The Meagles twins, Pet (Minnie) and Lillie (LD) perhaps best reflect the author's playing with the transference of identities. Lillie dies at an early age and Tattycoram is taken in by the Meagles to replace her--a sort of surrogate creation taking place (Kaplan, 124). The separated parts of the single self need not necessarily like the other as in the Darnay/Carter pairing, or be lovers as they are in the case of Eugene Wrayburn and Lizzie Hexam (OMF). They can come together in any manner to make a unified self such as Dr.

Manette recognizing his daughter as "my other and far dearer self," or as Arthur Clenam and Little Dorrit find completion in finding each other (Kaplan, 115-25).

Just as Elliotson had taught Dickens to mesmerize Madame de la Rue and others with the fixated eye, and, lest we forget, within the earlier literary tradition as well, Coleridge's mariner was observed mesmerizing the "dinner guests" with his eye, so too Dickens's fictional figures may be seen with their fixed, "visual ray" steady: The eyes in the portrait on the wall "'seem fixed' upon Oliver (OT), X11);... Mr. Tulkinghorn feels 'a rather increased sense of power upon him'...on his encounter with Lady Dedlock--he is suddenly stopped in passing the window by 'two eyes that meet his own...looking in through the glass from the corridor outside (BH, LX1)';...Miss Pross and Madame Defarge stare intently: 'Neither of them for a single moment released the other's Eyes (TTC)';...or John Jasper's extraordinary 'optic vision' in his opium induced schizophrenia in the ordinary world and the one of dream-waking...Under the influence of opium, 'a strange film comes over his eyes,' like the old opium dealer who stares with a 'strange blind stare...an unwinking, blind sort of steadfastness (ED,XIV)..' ... Physical means of hypnotizing are also used: Jagers hypnotizes with his hands and Mr. Bucket with his fat forefinger which he puts to his lips, rubs over his nose, and shakes before a guilty man" (Kaplan, 130) (Professor Kaplan is using the Oxford Illustrated Dickens

except for Oliver Twist and The Mystery of Edwin Drood from The Clarendon Dickens, 1966,'72; and David Copperfield, Riverside, 1958), and so on.

Dickens very much enjoyed playing with glares, reflections, and exorcised visages, and it is no surprise that soon phantoms do appear about his own person. It is generally accepted among Dickensian scholars that this author's rich collection of caricatures and their structural doubles represent fictional substitutes for the man Charles Dickens--Narcissus choosing the "another" reflected in the mirroring water. Dickens himself tells us that his barrage of characters and incidents are particularly designed to keep the reader "going round," i.e., perpetually going around and back to him, the notion of language being a "self-perpetuating" tool, the notion that language and narrative resemble the substitutions, displacements, and condensations of dream work (Dryden, 73), the notion that language is equal to the uncensored voice of one's unconscious. This author's work may be seen as a plethora of little Dickenses disassociated in various degrees from their negative attributes in order to be the "ideal" hero. The displaced initials, David C. Scrooge, with his three ghosts is an excellent example here--Marley, Scrooge's representative miserliness; the Ghost of Christmas Past perhaps a variation on the aspect miserliness--Scrooge's hoarding of his capacity for love; and, finally, the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come--

Scrooge's potential self-Nemesis. The author's explorations into the effects of childhood experience toward the adult mind is easily seen here transformed by his vision of things into fiction. Evidenced particularly is his well-known, painful experience separated from his family. He had been put to work for six months in a blackening factory to offset his debtor father's prison sentence, and the reader is continually brought back to this period in his life: In "A Christmas Carol" there is that little boy at school all alone at Christmas time; then there is David Copperfield (DC) in a similar position being put to work in a factory; John Harmon (OMF) alone in his subterfuge, isolated and wronged; Pip sent away from love in the person of Joe Gargery (GE), and so many, many more--the pattern continually repeating itself, the narcissistic repetition compulsion and circular return back to childhood. Christmas itself is a metonymic substitution for wholeness, that is, in the child's perception Christmas is "an altogether around the hearth" type unity, as well as a uterine or "secure" image. As suggested, Dickens's texts are filled with innumerable such circular patterned or reiterated unity images. The shape of Scrooge's hand functions similarly. It is an incomplete circle in its emptiness, whole and unified when ultimately it is filled and giving (Dryden, 58).

The unity and return upon self that the circle image suggests also occurs in the narrative structure of Dickens's novels. There is always a return to a story of origin or

birth; in this way little mysteries are slowly revealed about the protagonist's engendering, taking the reader back to his time of origin. Critic Sadoff would agree here, seeing the recurring narrative pattern in Dickens's work as both an attempt to come to terms with his own unfavorable origins as well as not to know them. Often paternity is seen as something his protagonists seek to discover, yet they always learn it from a story within the story, as a mere "fiction," hence as a metaphorical killing off of the father in the story of origin. Arthur Clenam's father (LD), David Copperfield's (DC), Pip's (GE), even Scrooges's father, as the narratives open, are quickly passed on and out of the picture. If one is to create one's self, one has to get rid of the father. If one is to create an ideal self, one has to pass all the negative self-aspects one detests onto another self-image, exorcise them, and give birth to "Another" de la Rue fashion. The closest of kin, particularly fathers or their surrogates, brothers etc., are the most immediate and typical such repositories. These embedded stories of genealogy and narrative origin in Dickens's fiction may be seen thus as the enactment over and over again of the original primal scene, and as such an attempt to kill off the father and create self anew.

The attempt at disassociation and the proliferation of double father surrogates throughout the author's work may also be linked to Dickens directly--suggestive of his ambivalent relationship with his father, John Dickens (Sadoff, 23). Mr.

Micawber Bleak House, long considered by many critics a portrait of Dickens's own father exemplifies, showing the author's ambiguity. He does not seem able here and in similar situations to out right "kill-off," but he does so indirectly, rendering Micawber absurd and impotent. Within his overall effort toward moral awareness, the author elects to make Micawber a comic figure, the "dead pan foil," in the face of his gross moral failing as a responsible father. In this figure, furthermore, may be seen the sub-lineal reiteration that lack of self-control and inability to hold onto anything that is one's own is the constant threat to the self-centered and blind ego, for it spells "fragmentation." Mrs. Micawber further underscores the play on double views as compliment to him. To the degree that he is optimistic and seemingly indifferent to their sorry predicaments she is pensive and worrying. Within a narcissistic, circular pattern, furthermore, Micawber's inability to maintain his possessions reflects his inability to regulate the consumption of goods and services and recalls autobiographical David who, similarly, upon leaving his aunt at Dover, loses nearly all of his possessions (Dryden, 101). It echoes further the summa Dickens, Pip, in the latter's difficulty in staying within his allowance while in the process of becoming a gentleman. And it echoes again the author's seeming need to always acquire more money.

An other such surrogate example from Great Expectations is the figure Wemmick with his dead language. J.Hillis Miller suggests he mouths cliches such as "My guiding star is: Get Hold of Personal Property." So too does Pumblechuck who, as Magwitch, boasts in comic parody that, "Pip is the gentleman he made," that he is Pip's "founder" (Miller, "Assessing," 124). They are all suffocating puppets of society in her various manifestations, materialistic as Pip is: Magwitch, attempting to own another human being may be heard bragging,

I says to myself, If I ain't a gentleman, nor yet ain't got no learning, I'm the owner of such. All on you owns stock and land; which on you owns a brought-up gentleman?

(Great Expectations/Bantam, 300)

Within the structure of the "Bildungsroman" there frequently may be found a loss of innocence motif, a step into evil; the protagonist must know evil to overcome it. In repeated fashion, accordingly, Dickens maintains the split off aspects of the protagonist through these surrogates. By identifying with and yet separating these figures from the character in question, in this case, Pip, the character remains somewhat untainted: They are, but they're not Pip. As he has been seen to do with other pairings, the author is still about the business of shaping, molding, and creating to his specifications. He has made the figure of the surrogate the "bad guy," the "evil engenderer" to Pip as he steps into "experience." In this way, yet another way, Dickens is trying to remove natural concupiscence and keep his figure ideal.

Within the metaphorical structure of Great Expectations, Magwitch may so be identified "father" in several ways. First, he is given a resemblance to Pip in his need for support and castaway status; second, he is given a paternal resemblance in his ghost-like, skeletal appearance seeming to rise up out of the churchyard grounds. In addition, in an attempt to link them, homoerotic penetration imagery also makes its appearance in this scene (Dryden, 187-8) when Magwitch lays Pip down on the tombstone and the latter describes how Magwitch,

came closer to my tombstone, took me by both arms, and tilted me back, as far as he could hold me; so that his eyes looked most powerfully down into mine, and mine looked most helplessly into his.

(GE, 3)

Pip is never literally penetrated, but, as Dryden points out, he is violated in the way an adult fantasy can break into the interior of a child (Dryden, 188):

"There's a young man hid with me, in comparison with which young man I am a Angel. That young man hears the words I speak. That young man has a secret way pecooliar to himself, of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door, may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the cloths over his head, may think himself comfortable and safe, but that young man will softly creep and creep his way to him and tear him open. I am a keeping that young man from harming of you at the present moment, with great difficulty. I find it wery hard to hold that young man off of your side."

(GE, 4)

A forced entry is being described here which is cannibalistic--"getting at...and his heart, and at his liver," and which reiterates the narcissistic fear of being "gobbled up" by the world. When many years later Pip gets the message from "a man" in the tavern, the fear is rekindled; this man is the current "gobbling" surrogate father, as is Orlick similarly continuing the sinister penetration when he too in a like manner with the "eye" and physical overpowerment threatens devourment.

Notice particularly in these links the use of the mesmerizing "eye." There has always been a connection with the age old belief in the "evil eye" and Narcissism which has its basis in mirror imaging and which goes back to the mythical figures of Athena and Medusa. Recall Perseus could not look at Medusa's eye or he would perish. It is recorded that Athena had a "fiery eye" as well, and that the pair share much connectedness--in a history of rivalry, for example, as "queen of the city" and "queen of hell," and by the fact that the birth of Athena is the exact "mirror image" of Medusa's death: Athena is born out of the head of Zeus after either Hephaestus or Prometheus opens it with an axe, while upon the death of Medusa, from her head likewise split open with an axe, is born Pegasus and Chrysaor, further suggesting the competition between goddess and monster. In addition, some accounts of the myth suggest that it is Athena who orders the snake-head deformity in the once beautiful Medusa for the

latter dared to compare her beauty with that of Athena's, and further that it was Athena who ordered Medusa's death. The implication here is obviously that Athena must overcome Medusa in order to establish her own identity, that they tie into the doubling aspect, i.e., that they are two aspects of the same person with the good separated from the evil. As Narcissus had stared into the pool, two dark eyes stared back, and he too dies--turns to stone, at the sight. It has even been suggested that the Echo of this myth in her disembodiment is not a separate entity but also a self-encounter, i.e., that she is Narcissus's voice. In some cultures the sight of this reflected eye is so frightening that a mirror is worn to reflect yet back again the image. The encounter with the self-reflective eye for the romantics almost reached megalomania (Seibers, 78). And in the field of psychoanalysis itself, lest we forget, therapy is merely the therapist acting as mirror for the patient to see himself and thus progress toward a cure. In short, Dickens is very much in line with regard to the connection between reflected images, narcissism, and the long standing tradition of the "evil eye."

Within the metaphorical structure of the story as well, Magwitch is shown to be existing not outside of Pip but inside him in several ways. First through their parallel desire to be a gentleman:

"I swore artewards, sure as ever I spec'lated and got rich, you should get rich. I lived rough, that you should live smooth; I worked hard that you should be above work. What

odds, dear boy: Do I tell it fur you to feel an obligation? Not a bit, I tell it fur you to know as that there dunghill dog wot you kep life in, got his head so high that he could make a gentleman--and, Pip, you're him!"

(GE, 298)

Then, as Dickens himself is linked in his materialistic ambivalence and perhaps feelings of guilt, so too is Pip linked to Magwitch's materialism and his criminality--remember, it was Pip who stole the food for Magwitch and the file so the latter could cut his leg-iron, that very same leg-iron which was used by Orlick to kill Mrs. Joe: Connections. Reflections. Of the author himself, it is reported that a few years after writing Great Expectations he was to have remarked that he always felt as if he were wanted by the police--"irretrievably tainted." "Compared to most writers of his time the Dickens of the later novels, the word has it, seems to be obsessed with guilt"; he seems to write not in the style of Cartesian or Catholic rationalism but as that other irretrievably tainted artist, Fyodor Dostoevski (Stange, 81).

Identified to Magwitch in shame as both are social outcasts in their criminality and well as birth, it is no wonder Pip is mortified when he shows up. And his entry onto the scene with that "supernatural," phantom-like quality as well is clearly noted: Up the dark staircase he enters "the circle of light" "for a mere instant" before moving "out of it" into the darkness again. At first Pip doesn't recognize him, but then he comes vaguely familiar into his consciousness

as a parent does, continually emerging in and out of the consciousness of the child (Dryden, 210). And he is not even able to kill him off within the metaphorical structure of the story, for he only returns again as Compeyson--the proliferation continuing--this figure is seen making his appearance as the phantom of Pip's desire to kill Magwitch. He is also linked to Pip in the penetration imagery dating back to the churchyard scene--: "...A boy may lock his door...but that young man will ...creep his way to him and tear him open....I find it wery hard to hold that young man off your inside" (Dryden, 219). He is another surrogate, in continuum a manifestation of criminality and guilt. When Pip says, "he was there, because I was there," he means "there" in the state of mind as his conscience: Pip says of his secret dealings with Magwitch, "the secret was such an old one now, had grown into me and become part of myself, that I could not tear it away" (GE, 113). In this regard, Orlick's relevance to the plot which has given many critics cause to question, becomes very clear: This figure functions as interim in the continuing progression through time of the "young man" metaphor, and, hence, is very important to structure. He too comes upon Pip from behind, holds a lit candle "mesmerizingly" to his eye, and also threatens him with annihilation. In each case Pip is put into the lower, weaker or "feminine" position. Dickens is very neatly setting up the links in his circular path with the pattern seen ever continual and returning upon

self.

Females, indeed, are also threatening phantoms to breakdown Pip the perfect. Molly, Jaggers's housekeeper and natural mother to Estella is one, and the threat is castration. Again, there is the "eye" association: Pip recognizes and connects her to Estella through the eyes--Molly has Estella's eyes (he connects Molly's "knitting action" of her fingers to Estella's fingers, hair, and eyes (GE, 362). As another Estella she is equally incriminated in the ridicule and debasement Pip endures from Estella, the second female castrator in his life, when he is sent off to Satis House. From their very first meeting and on through most of their adult relationship Estella never ceases to demean and remind Pip of his "lower" status. And this castrating fear continues to haunt Pip as he claims to have in latter years reproduced the effect of Molly's face in passing a face with flowing hair behind "a bowl with flaming spirits in a dark room" (Dryden, 215). The face of Medusa is showing up here--the flaming hair--the flames recalling "flowing snakes," the ugly face becoming superimposed on that of the beautiful--Estella: The conjurer and the conjured it would seem. Mrs. Joe was the first castrator in Pip's consciousness. In addition to her constant bullying him, recall that little boy who stuffs bread into his pants' leg at dinner that notorious night of Magwitch's emergence with Mrs. Joe menacingly hot on the trail after it. Furthermore, these figures, in their capacity as

reflections of Pip, also suggest self-castrating imagery: As he later looks at Estella, he sees a ghost quickly pass over her face just as he had seen one pass over Magwitch's face (Dryden, 212). He starts involuntarily, but "instantly the ghost passed once more and was gone" (GE, 222). Pip saw in a flickering instant Estella's connection to Magwitch as he saw his own. In Mrs. Joe is reflected Pip's guilt--he stole the bread; he stole the file to cut Magwitch's leg iron.

The constant propagation of "other selves," the doubling technique in Dickens's narrative structures, the son's attempt to ward off if you can't kill off the sins of the father, may be seen not only through the Magwitch et al figures of Great Expectations but throughout Dickens's work (Sadoff, 10-64). For example, as Darnay had escaped inherited guilt vicariously through Carter, i.e., as the latter is darned the "bad guy," Esther Summerson (BH), similarly, is saved when she brings down the house of Dedlock and when she expunges her inherited guilt through the text's structural narration: The use of two narrators, with the omniscient one relating Esther's story, works to separate her, literally as well as physically, from the revelation that Nemo, alias Captain Hawdon, was her socially unacceptable "father." Ultimately, she emerges the "Another" with her new, and transformed, though "pock-marked" face.

Disguised primal scenes, various ways of killing off the surrogate figure, reenacted parricides attempted--all through

his oeuvre and especially in Great Expectations Dickens yields up a slew of surrogate fathers, all representative "of this world's goods"--that materialistic side of Dickens and desire to be a "somebody" which had put him at odds with those traditional values he primarily espoused: Wopsle, within the metaphorical structure of the story, may be seen as a Pip, alias Dickens's figure, in his role as phantom critic of the former's great expectations, in his unconscious desire to father himself socially; Trabb's boy is also a metaphor for the self acting as "other"--the intent to associate performance with acting, vis a vis, self-delusion, Dickens attempts through writing to engender himself, to make himself in narrative the "hero" of his own life (Sadoff, 33-40).

The author always associated writing with parenting. In referring to that disguised autobiography, David Copperfield he say,

... Of all my books, I like this the best. It will be easily believed that I am a fond parent to every child of my fancy, and that no one can ever love that family as dearly as I love them. But, like many fond parents, I have in my heart of hearts a favorite child. And his name is David Copperfield.

(DC/Oxford, xii)

- A corresponding interest to this may be seen in the author's "food and drink obsession." Hungry children, in particular little boys, run in abundance. Cratchit's goose is famous, as is Mrs. Joe's pork pie, or Fagin's breakfast for Oliver: His hot rolls, coffee, and ham out-do the latter's

Sowerberry dinner of "broken bits of meat which had been untouched by the family dog," Then there is poor David C's. experience at Yarmouth where the boy is duped of his dinner; Dickens makes sure, however, to let the reader know young David had a good breakfast the next morning. The Pickwickians' are protein-wise--capons, tongue, veal, ham, pigeon-pie, lobsters, and salad. And the list goes on--brandies and water, gins and water, jorums of punch, glasses of ale, wine, assorted spirits, haunches and joints of beef, mutton (Clark, 24-9). There are culinary delicacies abounding, raising water to the reader's pallet, and, one cannot help thinking, thoughts to the author's nurturing attentions, possibly his self-referencing pallet. But, further, such orality is related to the narcissist's fear of fragmentation; by eating he is "stuffing into his mouth" whatever threatens him. It is another way the narcissist tries to control and protect the wholeness of the image. From that day back on the marshes when Pip first begins his descent into loss, this little boy is terrified by threats of violation to his self by that "other young man" who is going to gobble him up.

Killings, deaths, deathbeds, crypts, morticians's--mortuary mania also prevails in this author's work. He feeds young boys and kills fathers or the such. Nurturing and rebirthing images are continually set against those of death and dying. The river in David Copperfield, as it is in Great

Expectations is one such image and it reflects an aspect of these protagonists and their surrogates as Wemmick's "dead mouth": It has been made foul by the pollution of industry. To the larger, symbolic picture these comparisons suggest stultification, at best the indifference of a materialistic society toward her children. In the face of such "father absence," progeny must do their own engendering.

The sense of abandonment, isolation, and even solipsism that "father absence" promulgates, we are reminded, very much characterizes the narcissist, and this aspect is also readily in appearance in and around the Dickensian character. Textual language reiterates the lack of understanding between them as exemplified in the following conversation between Joe and Jaggers from Great Expectations:

"Which I meanersay...that if you come into my place bullbaiting and badgering, come out! Which I meanersay as sech if you're a man, come on! Which I meanersay that what I say, I meanersay and stand or fall by!"

(GE, 133)

And below, the solipsism--Joe reading when Pip is at Mr. Wopsle's great aunts school (Van Ghent, 57-8):

"Give me a good book, or a good newspaper, and sit me down afore a good fire, and I ask no better. Lord! when you do come to a J and an O, and says you, 'Here, at last, is a J-O, Joe,' how interesting reading is!"

(GE, 41)

In addition to the structural doubling techniques, the sense of separateness is further reinforced by a splitting off

or mirroring of the figure through its corresponding part. This is effected through the author's use of synecdoche, one of the two major divisions of metaphor where the part is given for the whole, with the result a collection of rend characters. Dickensian figures may be viewed literally separated as that little boy in the cemetery surrounded by seven gravestones (GE), as well as graphically. Jaggers's forefinger being bitten and then menacingly thrust at people and representing the law, Wemmick's post office mouth, and Magwitch's throat that clicks as if it were going to strike are some examples. The obtuseness, economically determined world Dickens believed shattered traditional human values is being reflected in these images: The reader is given the person and the "thing" it has become. Miss Havisham and her decayed wedding paraphernalia is associated with money (Pip thinks she is his benefactress) and, hence, is another manifestation of "deadness" so associated. As Magwitch had of Pip, in effigy the "Witch" and the Sham," she too has attempted to use a human soul, Estella, for her own use and not for it's own satisfaction. Magwitch wants to use Pip not in love but in arrogance, as vengeance on the world which slighted him. Miss Havisham, similarly, has created an Estella incapable of love, one designed to only break men's hearts as one broke hers. At the same time, she wants Estella to love her. The fragmented aspects of their characters is clearly evident--a split off of the good and the evil--humans

knowing and, hence, needing human love, and those thwarted because it was not forthwith. Miss Havisham wants the impossible, for in order to love another we must first be a whole and self-loving person: "Estella, Estella, cold and hard to Me!" Dickens's pictures are very clear: If you don't use your will to overcome what you hate, you will become that which you hate. Both these figures are reflections of that which they hate. Pip is an up and coming as Miss Havisham tells: He made his own "snares"; she never caused them.

Disembodied "faces" as well, as we have seen, are ever haunting Pip. While he and Joe observe the arrest of Magwitch and Compeyson on the marshes, Pip exchanges a look with his convict and states, "...if he had looked at me for an hour or for a day, I would not have remembered his face ever afterwards, as having been more attentive" (GE, 34). Pip returns the gaze years later when he "looked attentively at" Magwitch in his attempt to recognize the stranger who had entered his chamber. The two ugly casts of the hung convicts in Jaggers's office similarly effect Pip as they "rise and fall" with the fire place, as does the "head" of Molloy with her "flowing hair" and her face "disturbed by fiery air" (Dryden, 213). Medusa, ancient fetish and occultism--the "evil eye," the reader is continually pulled back to an earlier Dickens's experience, here that of his mesmerization stage again. The parade of faces, parts, doubles continues: Estella, as money, is Wopsle's "star"; as Magwitch, is

described as coming out of darkness into light. And she too is also described as "light" coming down the dark passage of Satis House as "like a star"; when she becomes a woman, she is constantly surrounded by the bright glitter of jewelry (Stange, 78). A parallel to Miss Havisham as she is to Pip, her eyes are detached and in the heavens above, cold, derisive, and mocking. As ghosts, they are flickering bits and pieces. Pip wants her eyes there--the gilt of the material world, and he wants to hold her in his arms. His hold is as untenanted as that which her benefactress tried to grasp. Wherever the reader looks, his eyes so fall upon such false stars, hollow phantoms, reflections surrounding and duplicating Pip.

Dickens saw the human soul reduced to the images occupying its "inner life," and his use of pathetic fallacy, that projection of human impulses and feelings upon the nonhuman such as upon beds, houses, or hats, no less further presses the reflection onto the written page. As Miss Havisham's cake ghosted the necrosis in the human agent, the river in the final scenes ghosts the demonic, acting in the occult--"discolored copper, rotten wood, honeycombed stone, a green dank deposit"--it drowns people as if by intent, changes all it touches. People are reduced to phantom puppets in effigy or dolls stuck with pins--homopathic magic, as Pip and Estella to Ms. Havisham's "Play" (Van Ghent, 63-5). Mesmerized, extracted, and held up for scrutiny by

extension are the demons of the human race, the ghosts of human souls reduced to things--the author's vision of his day. Soon the strange, disjointed phantasmagoria overtakes the scene. Jaggers's almost comic description even recalls the devil:

He was a burly man of an exceedingly dark completion, with an exceedingly large head...

(GE, 128)

And the reader, together with Pip, is continually led to see these ghostly reflections: Upon his return to Miss Havisham and Satis House, Pip imagines that he sees a figure hanging by the neck from a wooden beam,

I fancied that I saw Miss Havisham hanging by the beam. So strong was the impression that I stood under the beam shuddering from head to foot...

(GE, 373)

J. Hillis Miller affirms of Dickens's work that a sort of supra-reality exists where is caught,

fleeting glimpses at the horizon of the material world, or in the depths beneath the upper layers of consciousness. In those depths are the regions of dreams, or of that hallucinated vision of things and people...

(Miller, "The Search for Identity," 101)

These hallucinated visions remain as do the repressive visions of Newgate Prison in the background, hovering about the text and reinforcing the picture of oppression. Pip remains linked in the "criminality" as the various guises and levels of society stay imprisoned in their selfishness. He is afraid, the reader is told as he exits the prison, that he

will carry the smell with him; he tries to beat the prison dust off his feet and exhale its air from his lungs (Stange, 80).

Pip tries desperately to get rid of these threats to his identity. In a sort of juxtapositioning within the author/character relationship, it is now Pip who tries to alter the picture by altering the narrative. The play of light and dark on Magwitch's face also functions in this capacity, i.e., "Go away, you are not part of the story." And this action is very much in line with a traumatic wound, narcissistic or otherwise; the sufferer frequently seeks to blot out the memory. Pip even attempts self-mutilation--his illness and self-flagellating moments--which may also be linked to the narcissistic effort at self-mastery. Freud develops this idea at length in Beyond the Pleasure Principle where the little boy of this case history, not all that removed from his "fort-da" grandson, attempts self-annihilation upon the loss of his mother; his little game of hide and seek, in and out of a "uterine-like" enclosure he constructs--I'm here, I'm gone--so interpreted (Dryden, 210). Both of these incidents may be seen as a return to the story of origin and an attempt to go back to that ideal, prelapsarian state. All these efforts fail, however, and Pip remains tainted ~~and~~ threatened with fragmentation in the various ways .

Ultimately, it is not until Dickens takes his character through a Kierkegaardian, self-emptying that Pip does become the hero of his life. Only when he becomes ashamed and selfless in his amends, responding once more as the natural man, instinctively, and not in the calculating manner of the world, (as, again, recalls Coleridge's *Mariner*) is his isolation broken, the phantom images vanquished. The process constitutes a stepping out of the circle of oneself in the love of another and a constant working and reworking, assessing and reassessing of one's relationships (J.H. Miller, "Discussions," 101). The classic country/city metaphor has been put to work here to suggest this return to innocence. When Pip is removed from the country and its associative instinctive natural action, going to live in the city with its associative manipulation and lack of charity, he loses himself. The move is symbolically associated with death as suggested through the earlier mentioned supporting imagery. It is only through ultimate humility, the yielding up of any hold on self, that Pip comes to know love--the source of all creation, and only then does his "Another" emerge.

It is here that the figure of Joe Gargery most comes into play. He is for Pip the "ideal imago," linked to this image in his identity with the country, in the play on his name which technique Dickens loved to use (his so called "tags"), and in his action. As has been pointed out, Joe loves totally and without condition. Furthermore, within the metaphoric

structure of the plot's reflected images, Joe is also identified as being a part of Pip, the unsoiled part. They are linked through Joe's blacksmith fire and its correspondent creative association as well as also in homoerotic merging. This may first be observed with Pip's seeing Joe's strong and potentially destructive physicalness muted by a womanliness, the penetration suggested in the touch (Dryden, 224):

Joe laid his hand upon my shoulder with the touch of a woman. I have often thought of him since, like the steam-hammer, that can crush a man or pat an egg-shell, in his combination of strength and gentleness

O dear good Joe, whom I was so ready to leave and so unthoughtful to, I see you again, with your muscular blacksmith's arm before your eyes and your broad chest heaving, and your voice dying away. O dear faithful Joe, I feel the loving tremble of your hand upon my arm, as solemnly this day as if it had been the rustle of an angel's wing!

(GE, 132)

It is in their powerful physicalness that all of the engendering surrogates are linked to each other as well as to Pip. The reader retains each of these figures through an image of their huge and powerful hands, very much as a small boy, as Pip sees them. Jaggers's "large" hand, Orlick's on Pip's shoulder, Magwitch's at his throat, Joe's on the anvil, his hand the strongest remaining image as blacksmith--shaper, molder, forger. As each hand takes hold, so Pip becomes. It has further been pointed out that this image of Joe is a purging or "cleaning" image. As the "hand" can be punishing, it can be supporting, protecting, and comforting--renewing.

As Pip in his illness puts his head on Joe's shoulder he is brought back to childhood, indeed, to the infant, the gesture one of complete dependence and selflessness where the parent has complete mastery over the child. In this merging vision of the surrogates, there is a merging of their aspects in Pip but with the mature realization that pain and joy exist side by side in an harmonious balance (Dryden 224-6), and that a fixed Edenity is not possible just as Narcissus's ideal self-perception is not possible.

Ultimately back to Joe and love, Pip had been on the journey of trial and error toward manhood. Joe Gargery as Biddy from the same novel or Miss Dorrit (Little Dorrit) and so many other of his characters are Love's reflections and represent for Dickens the "ideal imago." Pip could only love Estella when he undertook to love Magwitch in the Christian sense of charity and compassion, and in his return to Joe in the Christian sense of true humility through suffering. And only then does he emerge a self-lover, gently subsuming the ghosts of guilt and incrimination in the process. In this, Pip/Dickens cuts the heroic figure in an identity with the heroes of old.

With the fall of religion as it had been known for thousands of years, this author, as were Eliot, Lawrence, and so many others later to do, strove in his work to keep their embodiment alive. If heretofore the saints were a myth, certainly what they represented was not. Accordingly, Dickens

strove through his fiction to keep charity, love, and brotherhood alive and to keep down the "dust piles" of materialism, this spirit poetically compressed particularly in Great Expectations. However, the dichotomy--man's natural concupiscence--is ever threatening, to Pip as to everyone. This protagonist has created "Another" and better self, but the world was his incubator; he could not have seen the good if it were not for the evil. Scrooge similarly, could not have been able to give away those geese, had he not been a successful man of the world first; John Harmon (Our Mutual Friend) is a rich man as the text closes, as is David (Copperfield).

As the true protestant that Dickens was, the nature of Pip's guilt is not seen as inherent sinfulness but hypocrisy, and, in this way, Pip is redeemable. Yet, no "Another" ever really emerges for Pip either, that is in a "final sense." Even in this Dickens's greatest treatment of romantic, transcendent love, the ghosts, the guilt, remains lurking. Though subsumed into Pip, they are ever ready to pounce back into control with any lapse of the will. To exist in the world and not be touched by it is an idealistic dream. And not even in the imaginary world of fiction does the ideal image gain permanent anchor. Turned upside down by Magwitch that day in the field, Pip's vision has been righted again through the forging power of suffering, but with the ever constant vigil that goodness and beauty reside with the dark

and ugly. Only in the constant testing and retesting of self in relation to the world does the self precariously become integrated. As reflections on water, it is a constantly wavering view as the final lines of the text reaffirm. In a similar analogy, J. Hillis Miller refers to William Faulkner's Quentin Compson who is also carrying around a ton of guilt. Quentin wants to achieve an Edenic fixity with dead sister, Caddy; and he also attempts to remove himself from the world through a symbolic return to the womb (drowning) in order to do so. But, likewise, he cannot remove parts of the narrative; he can't escape his imperfections. In the very similar Coleridgean Neoplatonism (see above "Frost at Midnight,"), an image/reflection cannot exist outside of self, but is only an extension of self, frittering to and fro as ripples on water: There is no Pip with Charles Dickens, and there is no Charles Dickens without the conflicting manifestations of his personality. Thus the reader is left with the precarious vision of Pip in his final form of love for Estella where he has come to terms with that love and his untenuous relationship with society. He is left to catch that glimmer of Pip and Estella together as burned down and scourged metaphorically as is Satis House: There can never be enough vigilant introspection and renewal. And so, with a rising sun, light, or a new day reflecting the circular pattern of return to that pristine state and unity, the reader's view similarly opens upon, "A cold silvery mist"

which had "veiled the afternoon." But soon it begins to clear, it yields a new house, a newly emerging, but a quite frail and irresolute "another" reflection of Pip and Estella.

Pip is speaking as the moon begins to rise further:

The freshness of her beauty was indeed gone, but its indescribable majesty and its indescribable charm remained. Those attractions in it I had seen before; what I had never seen before was the saddened, softened light of the once proud eyes; what I had never felt before was the friendly touch of the once insensible hand.

And Estella's response,

But you said to me ... God bless you, God forgive you! And if you could say that to me then, you will not hesitate to say that to me now--now, when suffering has been stronger than all other teaching, and has taught me to understand what your heart used to be. I have been bent and broken, but--I hope--into a better shape.

(GE, 450)

The future is left nebulous, the reflection wavering.

Section 111

Emily Brontë: Another Realm

In psychoanalysis, narcissism exhibits the characteristics found in the study of all perversions, and Freud associates a myriad of mental disorders with the condition: sadism, masochism, megalomania, paranoia, persecutoria, hysteria, and homosexuality. The narcissistic individual is characterized by libidinal withdrawal; and accordingly, sleep and dreaming are both referred to narcissism. Developed to its full extent, this perverse form of self-loving represents the final failure of psychoanalytic therapy, for the truly narcissistic individual is considered incurable and beyond the reach of the psychoanalyst.

(Seibers, 127)

Emily Brontë was a contemporary of Charles Dickens although she did not live as long into the century as he did. And if it can't be said that her Wuthering Heights written almost twenty years earlier in 1847 prefigured his Great Expectations of 1860/61, it certainly can be said these two works parallel each other. They were both, as was Austen in her way, in contention with the materialistic world. And while it can be said of Austen that she manifest certain complicity with nineteenth century veneers and of Dickens that he struggled with the conflicts so derived, tracing their path in the tangible world of the here and now, it most certainly can be said of Brontë that she delved right into the very soul of the matter, into the world of the mystical, not entirely abjuring Mammon but yet concerned with emotional and spiritual denial and deprivation. Hers is a raw portrait of a world

self-estranged and holding up one image for emulation, the other for denigration. Her portrayal recalls Ingres' smoothly modeled marbles, the pumiced edges of human passion honed to a certain uniform, "even keyed" banality. It is a portrait of a world suffocating aspects of itself and of those of its progeny who do not conform to particularly determined social models of the ideal. It is a narcissistic microcosm of a world that contains two realms of existence, the one representative of the "acceptable norm" and the other existing on a spiritual, mystical realm that the "normal," the ordinary, refuse to recognize. Brontë's spiritual world is fired by passionate intensity wherein lies the creative mysteries, the deeper beauties, the ecstatic, and where few are privy. Their representatives, Catherine and Heathcliff, are the embodiments of natural principles in the universe, of natural, primitive passion in the human, hence the magnitude of their emotional intensity and the source of their dynamic potential. Though they are often associated in various ways in the text with the "supernatural," these forces are not outside the earth, merely outside the comprehension of the establishment. And though they exist within and as part of the world entire, their constant coming into opposition with the demands of the social image leads to their eventual thwarting and representation as merely forces of destruction. Brontë, above all, is giving you the inside view of this process.

Her passionate soul embraced a mystical romanticism wherein reigned another realm of existence. From her earliest works onward one can see this spiritual intensity which almost reaches orgasmic heights as it espouses the natural world (Wilson, 235). She writes of the experience,

'But first a hush of peace, a soundless calm
descends;
The struggle of distress and fierce impatience
ends;
Mute music soothes my breast--unuttered
harmony
That I could never dream till earth was
lost to me.'

Then dawns the Invisible, the unseen its truth
reveals...

(Emily Brontë, Gondol Poems, 21)

And in the next stanza she writes,

'Oh dreadful is the check--intense the agony
When the ear begins to hear and the eye begins
to see;
When the pulse begins to throb, the brain
to think again,
The soul to feel the flesh and the flesh to
feel the chain!'

(GP, 21)

The "flesh," the material, encumbers, "chains" the spirit! She echoes Blake and Wordsworth even while there is no evidence that she ever read the former, and, as no other, prefigures Lawrence; her mature Wuthering Heights presents Catherine and Heathcliff, nature's unbridled principles, as roamers of the countryside half primitive--"savage, and hardy, and free." From the onset the reader is made to see that they

are apart from the "normal" sphere; neither do they understand it, or it them. They don't know how to act, dress, speak, "feel" in the "acceptable" manner. They are obscured to their own sphere out, on, and in an identity with the wild and beautiful moors of the English countryside. The critic Philippa Tristram argues that certain lapses in mature time surrounding the tale's enfolding is the result of this pair's failure to reach maturity, of their unwillingness/fear to go from the world of innocence to experience (Tristram, 184-7). While such a Blakean-like reading may be applied here and there in the text, this is not the case "here." The passion that Brontë insists upon goes far beyond childhood irascibility: Heathcliff doesn't know or understand envy or petulance as he looks through the window that fateful day the two stumble onto Thrushcross Grange. His only concern was for Cathy, her well being, and that she did want to be there. When he sees this is so, he leaves. Cathy, as he does also, laughs as their peeking through the window reveals one of the inhabitants, Isabella Linton, crying over some triteness, an action they rightly perceive as shallow and peevish. Thrushcross Grange-- house metaphor for "gentry," for Victorian institutions, for forces alien to their nature-- represents the "ideal" and the escalating force to their ultimate destruction. The author suggests, however, that the actual beginning to this process takes place in the earlier years-- "...trailing clouds of glory...the prison house closing

in..."--at Wuthering Heights, a house quite removed from Thrushcross, a haunted, harsh, brutal place as the name suggests where nature storms angrily, and where Cathy and Heathcliff were reared. The house as the Earnshaw clan--originally people close to nature--farmers, goes back to the 1500s I am told by the date on the threshold and suggests the erosion of time. As the story opens two figures are encountered who have been in one way or another associated with it and who have lost touch with nature and its associated deeper, inner life; they occupy the realm of what the author establishes as the "normal," those totally devoid of inner vision or passionate feeling. They are servant Nelly Deane who resides there and the even more obtusely depicted visitor to the area, Lockwood, a chance passerby. He is given the role of principal narrator though relating through Nelly who is, in turn, relating the events of eighteen or so prior years, the period from approximately 1757 to 1803. In this narrative structure alone the author could not be more emphatic in stressing this pair's distancing comprehension. With the original participants in the drama now deceased save their descendants young Cathy Linton and young Hareton Earnshaw, the reader must discern from these narrators' accounts the actual truth to the events being described. While on the one hand they are cleverly delineated as quite "normal," as a mean for the everyday person, the reader is quickly led to realize that he cannot accept their view of

things. Lockwood is cast copiously in the immediate "now." He does not understand "spiritual," or "mystical" or "supernatural," referring to the pathetic ghost of Cathy Earnshaw as a "fiend" and sadistically freeing himself from her grasp by rubbing her quite real, "icy cold" hand on the broken pane of glass. Though as the tale progresses he is allowed some mellowing from the sentimental prig his creator initially had in mind for him, for the most part he remains the "outsider" looking in; he does not understand the world of passionate emotions. He is a "sides taker," an educated diarist from the city and resistor to the rustic. If he does recognize certain values, the tone of his comment is flippantly urban (Tristram, 185):

"They do live more in earnest, more in themselves, and less in the surface change, and frivolous external things. I could fancy a love for life here almost possible; and I was a fixed unbeliever in any love of a year's standing."

(WH, Ch. 7, 52).

While critics do disagree as to his misanthropy, they do not dispute this emotional dullness. His language is suggestive of deadness; at best it postulates a degenerative reality--phrases like "shameless boys," referring to the cupids carved above the door of the Heights; or his description of the woman with whom he flirted at the seaside as a "real goddess"; or his talk of his "susceptible heart" (Ch. 1, 3); or of going "to devastate the moors." Such language is artificial and used to cushion emotional reality;

it can only express ready-made stereotypical feelings" (Smith, 10-11). He has come to the Heights, we are told initially, to "escape" from the pangs of a broken romance in itself a cliché; he is incapable of knowing or embracing the real emotional pain of such an experience. He is put immediately out of league with Heathcliff's clear and passionate suffering as, for example, that voiced by the latter after Hindley has flogged him (Smith, 13):

"I'm trying to settle how I shall pay Hindley back. I don't care how long I wait. If I can only do it, at last [...] while I'm thinking of that, I don't feel pain."

(Ch. 7, 51)

The comparison is sharply brought home in observing Heathcliff's "raid on the inarticulate," his ineffable effort to express his feelings toward Cathy as against Lockwood's serious analysis of what seems to him extremes of love. The latter's frigid coldness could not be more apparent as he relegates the feelings to food (Smith, 14):

"One state resembles setting a hungry man down to a single dish on which he may concentrate his entire appetite, and do it justice; the other, introducing him to a table laid out by French cooks."

(Ch. 7, 52)

T.E. Apter perceptively points out the author's real anger at Lockwood not merely because he is shallow but because he is shallow and considers himself to be deep. He, Apter affirms, "makes the mistake that many would-be Romantic artists make; he supposes suffering on passion's account to be

a good excuse for poignant ornamentation....In Lockwood's case the fear of emotion causes him to believe he is an emotional person." Ultimately, the reader sees the comparison, "...that however horrendous Heathcliff's soul may be, it is more significant than Lockwood's soul," and that the example "...underlies a Romantic pride in the strength of emotion, be the strength good or ill" (Apter, 207). As such representative principles, Cathy and Heathcliff are cast amorally, as manifestations of passion made incarnate.

Nelly's density is likewise depicted and focused over the same encounter: While recounting to Lockwood that Cathy could not eat out of sympathy for Heathcliff, she then "vacantly" interrupts her telling as follows, the insensitivity never phasing her (Smith, 13):

I'm annoyed how I should dream of chattering
on...and your gruel cold.

(Ch.7, 51)

While Brontë takes great pains to represent these figures as shallow, rather self-abdicating facades for people, she cleverly avoids making them, Nelly particularly, too removed from the ordinary, as a witch or villain, for example, thereby defeating her purpose. As very typical then, Nelly is seen as somewhat "motherly" (Smith, 24). After the senior Earnshaw dies and Hindley is left in charge, she is credited with uttering of Catherine and Heathcliff,

... many a time I've cried to myself to watch
them growing more reckless daily, and I not
daring to speak a syllable for fear of losing

the small power I still retained over the unfriended creatures.

(WH, Ch. VI, 38)

In attempting to establish her as within the "mean," Bronte further depicts her as neither saint nor sinner through the figure of old Joseph who always reminds her of her nether world destiny. Not given to extremes in temperament or tolerance for it around her, she doesn't even want Heathcliff to be unique but a "normally" bad man (Mathison, 343). To Isabella's reference to Heathcliff, "Would that he could be blotted out of creation, and out of my memory!" she replies, "Hush, hush! He's a human being...Be more charitable; there are worse men than he is yet!" (WH, 147). Her density is further compounded with her always wanting to keep the peace at any cost--when Heathcliff is first discovered missing, she is shown as being disturbed only in that the household routine is being upset. Always concerned with "appearing" good natured and tolerant, she is a bit smothered in pretentious justification.

It is within this characterized "normalcy" that the flaws in her logic, her limitations, are steadily made apparent. Robust and hardy, in excellent physical condition, for example, she always makes judgements and interpretations on this basis manifesting indifference to those less blessed. Accordingly, the reader is quickly moved to reject her view and that of the physically healthy world so associated, and to sympathize with, as well as see more clearly those occupying

the more sensitive and intense realm, as Cathy and Heathcliff experience life.

Her lack of compassion for the character Hindley's (Earnshaw) consumptive wife at the onset of the story and later for the frail son of Isabella (Catherine's brother and sister-in-law respectively) further reiterates her alienation from the world of sensitive feeling. Below she is recounting to Lockwood her response to the wife who has expressed a fear of dying:

I imagined her as little likely to die as myself. She was rather thin, but young, and fresh complexioned, and her eyes sparkled as bright as diamonds. I did remark, to be sure, that mounting the stairs made her breathe very quick, that the least sudden noise set her all in a quiver, and that she coughed troublesomely sometimes: but I knew nothing of what these symptoms portended, and had no impulse to sympathize with her. We don't in general take to foreigners here, Mr. Lockwood, unless they take to us first.

(WH, Ch. VI, 37).

As this consumptive's need for sympathy evades Nelly, so her fallibility of judgement continues a little later on when the then still young Cathy (Earnshaw) becomes ill (Mathison, 337):

...Mr. Kenneth, as soon as he saw her, pronounced her dangerously ill; she had a fever.

He bled her, and he told me to let her live on whey, and water gruel; and take care she did not throw herself down stairs, or out of the window; and then he left....

Though I cannot say I made a gentle nurse, and Joseph and the master were no better; and though our patient was a wearisome and headstrong as a patient could be, she

weathered it through.

(Ch. 1X, 75)

And yet a little later when Cathy returns from Thrushcross Grange confused and telling Nelly she is going to marry its proprietor, Edgar Linton, even though she does not love him, Nelly's limitations are further manifest (Mathison, 347):

She paused and hid her face in the folds of my gown; but I jerked it forcibly away. I was out of patience with her folly!

(Ch. 1X, 70).

Unwittingly, however, it is Nelly who comes closest to assuring the existence of Cathy and Heathcliff's unseen world as well as the ordinary one. She always alludes to it though she does not understand it; one above Lockwood in this, she doesn't want to hear about Cathy's dream for she fears what it forebodes. In this regard, Nelly has been described by critic Anne Smith as the "double-bind" (Smith, 24), the easy co-existence of the material present, Christian world and that of another realm: Because she does not understand Heathcliff, for example, it is she who sets up the demonic picture of him when she questions where he came from (Smith, 24). We are reminded here of the human tendency to isolate and expel an individual by representing him as unnatural or supernatural (Siebers, 22). This tendency may also be traced back to Freud's comment to his wife (Martha Bernays) that we relegate to the "uncanny" someone who can't be explained in terms of oneself (Siebers, 137). Nelly also lays the ground for the

ghost with the comment on Cathy's serenity in death, with the comparison to young Catherine, and in her relating Heathcliff's funeral wishes (Smith, 25-6):

"No minister need come; nor need anything be said over me. I tell you, I have nearly attained my heaven; and that of others is altogether unvalued and uncovered by me."

(Ch 34, 283)

She, furthermore, establishes this other plane of existence beyond the surface one yet one that is as very much in this world when she acknowledges that Heathcliff's heaven is to share death with Catherine, to be with her again on and in this earth. In mind here is that fantastic image of him outside, as Cathy, inside, dies. He is soaked in dew. The blood from his pounding head is spilling against an old ash tree against which he is leaning and trickling to the ground; he is as fixed as a piece of timber so that a pair of ospreys can pass and repass building their nest without notice of him. A unity with Catherine in death as well as their earthly essence is beautifully being manifest here. Brontë prefigures the poetic self described by Herbert Marcuse, "who praises narcissism as a nonrepressive erotic attitude toward reality that seeks to be one with its environment but that accomplishes this goal only in death or deep sleep." (1) In addition, because this mystical or spiritualism is related by Nelly, i.e., from someone normal, its existence becomes even more concretized. The saintly servant, Joseph, also adds to the credibility when he says the Heights is left

"for the use of such ghosts as choose to inhabit it" (Ch. 34, 286), and that he sees them every rainy night when looking out from Heathcliff's window. They are equally at home and at ease "under t'Nab" where the shepherd boy and his sheep see them, and where an echo of Heathcliff is heard, "...you'll have a better chance of keeping me underground, when I get there...with my heart stopped and my cheek frozen against hers." (Ch. 29, 244). In other words, on the one hand they are acknowledging through this pair a level of existence characterized by an intensity of passion while at the same time refusing to recognize it as part of their realm, as part of what is normal.

Brontesque mysticism did embrace a belief in ghosts, in part the influence of sister Charlotte's ghost story telling friend, Ellen Nussey, and most likely in part from such associations as the eerie moors and her religious upbringing could foster. Also, her preoccupation with death presupposes a certain demonic ecstasy and level of passion to which she does remove her principles, Catherine and Heathcliff. To underscore this effect, the author has inundated her text with a slew of strange and supernatural references. So much was she in earnest to incorporate into her sphere of passionate intensity a mystic quality that a compiled list of these references ran to sixteen typed pages with an average of a dozen references per page (Wilson, 234). Brontë has been linked to such as Scott, Byron, Wordsworth as mentioned,

Southey, et.al. from this tradition as well as Poe in his absorption with death and corruption (Wilson, 234). She also attempts to link Heathcliff to this literary "demonism" via some association with the Byronic hero, with Milton's Satan, and/or, as Tristram suggests, with the "doppelgänger," the fairy-tale changeling or illegitimate son (Tristram, 194). But she charges her demon with such energy, such raw, animal dynamism, that his discharged force pervades the atmosphere of Wuthering Heights identified as a force well removed and beyond ordinary dimension. In what Augustine described as "the absence of the good," Brontë gives the reader the suggestion that without positive mirroring, spiritual dynamism becomes totally demonic.

There are other canonical views as to where Brontë is drawing from to effect such demonic passion. First, it is suggested that this passion arises from her tinting of the atmosphere surrounding Catherine and Heathcliff with particular language, Hindley calling Heathcliff "imp of Satan (WH, 33)," for example. Then, similar to Marcuse's view, she is described as working within the romantic tradition of including an involvement with nature so intense, so mystical that it contains a death wish or return to the "the mindless unity of nature to mend the separation from nature caused by society and sophistication"; the Catherine/Heathcliff relationship is a bond, critic Apt suggests further, that grows viciously single minded when thwarted...promoting

destructive and self-destructive tendencies (Apt, 206). It recalls the kind of megalomania which erupts, as Tobin Siebers saw, in the romantic movement when the libido is turned on self (Siebers 76). In addition, critic David Cecil aptly describes Bronte's mystical temperament in terms of seeing the world as divided into two principles, the animate and the inanimate, mental and physical. On the one hand they may be called the "principle of storm--of the harsh, the ruthless, the wild, the dynamic; and on the other the principle of calm--of the gentle, the merciful, the passive and the tame." They are not in opposition but in harmonious existence as different aspects of the single pervading spirit. Because of earthly interference, Cecil agrees, these forces change from positive to negative, the calm becomes "weakness not harmony," and the storm, not "fruitful vigor, but disturbance." When they are free from their fleshy bonds, they begin to flow freely again together in harmony as one principle (Cecil, 301). When Heathcliff digs up Catherine in her grave, ghoulish as it sounds to the uncomprehending, it is out of a craving to be joined with her as is her similarly rapping at the window in death, looking for Heathcliff--that icy hand through the broken pane which gives Lockwood so much trouble. And finally, it has been suggested by critic Goodridge that Bronte is working from an old Christian tradition with darkness and light imagery to augment intensity, that terrestrial matter was the sphere of the devil while the

soul which is angelic is imprisoned in the body and longs to escape from it, its earthly hell (Goodridge, 176).

While these are all very viable suggestions and within the established view, it has to be quite apparent, however, that they all contain an underlying similar pattern, that of unacceptance, followed by the emergence of destructive propensity, and an ultimate seeking of a unity again somewhere out of the realm of the normal world; it has to become apparent that this reductive scenario unbares as well the archetypal pattern of the narcissist. Genius as she was Bronte may be seen here, as she will be seen later in retrospect when the Darwin issue comes into play, picking up on psychological vibes which while existing from the beginning of time, were not to become part of a formal science until many years later.

Heathcliff out of the Heights has also been compared to the classical Freudian repression of the id and what D.H. Lawrence was to later call the snake in his poem by the same name. The snake represented for Lawrence a god coming out of the darkness, but irrational fear, education--the superego--inhibits its emergence and it is driven back into the darkness. He likens the happening to Christianity driving out the old fertility god, Pan, and calling him Lucifer and evil (Sagar, 150).

One also has to recall Hardy here several decades later, particularly his Tess. As Lockwood and Nelly unfold the tale,

it becomes clear that the last vestiges of that vital energy which perhaps went back to Stonehenge, as Hardy suggests, are finally yielding in favor of an "appearance" world without real substance. Among the perpetrators, among those forces of suppression, Brontë makes sure to let us know is Joseph, her representative of "normal" religion of the age. As the mystic without the mysticism, contemporary religion without its originating spirit, he is especially cast with a satirical eye as he manipulates the perfect--always brow-beating, pontificating others about their limitations, hiding behind the guise of dedication to goodness, but actually having no regard for the other's well being, only the projection of his "good" image. Joseph's dedication to the Heights, Nelly tells us (Visick, 369) by her referencing remark to Heathcliff, was based on "his vocation to be where he had plenty of wickedness to reprove" (Ch. Vlll, 55). The author knew her countryside well, and Joseph represents for her its joyless, hell-fire evangelicalism and the embodiment of the malign human spirit the Heights becomes. It is a representation of what one becomes when one's deepest and most spontaneous self is suppressed.

Old Earnshaw as well is also seen as intolerant of anything removed from that image of what is typical, normal behavior in his daughter (Leavis, 311-12). Nelly relates her father's attempts to improve her, or tame her to an approved pattern resulted only in:

...a naughty delight to provoke him: she was defying us with her bold, saucy look, and her ready words; turning Joseph's religious curses into ridicule, baiting me, and doing just what her father hated most'-- Mr. Earnshaw did not understand jokes from his children', Nelly notes, 'he had always been strict and grave with them.

(WH, 35)

After behaving as badly as possible all day, she sometimes came fondling to make it up at night. "Nay, Cathy" the old man would say, "I cannot love thee; go, say thy prayers, child, and ask God's pardon. I doubt they mother and I must rue that we ever reared thee!" That made her cry, at first; and then, being repulsed continually hardened her, and she laughed if I told her to say she was sorry for her faults, and beg to be forgiven.... It pleased the master rarely to see her gentle--saying "Why canst thou not always be a good lass, Cathy?" And she turned up her face to his, and laughed, and answered, "Why cannot you always be a good man, father?"

(WH, 35)

"Nay, I cannot love thee! Why can't you be good like..."--how can a child attain any deep feelings of regard and self-worth in such an insubstantial and trifling environment? There is no positive mirroring, no healthy narcissistic supply from "mother," analogously the "others." He, as they all, is equally out of touch with Cathy's as well as Heathcliff's uniqueness and natural goodness, that though they are "different," there is no justification for their identity with "bad". "...Tiger, tiger... Did not He who made the lamb make thee...."

It is interesting to note here the observation of Dr. James Masterson, a long established expert in the field of

narcissism, on the sociocultural swing toward this distortion on the American side of the Atlantic. He suggests that the sudden rise in this tendency began not in the sixties but in revolutionary days, as reaction against the authoritarian attitude of the British government over taxes, property rights, land use, and economic development. This authoritarianism continued to flourish in childbearing patterns, in schools, in the courts, in business, and in many social customs, particularly those governing relations between men and women and with minority groups (Masterson, Search, 105). He implies that backlash to authoritarianism went full circle, from a championing of the rights of the individual to the individual's complete absorption with himself. Masterson is referring to the period not far removed from the time of Brontë's writing, and one has to wonder if the British brought with them such as they had at home. To this end, while we can't know absolutely Brontë's intent, we do know she was born on the cusp of individualism's great thrust and that she rebelled against such authoritarian "whitewashing" in her lifetime as did the great romantics. Furthermore, growing up at the inception of the era's great social and cultural change which, as the century rounded, displaced so much of the simpler, close to earth people of the countryside to which she was a part may have triggered in her some rebellious foresight. The Victorian class consciousness of her day which prefigured this movement was already being seen by many as

"unnatural" gentility, and, again, one might wonder if Bronte is attempting to depict the process, i.e., might Wuthering Heights be a rudimentary and, perhaps, unaware exploration into the social evolution of narcissism.

In this regard, Emily, as her sister Anne who develops his portrait in The Tenant of Wildfeld Hall, was most sympathetic to their black-sheep brother Branwell who may be seen as a "victim" of this movement. He was the pride and hope of his family, but, for whatever cause, he was quickly driven to the consumption of opium and ruin. As one and a very possible prototype for Heathcliff, it is suggested, Brontë, together with sister Anne in Tenant, was drawing from something she knew well. Both sisters present "dark" protagonists, figures of great passion and sensitivity who, because they are so removed from, and unrecognized by the rest of the world are driven to destruction of self and others. The artist's fierce challenging of the Calvinist doctrine of the elect, arguing for compassion in the face of determinism, may also be coming into play in the writing of the novel. She may have been trying to counter the destructive possibilities inherent in the attempt to mold and shape what heretofore could truly be individuals (Leavis, 312).

A brave spirit as well as a consummate artist, she herself may be seen very much as one with the protagonists in her vituperative outbursts against this destruction of one's vital and creative uniqueness. She really was herself expert

on the subject of "outcast" and "isolation" having experienced it firsthand during her lifetime as it was also something that stayed with her long after her death. At the point that the Brontë siblings' inner, secluded world gave way she, as Branwell, was also "beaten down" by the "acceptable" social world. Her clothes were ridiculed as old fashioned, her demeanor cited as ungainly, her unsociability as relegated to "peculiar," and her art--Wuthering Heights--as an "odd ball" work, out of the "normally" romantic work. With the exception of George Lewes who recognized the mystic passion in her work (Sagar, 130-31), no one understood what she was trying to say on this subject. Her work was viewed in the least as ineffectual in its literary contribution but, more often, as wicked and revolting. Even her sister Charlotte felt that Emily's ideas were too "daring and original" for fiction and that she would be well advised to become an essayist (Sagar, 130).

Not only was she able to give a perceptive picture of that which was beyond "the normal" in society, but Emily also knew firsthand, drawing from herself as well those "inaccessible" regions of emotional intensity. While it has been suggested the Catherine/Heathcliff relationship may have some source in the author's very deep and compassionate involvement with dearly beloved brother Branwell (one reason, in fact, given for the lack of overt sexuality in the Catherine/Heathcliff relationship is the Branwell issue, i.e.,

that Brontë may have been seeking to palliate any incest association), this was only a small aspect of the total picture. Actually, the essence of emotional intensity may be seen arising out of this pair's unity coming from deep within Emily. There is about her the suggestion of a hermaphrodite figure which she may be refracting onto her figures as, it is well accepted, she is refracting onto the text her keen mathematical mind seen in the work's intricate architecture. While Emily manifests feminine stresses in her homemaking skills and in the care, i.e., nurture of her animals, she was physically lacking in femininity as say compared to Charlotte's diminutive figure, for example, as were other aspects of her character. M. Heger, her one time tutor and fruitless love of sister Charlotte, said of Emily she should have been a man because of her defiant eccentricities, and her philosophical argumentative skills. He saw her being able to assume male employments, but suggests her gifts in this regard were potentially dangerous because they stressed power (Davies, 47). This connection may be seen by extension in Heathcliff who, when separated from his "feminine" Cathy, becomes the great power in demonism. Emily, it has also been said, was "egotistical" as the narcissist and one very liking to "lord it over" her sister Charlotte (Davis, 47). And as her Catherine, it is said Emily was proud, detested pity even to the degree that until the very day she died she still got up every morning at seven, retired at ten, and doggedly

refused to let anyone "do for her." Heathcliff is similarly seen detesting pity and arrogantly enjoying "bullying" power in his dealings with the other characters, Hindley particularly. It would almost seem in her creation of this very self-referencing pair with their correspondent male/female aspects that, after creating two, Bronte then niggardly takes one back. Albeit, together they make one powerful explosion of pent-up frustration. The image is one of heretofore wholeness and self-unity which when divided spells destruction. It is an image within an image, that of a the world split against itself, as well as an image of self-division; it is a reiterated interior view of the narcissist split against himself.

The omission of overt sexual activity in the pair's relationship now further becomes clear since sex is an act of uniting; by its omission the author would seem to be suggesting that they are already one, self-reflectors of each other. There is much textual evidence about them to reinforce this. They slept in the same bed together as children for example--a uterine image, i.e., jointly conceived; then it is intimated that also as children they exchanged and interchanged clothes. Furthermore, if you will particularly recall, both Catherine and Heathcliff are portrayed without rivalry between them: Cathy, for example, is not "jealous" that Heathcliff is to marry Isabella, only anxious over his destructive designs which, I might add, she knows well;

Heathcliff is not "jealous" that Cathy has married Edgar, only that she has turned her back on that aspect of herself which encompasses him.

When Catherine utters that famous line, "I am Heathcliff," she is referring to that aspect of nature to which, in Brontë's reductive world view, these two embody and exclusively belong, and which renders them truly isolated from the others. There is no doubt of Catherine's total identity with Heathcliff--"...he's more myself than I am" (Ch.1X, 70); "...he is the eternal rocks beneath ...if all else perish..." As mirror images, they had kept each other supplied until Cathy abdicated to the Grange obscuring and impairing her real self. As a result, Heathcliff also loses his only supply of the self-reinforcement available to him and similarly becomes impaired, a force of destructive energy. He shouts to Nelly in overwhelming frustration when he sees Catherine ultimately dying from Edgar's emotional lack,

"How the devil could it be otherwise, in her frightful isolation? And that insipid, paltry creature attending to her from duty and humanity! From pity and charity. He might as well plant an oak in a flower-pot, and expect it to thrive, as imagine he can restore her to vigour in the soil of his shallow cares!"

(WH, 131)

A further comparison of Heathcliff's depth of feeling to that of Edgar's will give some insight into their great capacity to feel as well, perhaps, as to suggest the intensity of the pair's hatred when thwarted. Edgar had been trying to

keep the returned Heathcliff away from Catherine and the latter utters,

"...and there you see the distinction between our feelings. Had he been in my place, and I in his, though I hated him with a hatred that turned my life to gall, I never would have raised a hand against him. You may look incredulous, if you please! I never would have banished him from her society, as long as she desired his."

(Ch. 14, 127)

By reinforcing each other, or oneself, if I may be permitted, with positive feedback, particularly when it was lacking elsewhere, they had a chance to exist true to their own nature. The failure was in Catherine's betrayal, in essence the self-betrayal of the narcissist--"You did this to us," Heathcliff remonstrates, "and in breaking your heart, you broke mine too" (WH, 137). Cathy wanted to be accepted, to be part of Thrushcross Grange (Tristram, 195); she sought to be the image expected of her by the "normals". What she got was "frivolous external things"; she declares to Nelly, "They are small children, and fancy the world was made for their accommodation" (Ch. X, 83). She can't get what she needs nor can she give of the social graces expected of Edgar's wife nor of the intimacy as wife. The reader is overwhelmed with this process of their devastation.

Brontë presents a picture of the pummeling, of the rejection from the "supposed" acceptable realm, the institutions of class, religion, "propriety" all the way through and suggestive of this end, the issue under

consideration is something that still prevails to this day. Her characters are reflective of these attitudes/values--religious hypocrisy, callous insensitivity, class snobbery, frigidity--in their respective ways as exemplified:

Joseph: "...setting as many chapters as he pleased for Catherine to get by heart... thrashing Heathcliff till his arm arched,"

(WH, 38)

and

Hindley: "He shall have his share of my hand, if I catch him...."

(49)

and

Edgar Linton: Color cast as fair, blued eyed as against the dark Heathcliff is seen referencing the latter:

"What! the gipsy! the plough-boy,"

(80)

and

Isabella Linton's false passion revealed as she so quickly flees from Heathcliff,

And, when Heathcliff takes the degradation as he so often did and asks for help,

Heathcliff: "Nelly, make me decent, I'm going to be good."

Nelly: "'High time, Heathcliff,'" I said; "'you have grieved Catherine; she's sorry she ever came home, I dare say! It looks as if you envied her, because she is more thought of than you.'"

(Ch. X, 46)

Though the concept of narcissism did not prevail in her day in the way it is being characterized in ours, her exploration into environmental determinism pivots in the same

direction nevertheless. If one looks at the worldly process microscopically as in the Brontësque vision, the parallels are readily apparent, pivoting around mirror imaging and reinforcing patterns. Such social issues were very much in the air at the time of Bronte's writing even though they had not as yet coalesced into a formal science, and they very much present themselves in her work overall. First, among other strategical purposes, the text's intricate structure, the correlation of dates--births, deaths, marriages-- works to reinforce the sense of familial contingency. Then from the legal standpoint, the author was very much in tune with the latest of inheritance laws, these laws going through several changes during her short lifetime; and her knowledge manifests itself in the way Heathcliff manipulates and gets control of both Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights. That she was in touch with the question of heredity and free will is also evidenced through the young survivors Cathy and Hareton who show parental characteristics while modifications in outside attitudes keeps them from following in the paths of their parents.

But foremost, the role of environmental determinism in shaping who or what we become is given center stage. It is pointed out that Hareton is as much a second edition of Heathcliff as young Cathy is of her mother Catherine without blood connection, and that Heathcliff probably could have made him as "crooked" as himself if he had kept up the pressure

(Sagar, 154): "Let's see if one tree won't grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it," says Heathcliff as he gets the charge of young Hareton. "I've taught him to scorn everything extra-animal as silly and weak"

(Ch. XXI, 186). Heathcliff is refracting onto Hareton his own interior space, the final vision of the dying narcissist who knows he is dying without every really having lived as himself.

He denies Hareton education as his was denied and the consequence of this is that natural intelligence becomes ineffective. "Is he all he should be," young Cathy asks Nelly, "or is he simple, not right?" Nelly replies,

"Had you been brought up in his circumstances, would you be less rude? He was as quick and as intelligent a child as ever you were."

(Ch. XXIV, 212)

Hareton's illiteracy is seen as his most shameful degradation while the author suggests that his ultimate reclamation is effective (as psychologists Heinz Kohut and Alice Miller both affirmed) by loving reinforcement, a combination of affection and books through the agent of young Cathy (Sagar, 154-5). Her mother, we are told, hated books as the result of Joseph's abusing her with them. Catherine develops further, destructive and hating, the suggestion continues, because she does not receive such positive reinforcement from the "other" realm. Similarly, the proliferation continues with Linton, Heathcliff's natural son, who dies as the analogy goes of the

sown seed, i.e., because he is denied the human equivalents of space, soil, and sunshine, i.e., freedom and love (Sagar, 153), "... evidence of a wealthy soil that might yield luxuriant crops, under other and favorable circumstances" (Ch. XVlll, 167). Feeling worthless, unloved, unwanted, he yields up his soul in an escape, prefiguring ultimately both Catherine and Heathcliff and, perhaps Branwell in his way, and as most assuredly Anne has her Tenant protagonist do.

Though focusing on the spiritual, interior picture, Bronte makes as pointedly a direct link between the determined issues spewed from the "normal," the sphere of the materialistic as Dickens was to do later in Great Expectations. His Magwitch as we have seen has to go out into the world to "acquire" the wherewithal of "gentleman." But doesn't Heathcliff do the same? Cruelly ostracized from the life of Thrushcross Grange, he sets out to "acquire" a fortune, yes, and he brings back the rest of the world's goods as well--greed and meanness--as a cruel, hard landlord. He plots to secure the property of both Earnshaws and Lintons, and also to claim equality with them. (Leavis, 310). Denied acceptance, he returns reeking with all the characteristics of perversion (Sagar, 125). Sadistically he is seen hanging Isabella's puppy. Images of hanging cats underscores this as does those of dogs in every corner of the house gnarling, their teeth exposed as are Heathcliff's, described as fangs we are told, "The dog was throttled off, his huge, purple tongue

hanging half a foot out of his mouth, and his pendant lips streaming with bloody slaver" (Ch. VI, 41). Brontë dares such imagery to suggest the ghoul he has become. Then there is Heathcliff's warped inhibiting of baby birds from a supply of food and water. The resulting image for the eye of the reader and extending over the Heights in general is a nest of little skeletons. Cathy, as she is dying, recalls this experience and recognizes the part she could have played in changing this direction.

His "settling" with Hindley not withstanding, the description shows us the extent of his destruction. We are told he disarms him of his knife, "...slitting up the flesh as it passed on," and with Hindley fallen to the floor, "senseless with excessive pain... kicked and trampled on him, and dashed his head repeatedly against the flags...exerted preterhuman self-denial in abstaining from finishing him completely" (WH, 151). Wuthering, with the component of its description--storm, tumult, exposure--is one with Heathcliff, emergent as a brutal place of primitive intensity, deprivation, denial, narrowness, and a craving for warmth and health (Sagar, 133).

Ultimately, we hear Nelly as she approaches the self-starved and dying Heathcliff to make his peace with God to which he responds, "I've done no injustice, and I repent of nothing--I'm too happy...." (WH, 283).

He does not understand her when he is dying any more than

when he was that "sullen, patient child"; in a rebirthing process he is seen drawing back to an earlier state as he approaches that longed for death. A natural and healthy passion when dammed up from flowing its own way, the suggestion goes, runs the other. The dam is the seemingly innocuous but deadly world of the "ordinary." Neither Heathcliff nor Cathy are shown to have been given any choice but to refract back what was held up to them; they masochistically torture themselves as well as others: As Cathy's corruption gets underway, she is seen completely devoid of any pity. As an Estella-like figure debasing Pip, she looks contemptuously on herself as she says: "Marry Heathcliff! Why I'd no more think of marrying...It would degrade me to marry..." (WH, 68). It wouldn't do to marry a supposed "orphan" from Liverpool without lineage, without worldly credentials. (Legitimate son Hindley's beating of Heathcliff may also be seen here as a take off on Shakespeare's Lear).

There is that beautiful feathered pillow imagery at Cathy's dying which powerfully brings home her despair as she comes to realize the loss of her life. Many species' feathers, she observes, went into making the pillow, much cruelty too in the killing of so many beautiful natural creatures in order to make the pillow. As she plucks and tries to sort and make order of the feathers, she "reveals in this most poignant moment that the civilized world, priding

itself on its rationality, mildness and gentle behavior (Edgar reading in his library as she lay dying) depends on exploitation" (Davies, 100).

Catherine's perversion is made quite clear as well. Without the nurturing love, neither can she give it, and her relationship with both Edgar and Heathcliff becomes one of persecution-- hurting, dominating, controlling, making others suffer as she suffers:

"I wish I could hold you," she continued, bitterly, "till we were both dead! I shouldn't care what you suffered. I care nothing for your sufferings. Why shouldn't you suffer? I do! Will you forget me -- will you be happy when I am in the earth?..."

(WH, Ch. XV, 135)

... Her present countenance had a wild vindictiveness in its white cheek, and a bloodless lip, and scintillating eye; and she retained in her closed fingers a portion of the locks she had been grasping.

(Ch. XV, 135)

For Edgar who does love her in his gentle way, there is equally little tenderness or selflessness in the way of real love. She deliberately creates trouble between Heathcliff and Edgar as part of her need for violence and domination; consider the scene, for example, where she locks the three of them in and throws the key into the fire putting her husband at the mercy of the brutal Heathcliff, and further humiliating him with her insults, disloyalty, and indifference to what happens to him (Leavis, 316). And she and Heathcliff are

bent on self-destruction as well, neither abating in the torture of the other--"...and should a word of mine distress you hereafter, think I feel the same distress underground...Oh, you see...he would not relent a moment, to keep me out of the grave! That is how I am loved!" (Ch. XV, 136); and Heathcliff, "Why did you betray your own heart, Cathy?" (136).

Removed from the only environment where she could get reinforcing self supplies, i.e., going to live at the Grange, she became even more frustrated, thwarted, and destructive. All is fruitless about her even the child she bares as it too is a Linton (Davis, 101).

As her deterioration progresses, she manifests further and further libidinal withdrawal, isolation, and despair. She longs to be out of the "prison house," out of the hateful world--"Open the windows, I'm burning..."

"... the thing that irks me most is this shattered prison, after all. I'm tired, tired of being enclosed here. I'm wearying to escape into that glorious world, and to be always there; not seeing it dimly through tears, and yearning for it through the wall of an aching heart..."

(Ch. XV, 136-7)

Soon she is seen moving from the hysteria of the true narcissist facing death to that of a paranoid state. Cathy's violent emotion is apparent as she sees her reflection.

"Don't you see that face?" she enquired, "gazing earnestly at the mirror."
And say what I could, I was incapable of making her comprehend it to be her own; so I rose and covered it with a shawl.

"Its behind there still!" she pursued, anxiously. "And it stirred. Who is it? I hope it will not come out when you are gone! Oh! Nelly, the room is haunted! I'm afraid of being alone!"... "There's nobody here!" I insisted. "It was yourself, Mrs Linton: you knew it a while since."

"Myself!" she gasped, "and the clock is striking twelve! It's true, then! that's dreadful!"

(Ch. XI, 105)

Catherine and Heathcliff's "death-wishing" is also consistent with the desperate narcissist's frame of seeking a return to that water, uterine, or prelapsarian perfect world, to that stage when they were young and themselves. This may be seen as their regression to dream and fantasy, and reminiscences of childhood days as in Cathy's wish to be back out in the moors or Heathcliff's arrested life. From this view also, their selfishness becomes more understandable. Each draws deeper and deeper into his narrow prism, in no way in touch with transcendent love, as Masterson describes it, the only type that will pull the narcissist back out of himself.

A clinician might analyze it as thus: Heathcliff is denied recognition as a person because there is no material, i.e., profitable reason why he should be accepted--relationships, marriage, these were important business institutions for the times. When his normal process of seeking of a father and a selfhood in and through the arms of Earnshaw was not realized, he sought in a typical narcissistic pattern his own "ideal imago" in and through Catherine. She

became his double, his mirror image with whom he yearned to merge. She kept him supplied; they grew up together in each other's reflection, they were one and the same, separated only in body--different and isolated only from the rest of the world. When she later fled to the moneyed arms of Edgar Linton, Heathcliff sought vengeance. And, when he found his striving there to have lead him nowhere, he sought death. Heathcliff does not internalize the father's superego, i.e., social scrutiny, and so is not able to form a healthy relationship with the mother, the world, Cathy (Engelberg 81-2). His anger is a self-hatred which in narcissistic identification is, as suggested above, transferred to the substitute self. In loss, while the object is lost the feeling is not and the sufferer moves into depression. The deep depression Heathcliff experiences is demonstrative of the deep depression which lies beneath a narcissistic personality disorder. It is colored by feelings of humiliation, outrage, anger and "coldness" or lack of relatedness; but, especially, depression centers around anger over the loss of wished for supplies (Masterson (Borderline, 30). The narcissistic personality disorder develops at the separation/individuation stage in the development of the psyche, and Heathcliff's trouble may be seen beginning when he must separate from Catherine or positive self-referencing, positive interaction with the world. The nineteenth century as it goes on is despairing, apathetic. Emily Brontë with her microscopic view

was quite the visionary.

Section IV

The Fallout

(The Instinct for Survival Gone Haywire)

When he looked to nineteenth century literature, Freud's associate Otto Rank had a rich legacy from which to draw in his studies of the double as another self. In it he would find endless characters struggling within themselves against fragmentation and toward the formation of a strong self. Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre and Villette are filled with mirror and somesuch doubling imagery as her protagonists struggle to find their own identity. Surrounding Charlotte Bronte's Lucy Snow (Villette) is a collection of textual symbols suggesting Lucy's search for the integration of self, for finding the father in herself: Among these symbols are the seeking of elusive shadows from her psyche; the "clothes" emphasis, i.e., through them one "puts on" an identity; and food deprivation motifs--starvation, a common nineteenth century trope for emotional lacking. Even the mention of St. Paul's dome always being in sight--though this may have certain religious connotation, falls in with the larger pattern of unity symbols, that is, the circle as the universal symbol for wholeness, would argue for a concern with inner peace and unity. In the absence of parental wished for supplies, Bronte's Jane Eyre is also searching to integrate the male stresses within herself as her frequent mirror gazing and shadow chasing will attest; she wished an "equal"

relationship with Rochester. As with Lucy Snow's elusive nun and mirror reflections, Jane's double makes her appearance from the recesses of a locked attic. Reference is made here to Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar's The Mad Woman in The Attic which deals in great depth with divided self themes during the century.

Jane Eyre not only struggles to control the male/female stresses, but she also echoes the isolation of the narcissist in seeing herself as a struggling woman trying to make a way for herself in a male dominated world. Like Dickens's Podsnaps or Fascination Fledgbys, the vacuity of the Brockelhursts and the Mrs. Reeds challenge her moral sensibilities.

George Eliot also echoes this isolation in her perfect narcissist, Tito Melema (Romola) where she explores this character's inchoate beginnings when his father (Baldassarre) literally (while travelling) as well as emotionally becomes lost to his son. Baldassarre had wanted a son just like himself and he got just that. Tito's vanity moves progressively toward the destruction of all that is good and beautiful in him--the love for wife and father, for example--until there is nothing left but an aggrandized self-illusion. Unable to accept himself as he actually is, he too becomes isolated from all the other characters in the text save for a very naive young girl who supports his illusion, who looks up to him.

More often, however, the figure of the double takes on the demonic, the doppelganger, as we saw with Emily Brontë's work. Foremost and earlier in this is Mary Shelley's Frankenstein monster. In her Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus (1818) she reflects her belief that the scientific concern to bridge the gap between the mind and nature was unnatural, that it dehumanized, produced monsters. Her Dr. Frankenstein defied current science and delved into the occult--he didn't need the foothold of established thought; he was going to do something completely on his own even, as it were, to the end of sacrificing the lives of all those who loved him. Shelley may be suggesting where such self-serving goes in her delineation of him as "monster," while the "supposed" monster he creates by pillaging the charnel house is delineated as more sensitive than he in his craving for human love and acceptance. This monster works as a foil to the doctor by only becoming hateful and vengeful when he is rejected by the world. Even Shelley's use of three narrators in her Frankenstein, each pulling the reader deeper into his particular world, enforces the notion of an environment of isolated consciousnesses. Her situation here also helps to differentiate again the distinction between mere "egoism" and the more serious "narcissism." Shelley's obvious message is that the world of material and scientific concerns has emptied out the human element. A look at George Eliot's comparative figure, her doctor, Tertius Lydgate (Middlemarch) brings the

point home: He too is schooled in the latest scientific knowledge, but he moves toward human considerations exemplified in his founding a much needed clinic for the poor or his interest in researching particular cures (his downfall, however, among other things is his inability to understand social constraints).

Critic Mary Poovey, in The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer, sees Shelley's work as a reflection of her life with Percy Bysshe Shelley. Mary blamed Shelley for the loss of her children, feeling his singular obsession with nature and the mind left him humanly unavailable to people. Her The Last Man follows similar thematic lines. Its character Adrian never takes a wife, seeks isolation, and is physically described at the end of the novel as also looking like a monster. The character of Lord Raymond again from this work, it has been suggested, is a satire on Lord Byron whom Shelley felt was simultaneously all wrapped up in self and an escapist from himself.

Shelley perceptively suggests the devastation of the human when the projection of the ego takes full rein, and this obsession which began to take hold at the cusp of the era can be seen at its end to have proliferated into major, conscienceless self-gratification. It is almost sixty years later, 1877, when George Meredith writes The Egoist, but there would seem to be no gap between his vision of mankind's egotistical development and that of Shelley's, or Emily

Brontë's written thirty years earlier, for he also saw some men reduced to their most primitive, brutish states.

Meredith's philosophy in this regard falls in line with Comtian thought, this philosopher being particularly influential during the 1870's. Comte introduced the term "social egoism" in his description of man's aggressive materialism which he believed returned him again to that primitive animal level from which he originally struggled to survive. In his own way, Meredith is well known for transposing onto his subjects this thought. He portrays mankind in a state of inhibited progress and, in fact, as returned to his raw, voracious, and animalistic state as he struggles to survive in social interaction.

Meredith suggests essentially that "egoism" has its roots in the senses and that man's frantic desire to maintain his individual senses is one of his most harmful instincts if it is not properly controlled by society. He argues through his work that man's instincts are continually keeping him from seeing how the evolution of the intellect leads him into society and survival (Hudson, 466). Terrified to move beyond the immediate gratification of his senses, he remains the child locked within himself. Called by another name, we have here yet again a manifestation of the narcissist's fear of fragmentation and his subsequent death wish. Though going by way of "eros" or seeming "life," the subject is actually "ducking out" on life's full experience, is not going forward,

taking on "come what may," but rather is surrounding himself in a safe cocoon of his own reflection. By making his subject in The Egoist Sir Willoughby Patterne, wealthy and with brains and ability, Meredith is suggesting how wasteful of the best in mankind is an overindulgence in the ego; for all of his wealth, refinements, endowments, Willoughby stands for the primitive past and not the present or the future (Hudson, 471). To insure his own self-preservation this Meredithian figure is seen attempting to gobble up, possess, and control the world that would seem to threaten him. He is a self-willed, spiritually empty narcissist in all his selfishness, limitedness, and self-aggrandizing behavior. Though we laugh at him, Sir Willoughby is equally a product and victim of society as is Catherine and Heathcliff, and the author is as serious as was Brontë in his attack. Willoughby is presented as the child of materialism and the evolving "I" culture. He represents Victorian England's social class, demeanor, and institutional values. In his social interaction he moves from the platform of entitlement, lacking natural sensitivity, and genuine response. Rather, he is unable to recognize the "otherness" in people and moves as artifice, programmed to wear and demand from others his "upper class trimmings"; he is depicted without moral deliberation in his action, is, as Dorothy Van Ghent describes him, "immalleable self-will, aspiring to a simplification of the universe on his own measure...a monster of the womb, imposing on drawing room and

lawn his unearned adulthood, his fetal vaporousness supported by name, wealth, and a leg...in his demand for osmotic nourishment" (Van Ghent, 187-8). He is as those he lords over a "thing" also, hence the tag, the "leg," as critic John Goode suggests, a reflection of his "...dancing to the tune...and leaping the obstacles provided by those over whom he has power" (Goode, 507).

Building himself from the world, he just seems to emerge upon it one day seemingly out of nowhere and before anyone realizes what has happened. The text describes it:

"When he was a child he one day mounted a chair, and there he stood in danger, would not let us touch him, because he was taller than we, and we were to gaze. Do you remember him,

Eleanor? 'I am the sun of the house!' It was inimitable!"

(The Egoist, 374)

Willoughby's identity is vested in "appearances"; he is "le roi sole," the very sun king, the image repeated on many occasions throughout the text. They are further frequently tied in with allusions to his suggested primitive sensuality. First, in combination with the original predatory male's passion to possess and the Victorian perception of women, the reader is presented with images of "voracious aesthetic gluttony" (Hill, 520). Willoughby's idea that women are "to be named innocent" reflects this possession. He resents and rejects Constantia Durham because she had had many suitors-- "She had been nibbled at, all but eaten up..." (Hill, 521).

When Clara Middleton is in consideration as a possible mate for Willoughby, he asks does she have wealth, position, beauty,

come to him out of cloistral purity...out of an egg-shell, somewhat more astonished at things than a chick...and seeing him with her sex's eyes first of all men.

(Egoist, 18)

It is also well known that Meredith read John Stuart Mill on the Victorian subjugation of women, and there are many images suggesting Clara as being imprisoned, entrapped, and Willoughby's house as a cage or a dungeon. These images are also often accompanied with mouth and devouring associations as, for example, when Clara begins to feel trapped, "fixed at the mouth of a mine," condemned to descend into it daily, "to be chilled in subterranean sunlessness...in those caverns of the complacent-talking man" (Chapter 10) (Hill, 522).

Willoughby may also be seen cocoon building when he surrounds himself with figures that act as satellites to refract back his self-perception of "wonderful." If you don't idolize him and/or your association with him, you're out as was the character Flitch who gave a brief try at employment elsewhere and then tried in vain to get back his old position with Willoughby. Adorning his most "grandiose" self-perception, Sir Willoughby will only be seen in the best of "admiring" company and often with the finest of food and wine to sustain the polished yet still primitive image. Dr.

Middleton is one such example of this company. A Victorian patriarch, he is shown sipping Willoughby's ninety or so year old port and smoking "his" best as well while he is about the business of "bartering" one of his possessions, his daughter.

Included in the self-aggrandizing satellites must be a wife, and the essence of the plot involves Willoughby's search to find a mate who must also continue to supply his "wonderful" image. Meredith's sensitivity to the plight of women is particularly seen here where he exposes upper class aspirations with regard to marriage. From the point of view of someone alien to the class, these values are on occasion displayed with bitter vituperation. The Egoist's thesis entire, in fact, it has been suggested, may be seen as a reiteration of Mill who writes of man's self-worship, disguised animalism, and overt selfishness (Hill, 523-4).

As we saw with Edgar Linton and Catherine, a desirable residence needs a desirable woman and men of this class tended to woo women connected to land, property, and or various monetary assets. A woman was a symbol of wealth or status, an ornament (Calder, 472-4). Willoughby looks on Clara as a "porcelain" vase, the image repeated on several occasions-- "the rogue in porcelain"--for example, as Mrs. Mountstuart Jenkinson, another Willoughby satellite, calls her. Clara is needed for narcissistic supply, to keep the status image. She is the "ideal imago"-- "... young, healthy, handsome...therefore fitted to be his wife...the mother of his

children...certainly they looked well side by side ...the female image of himself...she added...the softer lines wanting to his portrait before the world...He never seemed to undervalue himself in valuing her" (Egoist, 37).

Willoughby uses everyone as a flattering mirror to himself (Beer, 492) as he says to Clara. "...I read your heart as though you were beside me. And I know that I am coming to the one who reads mine!..." (Ch. 7, 53). When Clara defects to the side of freedom and individuality, Willoughby turns back to his faithful first love, Laetitia Dale, who initially looks at him as a planet of perfection. His greeting to her after a long absence is similar:

"Laetitia Dale!" he said. He panted. "Your name is sweet English music! And you are well?" The anxious question permitted him to read deeply in her eyes. He found the man he sought there, squeezed him passionately, and let her go...

(Egoist, 24)

It is the agile play of pronouns here which creates the ironic comedy as does the use of a single swift phrase. We are told, for example, that Willoughby thought Clara "essentially feminine, in other words, a parasite and a chalice" (Chapter 4) (Adams, 557). There is also the suggestion here that Willoughby has not yet learned to talk save also in stereotypical cliches. The isolated narcissist in him is readily apparent through the many passages of lapsed incoherence as the following:

He squeezed both her hands, threw the door wide open, and said, with countless blinkings: "In the laboratory we are uninterrupted. I was at a loss to guess where the most unpleasant effect on the senses came from. They are always 'guessing' through the nose. I mean, the remainder of breakfast here. Perhaps I satirized them too smartly--if you know the letters. When they are not 'calculating.' More offensive than debris of a midnight banquet. An American tour is instructive, though not so romantic. Not so romantic as Italy, I mean. Let us escape".

(Chapter 15, 123)

All of Meredith's characters in this work, in fact, refract a society of vacuity--idle rich, without depth or resource, without honest labor--what critic Robert Adams called "exoskeletal personalities"--people looking for a role without being particularly sure whether they have yet found an identity (Adams, 556). Along with Mountstuart, are Lady Busshe, and Lady Culmer who are equally empty, reflecting back to Willoughby the "cold and cavernous primitive void" which he is (Adams 555-6). They are all models for egoism in their particular fashion, Clara and Latitia not excepted. The entire environs of his world, it seems to be suggested, has become narcissistic.

Meredith is not saying, however, that egoism is blatantly evil. Quite Comtian in this, he too saw it as a necessary ingredient for primitive man's survival and as a continued ingredient for selfhood. As critic Goode suggests (506) Comte was neutral when it came to egoism and we hear in Meredith, "The Egoist is our fountain-head, primeval man ... a sign of

the indestructibility of the race" (Chapter 39, 324). Clara escapes from Willoughby as Latitia accepts him, both acting to the demands self-preservation. But Meredith was foremost for progress and the growth of civilization through evolution and vehemently against what he saw as the social Willoughbys who were using the forms of civilization to disguise uncontained animal voraciousness. They prevented figures like Clara from responding in their own full identity because, in the words of Gillian Beer, "...they present her with a model of what a lady should feel and be--a model which is static and anti-evolutionary" (Beer, 491). Willoughby's procreative instinct was seen as perverted to narrow appetite (the aesthetic gluttony) putting him in the Comtist perspective of a "social egoist" whose main motives are pride and vanity which the latter felt are the most difficult to modify because they are in perpetual antagonism with each other and because the most developed societies have a tendency to stimulate both (Goode, 507). Willoughby is so identified because of his competitive and property-based sensitivity.

Echoing Comte to some further degree, Meredith shows the mirror as a two-way reflector in that society reflects Willoughby and he, in turn, reflects it back: "Where I do not find myself--that I am essentially I--no applause can move me" (Chapter 31, 258). And it is because he so desperately needs that mirror he is willing to reveal himself to both Clara and Latitisha (Good, 510): "But try to enter my mind; think with

me, feel with me" (Chapter 6, 44). We are given that wonderful image of the octopus sucking others in by an osmosis as the Willoughbys of the world try to absorb the world. In technical words, they pull their determined ideal, "the object-cathexis," into their selves. Because there is no transcendence out of self through love, the end result of this enclosure, of course, is death, Narcissus pulling further and further back toward the water.

Dorothy Van Ghent argues in this regard that the entire text of The Egoist reflects this sense of enclosure. Her view seems in direct contrast to the work of John Goode who sees Willoughby's major characteristic as reflecting the very essence of the social structure. She argues that Willoughby's monstrosity is particularly terrifying because he is not overtly "connected," i.e., within the environs of the text, i.e., the reader seemingly cannot connect to him as he can to a more realistically drawn egoist such as Jane Austen's Mr. Collins who identifies "with (other monsters with) common economic causes." Van Ghent feels, consequently, that the Willoughbys are even more dangerous to the environment in their subtle pervasiveness; the comparison is one "...graded from grotesque obviousness to inconspicuous subtlety." He is "... truly dangerous because" he is "unconsciously environing" (Van Ghent, 190). Van Ghent and Goode's views can be reconciled, however, with the phrase, "within the environs of the text." The fact that there is no direct aesthetic

corroboration with Willoughby and the reader works for the comic mode, to keep him a figure apart from the seeming "norm" and so one to "safely" be laughed at. Yet, he is in all of us as the famous analogy goes through his spiritual relationship. Van Ghent's "enclosure" is meant not in the sense of textual "restriction" as it is meant more in the sense of "spreading out and enveloping" all, and is, thus, most insidious.

This textual style further reinforces Willoughby's appearance as an artifice, a "bibelot of literature" as Dorothy Van Ghent calls it, (Van Ghent, 191-2) or a conceit. He is the model for the "grandiose" figure for whom the world represents contempt; he is the top hat and cane figure who takes a big flop and we all laugh--at ourselves one time or another.

The breath of the world, the world's view of him, was partly his vital breath, his view of himself ... (He was) born to look down upon a tributary world, and to exult in being looked to. Do we wonder at his consternation in the prospect of that world's blowing foul upon him? Princes have their obligations to teach them they are mortal, and the brilliant heir of a tributary world is equally enchained by the homage it brings him...

(The Egoist, 312)

According to Meredith's theory of comedy, any deviation from what is the "norm" constitutes the comedy and society is always the "norm" in his work (Gillian Beer, 484). However, while the author goes to much pain to set Willoughby up as apart from the norm and hence an object of ridicule, he also

supplies enough concrete material to suggest otherwise. His name, it is well known, is derived from the willow pattern, i.e., Willoughby Patterne, a pattern which was very popular in Meredith's day, seen on dishes and fabric, and various artifices (Mayo, 453-60). Such association in the near view pulls Willoughby into the "commonness" and in the long view into the "artifice." This latter is especially true when we come to realize that the function of this pattern in the text (and analogously to Willoughby's lack of real substance) serves little other purpose than decoration (Adams, 556). And, finally, the text is filled with such images that both enhance the conceit and concretize states of mind as well as a prose that enhances the abnormal and eccentric growth conceit. The following, for example, reveals Willoughby's agonizing over the threatened defection of Clara (Van Ghent, 192):

The fact that she was a healthy young woman returned to the surface of his thoughts like the murdered body pitched into the river, which will not drown, and calls upon the elements of dissolution to float it.

(The Egoist, 192)

The connection to narcissism and "artifice" with regard to surface and appearance is particularly brought home in Oscar Wilde's Dorian Gray in his The Portrait of Dorian Gray of 1891. Meredith's exploration into the effects of unbridled ego through this figure is, perhaps, the century's greatest study in the evolution of narcissistic "monsters." In

Dorian's case the material commodity is eternal youth, but it comes out of the same father abandonment and subsequent loss of identity; the struggling ego becomes emptied of all other criteria for self-worth save its own sensual beauty.

The idea of "artifice," i.e., design, or contrivance, or artificiality, comes across through the textual conflict of illusion and reality. This view is derived first, among other ways, from the belief that Wilde's narcissistic temperament is reflected in the work, that figure of Dorian Gray is a Wildean self-reflection, that the author is working out and projecting onto the literary canvas his own interior struggle. Dorian himself would be Wilde's perception of what the world thought of him, the character of the painter Basil Hallward would be the ideal Wilde would have liked to have been, and Lord Henry Wotton would be the played out, rather hackney interpreted Mephistophelian figure, Wilde's id.

Parallels from Wilde's own life in regard to early relationships with both father and sister may have resulted in identity struggles for Wilde which were then translated into his writing. It is not out of the norm for paternal rejection to be turned into social rejection and/or to the turning thus to maternal identity--the female and its associative "youth" becoming the "ideal imago." Even though primary narcissism is corporeal as such, it is interwoven with secondary narcissism, the projection of one's ideal image in relations with others (ego ideals). Wilde always claimed to be speaking for the

young in his iconoclasm toward the old Victorians; his characters are all calculated toward juvenescence and are warned of the danger of listening to older people. A little embarrassed over his age as he took this position, Wilde even lied in court, making himself two years younger than he actually was. Critic Richard Ellmann says here that Wilde sounded a little like Falstaff shouting to Bardolph during the robbery, "They hate us youth" (Ellmann, 92).

In addition, Lacanian scholars also link homosexual origins to a defiance, to defy the desire of the father. Wilde's dilettantism and flagrant debauchery of his short-lived life style may be seen then as reproof against an ideal of the time, in this case that aging should occur gradually and with dignity and grace and through the imposition of a given social order. Wilde's open flouting of his homosexuality would likewise be such a defiance against the father/social order.

Coupled with this, however, is the writer's well known self-hatred for this life style, for what he felt it had done to his family. He was tormented by his conscience, his superego, in this regard. Hence, the emergence of the split--the image he appears to the world, that of Dorian Gray, and the image he would like to be, his ego ideal--Hallward. Hallward is portrayed as both ideal and virtuous, as well as homosexual, the former through his steadily "gad-fly" questioning of Dorian's actions and the latter through his

obvious feminization and infatuation with his portrait of Dorian. Hallward as the ego ideal also turns into "conscience" by extension as seen through his painting of aging Dorian. The latter hides this painting in a corner of the "attic," that age old metaphor for a corner of the mind, making further reference to the narcissist who hides away all that he does not want the world to see. The exchanged gaze between Dorian and his picture is the circularity of the look and the "evil eye" which reveals the truth, the monster he becomes. His punishment for not obeying the social order is death, the stabbing of the portrait and his subsequent collapse to the floor.

The youthful portrait we are given of Dorian also very much echoes Wilde's own life in that he too, as most of Wilde's characters in one way or another, is parentless and must forge his own identity. He is the child of a worthless father and a very beautiful mother who is rejected by her aristocratic family when she marries a penniless soldier. The mother's father contrives to end the marriage by arranging the soldier's death, and the daughter dies soon after she finds this out. She leaves behind a beautiful son who pines for his lost mother and loathes the grandfather who treats him badly. What was seen earlier with Jane Austen in a Freudian reading is similarly seen here with Lacan, i.e., that identity lies in repetition. Out of an initial rejection, the Dorian/Wilde figure may be seen in a repeated behavior pattern of aborting

the various social values. The tragic irony in this is, of course, that this identity has been imposed by the social order in the first place with the subject having little or no control whatsoever. To this order, Critic Richard Ellman argues, Wilde came to believe that the only duty we owe nature--reality or the world, is to reconstruct it (Ellmann, 94).

Wilde's portrait moves into a second narcissistic dimension as it explores the condition as an abstract and all-pervasive consciousness where reality is squeezed out, where no world exists save through the narcissist's perception, and where Dorian's presence steadily spreads out and across the entire text. For this effect Wilde uses condensing. He defines the textual environment within a limited urban locale and urban taste with Dorian's room, the idyllic garden, the character Lord Fermor's house in "a labyrinth of grinding streets and black grassless squares," Picadilly crowds and theaters; the character Sibyl's dressing room, a storeroom in the attic, innumerable dining-rooms, a secluded conservatory--all closely connected physically for the purpose of acting out a spiritual, inner drama rather than outright adventures (San Juan, 54).

Such a city setting offers the novelty and multiplicity of sensations that Dorian is seeking as well as offers a close-up, pivotal view of the steadily developing progression of the narcissistic consciousness, Dorian's movement from

sensual self-seeking, self-gratification toward the abjuring of all moral codes. This setting offers a stage-like atmosphere where life is seen reduced and solidified as in an art-work, further creating the illusionary movement away from reality. In Chapter XI, critic Epifanio San Juan suggests, an absolute stasis is effected with the massive catalogue of jewels, treasures, bric-a-brac of exotic wealth; with sentences weighted down by excessive syntax, decorative epithets, substantives, and phrasal units toward the end of lyrical condensation (San Juan, 55). This dense texture, San Juan continues (56) is further counterpointed by contrasted depictions such as Dorian's room or Basil's studio against the shabby home of the Vane family and the squalid slums of the London underworld; or Dorian's enraptured state over Sibyl's voice with its "wild passion of violins," set against the vulgarity of the "hideous Jew...smoking a vile cigar," who has "greasy ringlets, an enormous diamond blazed in the center of a soiled sheet" (DG, 73). The singular, aesthetic sensibility of Dorian's perceptions rings forth through such imagery, as does the emphasis on surface, decoration, and superficiality-- a world of gilded illusion.

The reduction of textual space further effects a sense of withdrawal on the part of Dorian into an intense singular self-awareness which pulls even closer attention to surface objects, contours, shapes and outlines of appearances, evoking even greater density of sensations, as well as paralleling his

impulses--"There was an exquisite poison in the air. I had a passion for sensations.... I felt this grey, monstrous London of ours...must have something in store for me (DG, 73)." Wilde uses a primitive stream-of-consciousness technique in some sections as in Dorian's ponderings and reveries, which capture the "unique apprehension of his inwardness and "the tone of things"" (San Juan, 56).

The author also exploits visual and aural sensations to establish the moral correlatives of the psyche and establish the irrational stratum of awareness as seen in the first two paragraphs of the novel:

The studio was filled with the rich odour of roses, and when the light summer wind stirred amidst the trees of the garden there came through the open door the heavy scent of the lilac, or the more delicate perfume of the pink flowering thorn.

From the corner of the divan of Persian saddlebags on which he was lying, smoking, as was his custom, innumerable cigarettes, Lord Henry Wotton could just catch the gleam of the honey-sweet and honey-colored blossoms of a laburnum, whose tremulous branches seemed hardly able to bear the burden of a beauty so flame-like as theirs; and now and then the fantastic shadows of birds in flight flitted across the long tussore-silk curtains that were stretched in front of the huge window, producing a kind of momentary Japanese effect, and making him think of those pallid jade-faced painters of Tokyo who, through the medium of an art that is necessarily immobile, seek to convey the sense of swiftness and motion. The sullen murmur of the bees shouldering their way through the long unown grass, or circling with monotonous insistence round the dusty gilt horns of the straggling woodbine, seemed to make the stillness more oppressive. The dim roar of London was like the bourdon note of a distant organ.

(DG, 23)

There is a synesthetic ordering here with the movement of scent and perfume coordinating distance and space, while visual and gustatory, and olfactory impressions coalesce (San Juan, 57-8). Such coordinating of space is most important thematically for Dorian wishes to transcend space and time toward eternal youth. As he moves through space his various states of mind enfold toward their final culmination and his death. Dorian's interior space is being explored as he becomes more and more entangled in the Lord Henry Wotton/Hallward conflict and reality is seen becoming more and more obscured. Through a psychological realistic approach the reader is simultaneously made privy to the sensations the character is experiencing; he is made privy to Dorian's psychic progression as Wotton leads him in the rationalizing of experience away from conscience and toward the thrills of satiating decadence. In this process Hallward works to reflect social conscience; any socially unacceptable desires this figure has are sublimated into his art thereby constantly countering Henry. For example, Wotton may be observed here leading Dorian away from Christian value and toward a Hedonism:

The aim of life is self-development. To realize one's nature perfectly--that is what each of us is here for....People have forgotten the highest of all duties, the duty one owes one's self.

(DG, 41)

Or,

The body sins once, and it is done with its sin, for action is a mode of purificationThe only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. . . .Resist it and your soul grows sick with longing. . .

(DG, 41)

Hallward, on the other hand asks,

Why is your friendship so fatal to young men? There was that wretched boy in the Guards who committed suicide. You were his great friend. There was Sir Henry Ashton, who had to leave England, with a tarnished name. You and he were inseparable. What about Adam Singleton, and his dreadful end? What about Lord Kent's only son, and his career? . . . What about the young Duke of Perth? What sort of life has he got now?

(DG, 41)

The sense of illusion/artifice, the most powerful of the text's narcissistic dispositioning, however, comes through in Wilde's role as social critic where he attacks the "singularity" of vision, you might say, where he suggests the consequences of singular, self-idolatry be it person or social order. He, as Meredith, takes strong issue with evolutionary thought though he moves towards its psychological query, becoming involved with the dialectic between the materialist and idealist schools of thought. He argues for the continued growth of humanism as well as hard core science, suggesting that the world embraces not only a Newton but a Shakespeare, not only a Kant but a Beethoven, that science tells only half the story and cannot explain human origin or humankind's place in the universe (Seagroatt, 749). Wilde believed that science needed a more imaginative and emotional component than the

methodology of the time allowed and that man must use all his faculties in the search for truth. As Heather Seagroatt, in quoting Philip Smith, suggests (2), there is allusion here to his belief that the early Greeks had,

... "mystic anticipations of nearly all great modern scientific truths; ... that man must use all his faculties in the search for truth; in this age we are so inductive that our facts are outstripping our knowledge--there is so much observation, experiment, analysis-- so few wide conceptions; we want more ideas and less facts..."

(Smith, Philip, "Protoplasmic Hierarchy...", 207)

The reductive materialism not only of Meredith late in the century, but of the earlier Mary Shelley as well is brought to mind through Wilde's belief that scientific methods can actually restrict the understanding of mental events. He challenged the "deep looking" and advocated a more sensuous model. The shallow people, he felt, were those who denied the mystery right in front of them. Like Walter Pater whose empiricism challenged any all reductive theory (Paterian empiricism sought to recapture the unique sensuous experience of the object of the moment that was otherwise lost in the grand theory or system for which it was evidence), Wilde believed the "new Hedonism which emerged was designed never to accept any theory or system that [involves] the sacrifice of any mode of experience" (Seagroatt, 752). Dorian, thus, must never arrest his mental development by accepting any doctrine or creed. As Wotton tells him,

Don't squander the gold of your days listening to the tedious, trying to improve the hopeless failure, or giving away your life to the ignorant, the common, and the vulgar. These are the sickly aims, the false ideals, of our age. Live! Live the wonderful life that is in you! Let nothing be lost upon you. Be always searching for new sensations. Be afraid of nothing a new Hedonism - that is what our century wants. You might be its symbol.

(DG, 46)

Wotton's sensual materialism--"Nothing can cure the soul but the senses..." (DG, 44) is contrasted against Basil Hallward's idealism with Dorian yielding to the aesthetic Hedonism and rejecting all creeds in the exploration of sensual beauty. Wilde is arguing for a harmony in the evolutionary process of the various human aspects of development. Relying solely on the aesthetic sensibility, what is known by the senses, is as problematic as relying on the mind, as relying solely on reason and logic. The sketch of the artist Alan Campbell within the text presages the pattern; he is the scientist prohibited from practicing his violin or piano; he is reflective of the century's scientific exclusionism thereby producing its own blindness. Dorian's steady rejection of spiritual, logical, and or moral codes for the singular world of the aesthetic leads to his blindness, to his self-illusion. He becomes vane, and proud, and incapable of any transcendent experience, of love; he feels nothing for the lives he comes to destroy for his singular pleasure. His initial desire for unchanging beauty becomes in the nineteen years or so that he is under Wotton's tutelage an amoral and

never satiating sensual self-seeking. When Sybil Vane loses her power as an artist, as a wielder of fantasy and makes true that old adage that love is not blind, when she reflects back to Dorian what is truly there, she loses him. No true narcissist can bear to see other than illusion; when Sibyl could no longer keep him supplied, she was no longer desired by him. Her death reflects the death of "object" or non-self love on the one hand, and on the other, in her role as mirror image to Dorian, she also reflects his, the narcissist's, inability to love himself as himself.

As social critic, however, Wilde's most important role was that of iconoclast. By extension, Dorian's portrait is meant to be a portrait of one aspect of the century. Wilde is attacking the unnaturalness of classical, idyllic art which he felt was as hypocritically denying to real life as was the period in which it was produced. As a close disciple of Pater, Wilde meant Sybil not as an individual but as an embodiment of a state of the soul and an entire movement in Victorian art (Nassaar, 113). She was the Victorians in their innocence; they lived a long time in the belief that they "had made it," that, even one up on their predecessors, theirs was "the best of all possible worlds"; they proceeded with blinders on until they were left on that "darkling plane." Sybil, in reflecting the earlier Victorians, was also meant to stand for their youthful, classical idealism--her "Greek head," and name taken from Greek mythology. Even the parts

she plays--that of spotless heroines--Juliet or Imogen or Rosalind--reflect this; she is the innocence and purity "peculiar to the infancy of the race or of an age" (Nassaar, 113).

Innocent, untouched by evil, she is also the symbol of art/illusion which energizes deceptive art since nothing can continue to exist unscathed by life. She, accordingly, had to die as does the art movement. Ellmann argues that Wilde believed art never expressed anything but itself, and that the aphorism about it holding the mirror to nature was mere obfuscation. If art be a mirror, we look into it to see--a mask. Art is no mirror; it is a "mist of words," "a veil" (Ellmann, 100). Dorian's unchanging facade is the veil, the mist, the illusion which only the product of the true artist can see, i.e., as reflected in Hallward's changing portrait of Dorian.

Ellmann suggests further that Wilde believed that the assertion of art that it can present the world by its creation of beauty actually reproaches the world, for it calls attention to its faults by its omission; Ellmann, 100). The final confrontation between Dorian and his portrait may even be a parody of the century's punishment, its horror. The long lasting residual effects of such rendering of life was to foster only more deeply the deceptive creed of surface values, of appearance and shallowness--Christopher Lasch's thesis on the cultural, narcissistic temperament.

The young nineteenth century had also looked to the Greek ideal--balance, order, control, symmetry. Greece was young yet to the nature of evil and the wiles and intricacies to the nature of the human psyche. The young nineteenth century refused to see it, and soon her emulation floundered as it had to under the weight of reality. The last decades of the Victorian era saw naturalism taking a firm hold. This naturalism incorporated an Hellenic decadence heretofore obscured, and it grew in momentum particularly around the time that John Ruskin's emotional breakdowns were becoming more and more frequent. With him out of the picture the school of aesthetic and moral art which he had founded would suffer further degeneration. Tennyson is also out of the picture at this time. As one of the initial champions of morality in aesthetics, seen in his "The Lady of Shalott" or "Ulysses," his final poetic works also signal the changing mood. The Arthurian romances involve a virtuous king destroyed by evil forces outside himself. "The Last Tournament," one of the grimmest and darkest of the Idylls, was published in 1872; the "The Passing of Arthur" had preceded it in 1869 (Nassaar, 116).

Tennyson's feistiness and long time pride in his physical stamina even to his latest years is greatly admired as was his spirit overall; he retained a faith in the divinity of the world and the immortality of the human spirit to the end (Martin, 555). Yet, these declining years were also plagued

with deep depression. The struggle against illness and fatigue, the death of his son Lionel (April 20th, 1886) as well as several long time friends, deep grief over the Irish question (Levi, 309), and bitterness toward Gladston and the way the latter was handling the country--all contributed to his depression. Besides having to deal with the younger poets who thought he had long since written his best, Tennyson even had to deal with Gladstone who came forward bringing the Queen's proposal that the poet retire. Though these two had always maintained a dignified relationship, their differences remained bitter and far apart (Martin, 568). Biographer Robert Martin draws attention to some lines from the poet's "Locksley Hall Sixty Years After" to support this view (Martin, 559):

Poor old voice of eighty crying after voices
that have fled!
All I loved are vanished voices, all my steps
are on the dead.

All the world is ghost to me, and as the
phantom disappears,
Forward far and far from here is all the hope
of eighty years.

(Tennyson, 1368, ll. 248-52)

The focus becomes even more singularly decadent through the influence of Walter Pater, particularly with his The Renaissance of 1873, which replaces classical, idyllic art for the sensual gratifications it champions. In this work, as Christopher Nasser suggests (Nassar, 113), the author writes that the Mona Lisa is the symbol of modern human nature, "of

what in the ways of a thousand years men had come to desire":

Hers is the head upon which all "the ends of the world are come," and the eyelids are a little weary. It is a beauty wrought out from within upon the flesh, the deposit, little cell by cell, of strange thoughts and fantastic reveries and exquisite passions. Set it for a moment beside one of those white Greek goddesses or beautiful women of antiquity, and how would they be troubled by this beauty, into which the soul with all its maladies has passed!...

(Pater, 98)

The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and modern thought has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life. Certainly Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea.

(Pater, 99)

As she is presented as the symbol of the modern era by Pater who had a great influence on Wilde, Sybil is so presented as the symbol of the old idea in her child-like innocence, play acting life. Her artistic imagination had transformed her corrupt environment into something pure and spotless, the tawdry theater where she works as well as Dorian who at this point was well under the corruption of Wotton. Likening him to Prince Charming, he tells Wotton,

"She said quite simply to me, 'You look like a prince. I must call you Prince Charming.'"

(DG, 115)

..."You don't understand her, Harry, She regarded me merely as a person in a play. She knows nothing of life."

(DG, 79)

When Sybil's world of art is shattered, her imagination ceases to recreate the outside world and render it pure and spotless. She becomes aware of the sordid side of life which she can't withstand and she dies--in naturalist literary style--not in glamour but alone, isolated, and in despair (Nassaar, 114-5).

As symbol of the era, Sybil particularly reflects the Pre-Raphaelite movement and its demise. Evolutionary theory which moved toward Zola's naturalism during the latter decades of the century could now be seen taking full reign even in this movement. The earlier Pre-Raphaelites, for whom Ruskin, though different, was also very much in accord, believed art, the spiritual, and the ethical were intertwined. They, among others such as Holman Hunt and John Everett Millais, original members of the Brotherhood, espoused "truth to nature" principles, the former particularly, even going to the shores of the Dead Sea, for example, to model as authentically as possible a "real goat tethered in woebegone thirst" for his painting, "The Scapegoat" (Nassaar, 124). Dante Gabriel Rossetti, while also true to nature, moved more toward authenticity in psychological moods or the analysis of states of the soul, with the beautiful/sensual linked to serving God. He presented the soul as essentially pure as compared to the decadents who saw it as evil and derived pleasure from it. A change begins to be seen, however, in his portrait of Lillith who manifests a tinge of evil and a hinting ever so slightly that the portrait is beautiful and desirable solely in its

sensuality. As Leonardo's Mona Lisa, her smile is as bewitching evil as it is enigmatic.

Lord Wotton who Satanizes Dorian by inverting Victorian values into him is also destroyed at the end. "By the way, Dorian," he said with a pause, "'what does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose--how does the quotation run?--his own soul'" (253). He had remained "sinless" hypocritically, by the transposition of his desires onto Dorian--his artistic creation. He, along with his wife who is named Victoria, is the Victorian world personified. Wilde says of her, "She was usually in love with somebody, and, as her passion was never returned, she had kept all her illusions. As Christopher Nassaar suggests (129), "she tried to look picturesque, but only succeeded in being untidy. Her name was Victoria, and she had a perfect mania for going to church" (DG, 70). The Picture of Dorian Gray is about the coming-of-age of Victorian art and attitudes. Wilde saw human nature in nineteenth-century England as rapidly plummeting from innocence into an awareness of the demon universe." Despite Wilde's seeming flagrant ignoring of social codes, this critic believed that the author was quite moral, particularly in this work, quoting him as stating "... that all excess, as well as all renunciation, brings its own punishment" (Nassaar, 130-1).

Wilde was quite perceptive to the uses of scandal and may be attempting to capitalize on his notoriety personally as

well as in his novel. Dorian's horror is meant to shock; it is his as well as the century's horror at what it has wrought. The despair at the end of the century, the "fin de siècle ennui," the boredom, the sense of emptiness is born out of a self-emptying by the means science or idyllic illusion. The romantic notion of self-realization had become by the end of the century the very instrument of self-demise: As the narcissist chasing his self-deceiving image, a part of the century also comes to the hysterical realization that it has naught but that "darkling plain" to show for its lifetime. Rounding with the awareness that all her strivings were unsatisfying to the deepest of human needs, she gives birth to the twentieth century.

The decade of World War I particularly brought into view the collapse of values prophetically perceived by many novelists of the nineteenth century, and Lawrence, as did Hardy and others, depicts the state of affairs through symbol and mythological elements to the end of suggesting a cure. Though I have been calling the condition narcissism, Lawrence called it modern man's failure to "be," i.e., he saw man living life according to set ego perceptions; i.e., according to the imposition onto his ego of what he "should be" so that he could no longer just "be."

Dorothy Van Ghent suggests that to understand Lawrence we need to go into the context of twentieth-century man's resignation to herd ideologies, herd recreations, and herd

rationalizations which render the individual impotent, and where males are looked on as commodity--Lawrence's belief--the disease of modern life, where human relationships are reduced to "anonymous economic properties or to military units or to ideological automatons" (Van Ghent, Forms, 247-59). Lawrence himself gives some labels to these ideologies or "commodities" we use to adorn an identity but that "lead to an empty nowhere, the rubbish-heap of all our dead feelings and waste illusions" (Lawrence, Posthumous Papers, 192). Among some of these fixities is the "played out stunt" of the "conquering hero" or the "supreme soul isolated and alone in the universe, facing the unknown in the eternity of death, ...pathetic boys who wrap themselves in the egoistic pathos of their suffering during the late war... self-pitying, played out specimens of the younger generation" (Lawrence, PP, 192). Of the woman he says she is like an idol, or a marionette, always forced to play one role or another: sweetheart, mistress, wife, mother (PP, 194). Both are egoists, shells of men and women who have "no more spontaneous feelings and can be made to suffer humanly no more" (Lawrence, PP, 200). Taking issue with one young man who, like many, misunderstand his message, Lawrence retorts,

A young man said to me the other day, rather sneeringly, "I'm afraid I can't believe in the regeneration of England by sex." I said to him: "I'm sure you can't." He was trying to inform me that he was above such trash as sex, and such commonplace as women. He was the usual vitally below par hollow, and egoistic young man, infinitely wrapped up in himself,

like a sort of mummy that will crumble if unwrapped.

(Lawrence, PP, 193)

When Lawrence writes about the importance of sex, he is not speaking solely of passion sex although phallic regeneration is a principal aspect of his message, but he is speaking of the natural rhythm in relationships between men and women especially but also between men and men and women and women with and without sexual passion. He felt that the rejuvenative flame of vitality for twentieth century man (and woman) is to be in touch again with those natural rhythms in human relationship which break man's isolation and make him whole again and in possession of his own soul. With the "I AM," "... he (i.e., man) becomes nothing" (Lawrence, PP, 192). With fixed ideas, fixed objects Lawrence felt we don't amount to much; we need each other in figurative "nakedness." In his way, he too is arguing against scientific materialism, the "world of reason and science" which he believed created an "apartness" between men and their individual natures (Jackson, 139):

"Knowledge" has killed the sun, making it a ball of gas, with spots: "knowledge" has killed the moon, it is a dead little earth ...; the machine has killed the earth for us....How, out of all this, are we to get back the grand orbs of the soul's heavens, that fill us with unspeakable joy? How are we to get back Apollo, and Attis, Demeter, Persephone, and the halls of Dis? We've got to get them back, for they are the world our soul, our greater consciousness, lives in.

(Phoenix 11, 511)

Lawrence reiterates over and over again that we only become truly mature selves through reflective interaction with another. "We have our very individuality in relationship....Apart from our connections with other people, we are barely individuals, we amount, all of us to next to nothing" (Lawrence, "We Need One Another," PP, 190). These beliefs are all played out in Lawrence's works in one way or another.

His Sons and Lovers is a study in the alienation from the natural relationship between father and sons (the Morels) and the stifling of a mature and fruitful reaching out toward another female by their mother who reduces all other human beings to unreality (Martz, 47-69) (Martz is working here with Chapters 7-11 exclusively). Sons William and Paul are shown thrust into life without the support of paternal identity and without the tools of self-worth to form meaningful relationships. They move toward paternal alienation through the urgings of their mother's perception of an "ideal imago," i.e., they are encouraged to value and pursue more middle-class values--white collar jobs; father (a coal miner) feels the exclusion and his personality steadily degenerates as well. This alienation is shown in Paul's repeated inability to respond sympathetically to his father who is drawn in this manner in the text, and by language--by comparison to Paul, his father speaks the uneducated dialect of the countryside.

Furthermore, because Mrs. Morel fails to reflect back to her sons their worth in terms of their own uniqueness but only as they reflect her perception of worth, they lack the "stuffing" to form true and meaningful relationships with the opposite sex and break the isolation of existence. This is made subtly clear with son William who soon dies in the struggle to separate from her and attach to an other and pointedly with son Paul who, in seeking to overcome this problem, also finds himself suffocating. Dorothy Van Ghent would argue here that it is Miriam, Paul's love interest, who is unable to recognize and respect the "otherness" or "outsideness"--in a partner that is the natural form of things in the uncorrupted person" (Van Ghent Form, 247). A closer scrutiny would suggest, however, that it is Paul who has absorbed his mother's view of Miriam--"she wants to own your soul"--and, consequently, he is unable to respond to Miriam naturally, ultimately destroying her inner vitality (Martz, 47-67). While textual narration seems to bear out Miriam's possessiveness based on her desire to learn and to absorb knowledge of the world, she ultimately is offering the freedom of natural growth within a relationship which, along with his mother's "life-warmth and the strength to produce" Paul needs as well: "A sketch finished, he always wanted to take it to Miriam. Then he was stimulated into knowledge of the work he had produced unconsciously. In contact with her he gained insight; his vision went deeper...."

Miriam urged this warmth into intensity like a white light" (S&L, 187). But naturally shy in sexual matters as well as spiritual according to her upbringing, maternally appeasing Paul uses these qualities as an excuse for rejection and egress from their relationship, breaking Miriam's heart and ultimately inhibiting his own growth (Martz, 67): "'You are a nun--you are a nun'" (295). The words went into her heart again and again. Nothing he ever had said has gone into her so deeply, fixedly, like a mortal wound" (S&L, 295). Paul analyzed the situation and resolved intellectually what might be best for him, completely ignoring the promptings of his own heart and the natural rhythmic flow of just "being." Again, as Wilde had done, Lawrence is attacking here the world of Socratic rationalism which leads man to be locked in his own ego, steadily destroying the spiritual and poetic forces which promote a natural togetherness symbolized by Miriam.

Lawrence's urgings for a return to the uninhibited rhythms of being and connectedness and the throwing off of individually destructive social accoutrements is particularly mythologized in Lady Chatterley's Lover. Here he moves head-on to suggest symbolically the impotent state of man in Europe entire. This work is far from his best and perhaps for this reason, i.e. that he is too proselytizing; and, perhaps, as Wilde, too much trying to capitalize on the value of shock to startle the reader into an awareness: Some passages delve into the very "raw" if not "raunchy" language of sexual

encounter in an attempt to break down the social inhibitions--veneers, which hinder the growth of the real person. Lawrence naively believed that if you emptied the word of social stigma, you emptied the inhibition. Were it that simple.

In Lady Chatterley's Lover Lawrence draws from rudimentary psychology's belief that sexual awakening is also the awakening into the creation of self. The plot is the symbolic reenactment of the birth of a new, better, and "honest" world--the fruit of the union, the child of the lovers, the representation of the new and vital world (Lawrence uses and is often identified with the figure of the mythological Phoenix which in a burst of passion and yielding up of its own hoarded identity gives birth to a new, pure, and innocent life).

Mellors, Lord Chatterley's gamekeeper, also doesn't like Forbes, the artist, "whose pretentious avant-garde painting is murdering the bowels of human compassion" (Becker, 88); whose hypocritical depiction of life is destroying life. With this portrait, Lawrence takes particular aim at the "surface and appearance," decadent mentality brought about by the industrial society (Becker, 88-9): He says through gamekeeper Mellors that if men were taught to live instead of earn and spend, wore scarlet trousers and danced and swaggered and were handsome, they could get along with very little cash--"They ought to learn to be naked and handsome and to sing in a mass and dance the old group dances, and carve the stools they sit

on, and embroider their own emblems. Then they wouldn't need money" (LCL, 326). It's a hundred years after Blake but it's still the same argument against the creation of dehumanized, plasticised repositories of social trends.

Lord Chatterley is the text's scapegoat, representing Europe in general--literally impotent--paralyzed from the waste down although it is subtly hinted that he did not (as Europe) show much vitality before his war wounds either. As industry he is interested in cash, money, profit, right connections--the who's who--and totally insensitive to the individual. As Willoughby or Wotton, he is pride; he too surrounds himself with like, self-reflectors such as the aforementioned painter or the young playwright Michaelis whom he tacitly allows as lover to Lady Chatterley and possible surrogate father to "his" child. Finding Michaelis truly very much like her husband, however, Lady Chatterley quickly flees in frustration to Mellors and the forest--Pan's secret wood--with Lord Chatterley too egotistical to even be suspicious of Mellors as his wife's lover: He cannot give the unsocially connected gamekeeper the least in recognition or human empathy. His house and the countryside surrounding it as well as its inhabitants are similarly sketched to compliment the deadness of the environment.

Lady Chatterley, Connie, is not quite the conventional woman of the time who "suffers through the sex" to get on with the "other things" in the marriage arrangement, but she does

marry Lord Clifford for his intellectual capacities (a commodity) which she soon finds to be equally dead. In her encounter with Mellors she comes back to life--there is the symbolic marriage and rebirth ritual in the text as well as her pregnancy, the fruit, fertility. And as the man revitalizes the woman, she too revitalizes him: There is some innuendo that Mellors's forest escape from wife Bertha is an escape from the "vagina dentata," or "toothed vagina" which in primitive folklore and myth represents men's universal fear of castration and impotence. Bertha is a variation on Mrs. Morel in her all devouring or attempting envelopment of her sons totally into her perceptions (Paul as he rejects "outsidedness"-- Miriam--and takes on his mother's identity values, takes them on completely even to her femininity (his creative genius so associated) and, as a reflection of Lawrence, echoes as well the author's growing awareness of his homosexual bias).

As Hardy sends his Tess back to Stonehenge, so Lawrence sends his figures back to Pan's wood for regeneration. The text is filled with such ritual and symbolic vegetative motifs drawn from mythology--Mellors in a green suit; allusion to Osiris and Dionysus and genital dismemberment; a dying and/or gestation period--all to suggest metaphorically that Europe must regress back to nature and instinct and away from industrialized, line assembled human beings. Lawrence's interest in mythology is well known, his having read Sir James

Frazer's seminal work on mythology, The Golden Bough, in 1915 and again 1922, as well as Frazer's Totemism and Exogamy (Jackson, 129).

While Connie and Mellors and their so representative child are given hope for new life, Lord Chatterley is not: He makes the descent into the secret wood but his wheelchair stalls. To him the forest is mere property; he more and more is seen insulating himself "into mechanisms--industrial engines, his motorized wheelchair, his typewriter, his mechanical horn, his radio...[coming] at last to prefer the wireless to having his cronies visit Wragby" (Jackson, 141). He is the mechanized human being, with limited focusing and perceptive abilities whose mind and eyes alone register while his sensual and intuitive instincts are forever dead.

Although Lawrence wishes and seems to be arguing for hope against the depression and despair of the period, he is actually advancing the cause of pessimism, taking a place, in fact, with some of the day's other great pessimistic writers such as Hardy or Tolstoy. Calling to carpet his own dictum, "Never trust the artist. Trust the tale,..." his actual text undercuts whatever optimism he wanted to feel and purport as seen in the arbitrary ending of Sons and Lovers where "optimism" resembles more stoic misery. Paul's anguished reaction to his mother's death is far more credible than the abrupt contradiction in the novel's forced conclusion (Gordon, 241):

But no, he would not give in. Turning sharply, he walked towards the city's gold phosphorescence. His fists were shut, his mouth set fast. He would not take that direction, to the darkness, to following her. He walked towards the faintly humming, glowing town, quickly.

(S&L, 491)

Then even though the Morels deteriorating marriage is obvious, the narrator cannot refrain from suggesting what they ought to have felt/done which also depresses the tone. Also, Paul and Miriam's romance is clearly tragic. And, finally, observe the opening of Lady Chatterley's Lover, "Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically" (LCL, 1). As David Gordon suggests, Lawrence is saying "We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen" (Gordon, 242): While he put his hopes for a resuscitant individual in passion's nascent potential, these hopes were really not very high.

It would have been very unlikely from such problems explored earlier that the following generations could go unscathed and evolve into a century without problems of the self. That our century has inherited the culture of narcissism is readily apparent. The pattern which, it is being suggested, began with the Romantics and continued to spread on through the Victorian era to the present may be seen in many ways. One is through our current preoccupation with multiculturalism. Alfred Kazin's article in Forbes, "Cry the beloved Country," sees, among other things, narcissism in cultural identity, in our living in a culture which is the

outgrowth of stress on ethnicity/multiculturalism to the end that all our past heritage is being devalued, written off as trash, and minorityness is being celebrated:

... the most advanced literary critics in the university are no longer interested in literature, "mere" literature, but in the devaluation of prevailing systems of thought that rest on our rethinking respect for words,...

and,

... in the name of class-race-gender equality, teachers and students all over America are now being trained in such intolerance to defame and exclude those who do not follow the party line. The cultural damage seems irrevocable.

(Kazin, 154)

Kazin is arguing here, simply put for our purpose, against the continuing prevalence of paternal rejection, where tradition and the foundations of authority were undermined in the service of self, or self reflections: Where in the past it was Willoughby's or Chatterley's version of the "old boy networking," power today seems to lie in identity with a particular ethnic or racial group. In either case the once proud concern for "self" seems to have gone over the hill to "self-centered."

Our century is particularly distinguished as narcissistic in its continued lack of authority figures--"the fathers" who failed the century before are failing us as well and more so. As Christopher Lasch recalls, the problems surrounding the failed institution of religion coupled with those of the machine age have resulted in modern man's failure to

internalize parental symbols of authority or cultivate respect for the innate power of man so that a healthy superego may be formed:

...the aggressive, punishing, and even self-destructive part of the superego is usually modified by later experience which softens early fantasies of parents as devouring monsters....If that experience is lacking as so often in a society which has devalued all forms of authority--the sadistic super ego can be expected to develop at the expense of the ego ideal, the destructive superego at the expense of the severe but solicitous inner voice we call conscience.

(Lasch 40-41)

Lasch, in his Culture of Narcissism, argues that we have become a "cult of expanded consciousness...where we have retreated to purely personal gratification...to live for yourself, not for your predecessors or posterity...to fix on our private performance-- collective narcissism" (Lasch, 30-1). The focus has shifted from individualists who saw their life in terms of a larger design, to disempowered narcissists who see the world as a mirror with nothing in it beyond themselves. The freedom from family and institutional ties has contributed to narcissistic insecurity which is overcome with the creation of the "grandiose self," and the attachment to others who radiate celebrity, power and charisma (Lasch 38). Fear of aging has also inhibited personal growth, and the heretofore personal issues now becoming political ones have relegated personal relations to "precarious" and "brittle" (by "personal issues" he means the formerly family

responsibilities such as the providing of basic necessities). "Impulse gratification", has made failure and loss insupportable, and impermanent attachments ("open marriages," open-ended commitments") intensify the disease they pretend to cure (Lasch, 47-69). The result of all this is an impoverished inner self, isolation, loneliness, and impotent rage.

Such totally narcissistic disenfranchisement of the past may be seen more and more creeping into succeeding twentieth century literature. Lawrence hints at this overtly as we have seen in his treatment of Lord Chatterley and what the latter represents, and subtly through Paul Morel as well, through this character's attitude toward his father: He dismisses him, Louis Martz suggests (61), viciously and says to his mother, "It won't be long. You can have my money. Let him go to hell" (S&L, 201). In his inability to give and thus receive anything from his father, Paul is left without roots--identity, as the narcissist--immature, and living in illusion. Similarly, the Joycean character Stephen Dedalus sets out to "forge the uncreated conscience of his race" "apaternally." As a modern artist his journey is to build an identity in the absence of the father, or the failed institutions. For, for Lacan, identity emanates from absence: The son is signified by the father's absence as in the Telemachos/Odyssean example: Telemachos is deprived of the power in the absences of his father (Lacan's *manque-a'-etre*); and this is indicated in

complex and indirect ways--"loss of power and authority...passivity--a total surrender, suffering in relation to the father...suffering a path to the father (as in the Christian context).... Passivity...the castration threat that must be resolved," and so on (Con Davis 1-26). Stephen Dedalus in The Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man as the persona of the young man, and Leopold Bloom in his Odyssean journey in Ulysses as the more "adult" one may be seen playing some of this out. Stephen renounces family and country ties and sets out to "father" or create himself. He does this not in a self-actualizing sense (as is the popular and Freudian related interpretation of such texts which came out of the thirties) nor in interaction with the existing world but in the narcissistic sense of disregard/rejection of existing values. In setting out "to forge the uncreated conscience of his race," "conscience," that is, in the pre-Romantic sense of the word, as identity, Stephen severs himself from the past and leaves himself with an uncertain future: He rejects the Ireland he perceives merely as a place choked by the "litany of saints"--Catholic judgement and damnation, the Ireland before Parnell--afraid to fight for home rule, the Ireland, he felt, which, like "The Dead"'s Gabriel Conroy, wore galoshes--had separated herself from life. Again, however, as the innuendo in the title suggests--portrait/artist--we have here yet still "the creator of illusion," the young forgerer in fantasy--idealism at best, and not reality.

As artist/creator Stephen sets out to find his "real" father, or what he would "like" to be the source of his creation (a little like Dickens or the Austens with their fictitious Codes of Arms), but he soon realizes that to be successful he must enter the realm of experience and know woman, and it is in this quest that his father's obscurity becomes even more intensified. Joyce believed that the search for the woman leads to the mother, again that first source and would be supplier of our emotional needs, and from the mother to the father, i.e., that in order to grow up into our own identity we have to take on the father--as it went--Zeus to papa Kronos. However, in the light of the failed institutions of the past, this quest only leads to the realization that the father is always uncertain: "Pater semper incertus" (Rabate, 88). Stephen has nothing to take on.

Joyce further underscores this "fatherlessness" through the "certainty" of a mother--first literally because of the womb and the passage down the birth canal, and second because of the natural bond of a mother's love which was a truth to him. Accordingly, we see Bloom, a very weak male, trying to reestablish a sexual life with wife and mother symbol, Molly, and to his leading Stephen there as well. Bloom is attempting to run down fatherhood and his own patrilineal line through an "uninterrupted" sexual life with Molly and the adopting of Stephen as his son (his own son Rudy has died). A connection, it is suggested, can be made through the womb; that is, father

and son are unified in that they both at least once have been privy to the mother's womb. Bloom can't get Stephen there so his attempt at paternity fails as well.

Joyce, in his teasing manner, is obviously "playing" with the paternity issue. In many cases Bloom is shown as not being able to sign his name thus breaking into the law of language to establish a patrilineal line in that way either. He is even further depicted as having problems with his father Rudolph Bloom, formerly Rudolph Virag whose suicide left Leopold yet still, so to speak, further disenfranchised.

Pertaining to Stephen, Rabate suggests that acquisition of language is contemporary with the Oedipal stages, for in first speaking one accepts a symbolic castration in that one has to renounce the intense desire for the mother. In learning the rules of language "one accepts the externality of a symbolic code which existed prior to my unique other and even predetermined it" (Rabate, 90). The implication here is that Stephen, in acquiring language, has thus acquired a father of a sort. The problem with language, however, is that it is always in process, but never becoming any fixity. While rigid cultural identity can suffocate the formation of the individual, language doesn't seem to offer much hope for forming substance either.

The text of Ulysses also suggests the Lacanian view that fatherhood is more than a physical function; it is also a law--a sexual difference, a prohibition against incest, or a

law of language (Rabate, 82): "A father is not a person but the focal point where castration can be brought to bear on the structure of desire"...a father is "a nexus of unresolved enigmas and the efficacy of a Name," and (Lacan again) "... is defined as an absence;" accordingly, "paternity and patriarchy are set adrift in a world of substitutes in which everybody is endlessly elsewhere" (Rabate, 82). In layman's terms and with respect to what Joyce seems to be suggesting in Portrait and later in Ulysses, a father in terms of a certain "root" identity can never be graspable; it can no longer be said we are cast "in the image and likeness of..." Both of these Joycean figures as well as his Gabriel Conroy from "The Dead" (who wore galoshes) are figures cut off from the past, with no future, and doomed to live only according to the system of identity they "make up." They are symbolic representations of the age in that they have no real and permanent codes of identity--no past nor future, but rather exist in the immediate moment, in the process of, but never treading turf as a complete self.

Joyce is traditionally viewed as the reflector of post-war man, joining the ranks of such as Rodin whose headless Walking Man or Hemingway's Jake Barnes (The Sun Also Rises) or Frederick Henry (A Farewell to Arms) epitomizes the feelings of disempowerment. But Joyce, in attempting to suggest hope through self-creation, leaves the door open for self-illusion as well. Such contemporary writers as William Faulkner

(Absalom, Absalom) or most recently Tony Morrison (The Bluest Eye) explore again the ends to such illusion either out of miscegenation, blind pride, or race rejection respectively. Back to the continent again and the late fifties, John Osborne is seen picking up and exploring the still prevailing cultural tendency toward singular self-adulation and exclusion through his character Jimmy Porter from Look Back in Anger (debut at the Royal Court Theater in London in May of 1956). Porter's generation did not accept him (a representative for a large portion of England's society). The war over, the equality faded and the old "class conscious" regime reestablished itself. Porter, like so many, did not fit in either with the middle or lower classes with whom he was thrown or the upper classes with whom he had fought a war and was granted the privilege of going to school with. This character, like Osborne himself, is isolated from the world around him. Porter's rejection derives from social class stratification which at the time of his writing Look Back in Anger he saw as still existing in England. Porter's constant berating of wife Alison is a self-berating. He resents her upper class origins which are a constant reminder to him of his lack of such credentials. He would only accept her if she conformed to the image he insisted upon. Her return to him is preconditioned upon their adopting a somewhat ridiculous posture of playful stuffed animals: Porter's is a rebellion against, and thwarted

illusionary escape from the preconceived order, as well as Osborne's way of ridiculing the social condition. Contemporary literature is capturing the still prevalent trend to adopt individually valueless models of emulation which abjure the inherent verities of time. Narcissus saw naught but himself...and slipped deeper and deeper...until he....

NOTES

1. Seibers, Tobin, The Mirror of Medusa (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1983) 79. Seibers is drawing from Herbert Marcuse. Eros and Civilization. Boston: Beacon Press '55, '66.

2. Seagroatt, Heather, "Hard Science Soft Psychology," Studies in English Literature 1500-1900 (V. 38, No. 4 Autumn, '98)

750. (Seagroatt is working with Smith/"Protoplasmic" and Wolfgang Iser. Walter Pater: The Aesthetic Moment (Cambridge: Cam. Univ. Press, 1987) 17.

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